MALAWI

STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT

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Mr. Chairman

Allow me at the outset, to join the preceding speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Bureau, on your election to lead the deliberations of the Second Committee during the 68th Session of the General Assembly. Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation during your tenure of office. I am confident that under your able leadership, the work of the Committee will be concluded successfully.

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished Representatives of Fiji, Benin and Lao Peoples Democratic Republic (PDR), on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries, respectively.

Let me also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary General for his insightful reports which will inform our deliberations.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation considers the agenda items before this Committee to be very critical to the achievement of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the developing countries, as well as in the process leading to the Post 2015 Development Agenda. We, therefore, look forward to frank and open deliberations on all the agenda items before this Committee, particularly on macroeconomic issues, sustainable development, globalization and interdependence, operational activities for development, finance for development, eradication of poverty, global partnerships and group of countries in special situations.

In a nutshell, we have great expectation that this Committee will advance the issues in the interest of both developed and developing countries, with special emphasis on the least developed countries.
Mr. Chairman,

As we embark on a new session of the Second Committee, we must all ensure that the global concerns affecting the majority of the developing countries, including my own, Malawi, are placed at the centre of our policy decisions. It is in this context, that I would like to briefly highlight a few points that are of utmost importance to my country, Malawi.

Mr. Chairman

With regard to agenda item 16, my delegation reiterates the importance of information and communication technologies for development in the promotion of sound economic growth and development of any country, rich or poor.

In today’s world, science and technology is increasingly becoming important in the global sphere of competition and production. Unfortunately, advancements in science and technology continue to widen the digital divide, between the developed and the developing countries. Accordingly, we call upon this Committee to consider this agenda comprehensively and reach a conclusion that is aimed at reducing this gap.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi needs a well-developed communications sector. Although, the ICT sector has been a key contributor to economic growth of the country, it is sad to indicate that this sector is one of the key areas where the country is lagging behind, due to lack of supporting services and infrastructure, such as reliable electricity, telecommunications networks, among others. We, therefore, call upon our development partners, to continue supporting us in this area.

Mr. Chairman

For the past three years, Malawi had been facing severe economic, political and social challenges. However, since last year, the current Government has committed itself to addressing some of these challenges through the restoration of the rule of law, the observance of human rights, the devaluation of the local currency and promotion of fiscal discipline.
The reforms that we have implemented have changed the whole scenario, hence Malawi is now registering a strong economic recovery. For instance, the local currency has stabilized, inflation is declining, and industrial production is up from 30 percent in 2012 to 75 percent in 2013.

Economic growth forecast for this year is at 5 percent, up from 1.8 percent from last year. That said, Malawi remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with rural areas being the most hit with poverty. Malawi’s Human Development Index is 0.418, which gives the country a rank of 170 out of 186 countries (HDI 2012).

Mr. Chairman

Malawi joins other Least Developed Countries in reaffirming its commitment to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA), which was adopted in Turkey in May, 2011. It is in this spirit that my delegation wishes to call upon all relevant stakeholders, to ensure that the Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing Countries get the needed support from the international community.

LDCs continue to remain vulnerable to numerous challenges the world is facing. It is my delegation’s hope that the Istanbul Programme of Action will receive the highest attention it deserves, and that it will be implemented in its entirety. We hope that through the IPOA, LDCs will benefit from duty-free and quota free market access and supply side capacity building.

Mr. Chairman

Malawi like any other developing country is more concerned about the continued suspension of the Doha Round of negotiations. We, therefore, urge the major trading countries, to show some flexibility and political will to accomplish the negotiations in a favorable manner to the developing countries.

We look forward to a fair and balanced international trading system, and the removal by the developed countries of agricultural subsidies, and trade barriers in non-agricultural commodities and services, in order to enhance access by developing countries to international trade.
Mr. Chairman

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes side events to be organized by this Committee. In the same breath, we expect, as usual, that the selection of panelists and key speakers will take into account regional dimensions to ensure a diverse perspective and balance in the discussions.

I thank you all for your attention.