Sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly
Second Committee General Debate
Statement
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Mr. Chairman,

My delegation joins other speakers in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election as Chairman of this Committee. My delegation is confident in your ability to steer the deliberations of this Committee to a successful conclusion.

My delegation wishes to align itself to the statement made by Fiji for the Group of 77 and China, the statement made by Benin for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as well as the statement by Ethiopia on behalf of the AU.

Mr. Chairman,

The 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly is taking place at the critical time in view of the 2015 deadline for meeting the MDGs set by ourselves in 2001. This session is thus setting the stage for the Post-2015 agenda. My government believes that the intergovernmental processes on sustainable development are very critical at this point and therefore wishes to underscore the profound importance of attaining the post 2015 development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me share with you the macroeconomic fundamentals obtaining in Zambia. Currently the Zambian economy is characterised by a stable macro-economic environment and strong economic growth. Economic growth has averaged above 6 percent in the last decade. Notwithstanding the positive macroeconomic fundamentals Zambia continues to grapple with challenge of high poverty levels which has also become the greatest global challenge. It is in this regard that we support the Second Decade UN Resolution for the Eradication of Poverty (2008 -2017) and we are committed to ensuring that the basic needs of Zambians are met.

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me to highlight also some progress made, and challenges encountered in achieving the set targets of the MDGs. The 2013 MDG report indicate that Zambia has made good progress toward meeting some of the MDGs such as, the increase in net enrolment in primary schools, reduced child malnutrition, reduce by two-thirds, the under-five mortality rates and three-quarters of maternal mortality ratio. Let me point out that maternal mortality is also affected by gender inequality issues as manifested in poor education for girls, early marriages, adolescent pregnancies from observations and reports in my country. In this regard therefore, with more effort, gender inequality as one of the causes of maternal mortality can be redressed. In addition progress has been made in the fight against HIV and AIDS, however we need to do more to ensure that the better social protection services and care are provided to the effected.

Mr. Chairman,

In less than two years, the deadline for the MDGs will be reached and governments will have an opportunity to take stock of the achievements made and challenges in attaining the development targets set at the turn of the century. What remains critical therefore, is what we do between now and 2015, and beyond.
Mr. Chairman,

My delegation wishes to reiterate that the ICT sector is an important factor of globalisation. As such, the success of any efforts at harnessing the potential benefits of the global village will be constrained by the inability to bring quality ICT connectivity to all nations. Zambia in this regard, has prioritised ICT connectivity as a critical tool for development and therefore wish to call for partnership and support of ICT development.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia welcomes and supports the resolutions of the 67th United Nations General Assembly on International Financial System and development, international trade and development, and External Debt Sustainability and Development.

My government acknowledges the critical role played by the international financial system in meeting financing needs of our development aspirations. It is in this view that we support the call for continued addressing of the systemic fragilities and imbalances in reforming and strengthening the international financial system through remodeling of the Bretton wood institutions in order to broaden their functionality to emerging development challenges especially for developing economies.

Further, the need for an international financial system that supports sustainable, inclusive and equitable economic growth; job creation and poverty eradication while allowing for coherent resource mobilization for development. Therefore the Sixth High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development held early this week has been timely and sets a stage for inclusion of financing issues in the post-2015 Development agenda.

In recognizing debt sustainability as an important pillar for sustainable economic growth and development, it is important that we reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that there is a balance between external resources mobilization and sustainable debt management. It is in this regard that we also urge the international community, to implement coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring and debt management that will contribute towards sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

We are also cognizant of the importance of international trade as an engine for development. However, multilateral trade negotiations under the Doha Development Agenda have regrettably been characterised by lack of significant and meaningful progress thus rendering, the call by the 2010 UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals for all countries to exempt least developing countries from duties and quotas by 2015 to remain unanswered. The forth coming 9th WTO Ministerial Conference to be held in Bali, Indonesia from 3th to 6th December 2013 is therefore, a positive development that should be a stage for conclusion of negotiations under the Doha development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia supports the Istanbul Program of Action (IPoA) 2011-2020 as the architecture for development. It is in this regard that as a country we have aligned our development agenda to the programme’s overarching goal of not only increasing and sustaining high levels
of economic growth, but also making sustainable progress in human and social development. This is has been further amplified in the Re-aligned Sixth National Development Plan (SNPD 2013-2016) whose theme is “People Centred Sustainable Economic growth and Poverty Reduction” with strategic focus on infrastructure and human development. We are therefore committed to ensuring the continued integration of IPoA priorities into the national development agenda.

Zambia recognizes the task at hand for ensuring successful implementation of the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action. It is in this regard that we support the call for governments, intergovernmental, non-governmental organizations, and cooperation partners to contribute to the Trust Fund in a timely manner for monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action. The success of the Programme will not only foster sustained, equitable and inclusive human and social development. It will also enhance gender equality, empowerment of women and reduced vulnerability of LDCs to economic and natural shocks.

Further, Zambia supports the declaration of the LDCs conference which underscored the ownership and primary responsibility of LDCs themselves to eradicate poverty for sustainable development and be on a sure path to graduate from LDCs status.

Mr. Chairman,

Zambia acknowledges that South-South cooperation is no longer merely an alternate modality for supporting the development of poor countries but also as an appropriate option to advance an equitable development agenda by taking advantage of the specific strengths and conditions of countries and region. We also take cognisance of the fact that south-south trade has changed the geography of international economic relations.

It is in this regard that we wish to emphasize and support the calls for the specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations system to take concrete measures to effectively mainstream support to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in their policies. Further the UN regional commissions should continue to play a catalytic role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation as it has become central in supporting vibrant growth poles of the world economy.

Mr. Chairman,

I wish to re-emphasise the importance of International support and partnership in accelerating the implementation of MDGs, in driving the post-2015 agenda for sustainable development and concerted efforts to eradicate poverty.

The need to have a single set of universally agreed sustainable development goals reflecting priorities which are actionable, concise, and whose implementation will resonate with the different development and economic levels of member states cannot be overemphasised. Therefore prudently balanced and effectively integrated economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development goals are critical. In this regard, the call for the convergence of the process on sustainable development in particular the intergovernmental process on MDGs, the Open Working Group on Sustainable development goals, financing for development as well as the Post 2015 development agenda is important. In this connection also, my delegation welcomes the first inaugural meeting of the High Level Political Forum held on 24 September 2013 attended by Presidents, prime ministers,
and other high-ranking officials. My delegation call for continued commitment at the highest level for increased momentum in supportive action to implement sustainable development.

To this effect, it is necessary to build global partnerships that are supported by commitments towards regional and international cooperation, anchored with mutual accountability, enhanced local private sector and public private partnerships, while putting issues of poverty at the centre for the achievement of sustainable and inclusive development in the future we want.

I thank you.