Statement

By

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During the General Debate

on the

Work of the Second Committee

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Check against delivery
Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to make this statement. My delegation associates itself with the statements made earlier by the distinguished representatives of the Republic of Fiji, and the Federal Republic of Ethiopia on behalf of the G-77 and China and the African Group respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

The world adopted the MDGs in 2000. Since then, they have been an important framework for global development cooperation. They have galvanized, catalyzed and shaped international discourse and action against poverty for over a decade. Our expectations were that they would provide a platform for the international community to accelerate human development through effective integration of the developing countries into the global economy.

But since their implementation began, the results achieved have been mixed. We have witnessed both progress and setbacks. We believe this has happened because the goals did not adequately address the multifaceted dimensions of poverty. They focused more on the symptoms and basic needs rather than the root causes of poverty. Because of this, they lacked strong links say, between poverty eradication and environmental sustainability leading to their implementation in silos.

Therefore, the progresses we have made on the goals have faced a myriad of challenges. Today, the effects of the economic and financial crisis of recent years remain palpable. Food and energy insecurities continue to linger. The levels of unemployment especially among the youth are rising. It has simply become impossible to permanently cushion the gains we have made on the MDGs from the threats of reversal occasioned by internal and external factors.

With this state of affairs, development across the globe will remain unsustainable. If we are to prevent this, and make a meaningful impact on the lives of the poor, then we have to collectively tackle global challenges. We have to pursue an integrated approach that prioritizes interventions with the greatest cascading effects on a wider range of goals. For example, we have to address the impacts of climate change in order to address food and energy insecurities. Similarly, we have to tackle global imbalances in trade to enable developing countries become competitive. We have address diminishing FDI and ODA as well as their quality if poor countries are to fight the unholy trinities of poverty, diseases and ignorance.

Mr. Chairman,

Member states and the UN are repositories of sound ideas. But sound ideas without concrete means of implementation will not prevent children in Africa and other poor countries from dying of malnutrition or preventable diseases. Neither will it save the Small Island Developing States from the threats of rising sea levels. Let me be clear. If we are to effectively address global development challenges, then we have to
concertedly confront the implementation gaps. This is the single most important ingredient for achieving the MDGs and the post 2015 development agenda.

We need to build strong capacities for our human resources and institutions for effective service delivery. We need relevant technologies as they play a key role in addressing development challenges across a wide scope of cross-cutting sustainability dimensions. In that regard, we need the right technologies in food and agriculture, water, energy, and development of green industries among others. These technologies are necessary for a shift to a more sustainable development pathway. But above all, we need stable and predictable financing for sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Last month, our Heads of State and Government at the Special Event on the MDGs urged for the acceleration of the unfinished business of the Goals. Similarly, they gave us an express political mandate for the launching of the post 2015 development agenda next September. We are now at a critical and definitive stage of deciding how to forge ahead with common understanding on what will constitute the post 2015 development agenda.

The next development agenda should build on the foundations already laid by the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals. My country believes that the agenda must put poverty eradication, equity and global sustainability at the center. Similarly, the agenda must be broad enough to include enablers of development. It must recognize the right to development and consequently promote equitable development. It must seek to eradicate absolute rather than extreme poverty as defined by 1.25 dollars a day.

I say eradication of absolute poverty because experience has shown that when people cross artificial poverty lines, say, of 1.25 dollars a day, nothing particularly special happens to their lives. They remain under the shackles of poverty; unable to afford basics like nutritious food, better medication and life changing education for their children. Accordingly, eradicating real poverty experienced by billions of people in the world cannot be pegged at 1.25 dollars a day.

Therefore, Mr. Chairman, the next development agenda has to be ambitious and practical. Without rapid economic growth, good governance, infrastructural development and access to energy, development will falter and poverty will linger on. Without equity, it will not be possible to address social equality and avail public services to address hunger and malnutrition. It will also not be possible to avail potable water and safe sanitation, prevent debilitating morbidity and preventable diseases, and confront illiteracy, ignorance and lack of skills.

Our experience with the MDGs has confirmed that developing countries cannot only grow through ODA but also through a fair and balanced global trade regime that
encourages free movement of goods and services as well as people. Therefore, we expect the new development agenda to address these issues in a holistic and comprehensive manner. We expect a clear global vision and action plan, backed by requisite resources for the new global development agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate that we need more political commitment now, than ever before towards the post 2015 development agenda. It is the good spirit of international cooperation that has seen us upgrade the United Nations Environment Programme, reform the Economic and Social Council and establish the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The reforms of these institutions are expected to establish coherence and integrate the pillars of sustainable development. Kenya will continue to support and constructively engage on the on-going processes related to the elaboration of the post 2015 development agenda. As co-chair of the Open Working Group on the formulation of global sustainable development goals, I wish to assure you of Kenya’s continued support and facilitation in your deliberations.

I thank you.