STATEMENT

BY
H.E. Dr. Zahir Tanin

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations

At the General Debate of the Second Committee of the General Assembly

10 October, 2013

NEW YORK
Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate Your Excellency on your well-deserved election as Chair of this committee and the election of your highly competent Bureau. I would like to assure you of my delegations' full support and cooperation during the discussions of the Second Committee.

I also wish to pay tribute to your predecessor for his tireless efforts and successful leadership of the Second Committee during the Sixty-seventh session.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Fiji, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Lao People’s Democratic Republic, on behalf of the group of Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Benin, on behalf of the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

As the work of the Second Committee commences, and with it a number of important economic issues, it is our strong belief and expectation that this year under your able leadership, the Second Committee will make practical decisions and progress on implementation of the recommendations and decisions of past sessions.

Mr. Chairman,

I fully endorse the major points and concerns reflected by our group, the LLDCs, but I would like to highlight the following points on our national capacity:

Over the next two years, we must accelerate global efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. As we have discussed over the past few weeks, there is much room to celebrate achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Poverty has been
reduced by half and significantly more people have access to quality living conditions and potable water.

In spite of these successes, there are still challenges to be addressed and areas that need new attention and focus, namely poverty eradication and financing for development.

In considering these points, special focus should be drawn to countries that lag behind the 2015 deadline for realizing their MDGs due to their special needs and challenges. Such countries will not be able to achieve their goals without international partnership. In this regard, I would like to commend the Secretary General’s Report which reflects the concerns of and attention to countries in special situations.

As a vulnerable member state of LDCs, and as a country highly dependent on aid, I would like to call on developed countries to fulfill their pledges in terms of mobilizing the Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the developing countries and the LDCs. I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening the Sixth High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development two days ago. The fruitful insights of this meeting can highly contribute to the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda. The follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus and Doha Declaration for financing is highly important and we support the call for convening the follow-up international conference on financial development before the end of 2015. We hope that the outcome of the upcoming Bali Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization overcomes the impasse of negotiations and provides deliverables for the future.

In the same vein, the comprehensive 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action scheduled in 2014 is critical to meet the special needs and challenges of the LLDCs. It provides an opportunity to strengthen our genuine partnership and fill the gaps in realization of our commitments.

While we are in the process of formulating the Post-2015 development agenda, it is our strong belief and expectation that the outcomes and recommendations of Rio+20, the Istanbul
Programme of Action for LDCs, the Almaty Programme of Action, and the Barbados Programme of Action should guide our deliberations of the Post-2015 Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express our support for the establishment of the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development. I hope this forum serves as a strong platform for addressing the gaps and shortcomings in sustainable development and builds on progress made so far. Considering that international aid is essential to the realization of sustainable development, we stress the necessity of regional and economic integration and cooperation as well as south-south and triangular cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of LDCs, we cannot ignore our vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. It is worth mentioning that we are scaling up our joint efforts in mitigating the negative impact of climate change. In this regard we urge the international community to make the green climate fund operational by early 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

Afghanistan was embroiled in violent conflict when the MDGs were set, and thus came late to the process, with a deadline set for 2020. As we progress, Afghanistan is committed to achieving its goals. Afghanistan’s National Development Strategy (ANDS) is widely aligned with the MDGs, as are our National Priority Programs (NPPs) under ANDS. According to the 2013 Afghanistan MDGs Report, progress is already measurable and some goals were met as early as 2010 with other indicators well on track towards their targets. As a country combating instability instigated by terrorism, an additional goal, Goal 9, on enhancing security was added exclusively for Afghanistan.
In conclusion, we would like to convey our wish to engage in fruitful and practical discussions during this session, along with our determination to reach measurable and concrete decisions of the goals of the Second Committee.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.