STATEMENT

BY

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ON AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT, FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION
AGENDA ITEM; 25

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Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by Fiji on behalf of the G77 and China as well as Ethiopia on behalf of the Africa Group respectively.

2. We also wish to thank the Secretary General for his report A/68/311 on the same agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Agriculture is the mainstay of most of our economies particularly in the developing world.

4. According to the Secretary-General’s report, it may be possible to achieve the MDG target of halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015.

5. Critically for Sub-Saharan Africa, there is need for injection of resources into the agricultural sector if we are to realize a world free from hunger.

6. The same report of the Secretary-General indicates that 868 million people suffer from chronic undernourishment, 26 percent of children are stunted and 2 billion people suffer from one or more micronutrient deficiencies.

7. This is an indication that issues of agricultural development, food security and nutrition should remain the centerpiece of global development initiatives especially at the time when the international community is seized with mapping a new framework for the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Botswana have always depended on rain-fed agriculture for subsistence production of crops and livestock key to sustaining livelihoods especially in rural areas.

9. Over the years, however, rainfall has become both sporadic and unreliable due to climate inducted factors. This has led to serious loss of agricultural production, food insecurity and overall contribution of agriculture into the economy.

10. The negative effect of climate change has also impacted on the sources of the natural and traditional food content that has a great nutritional and medicinal value.
11. This continues to pose a serious threat to national food security and nutrition, as well as our national strategies to eradicate poverty and hunger in the country.

12. Notwithstanding the challenges that Botswana faces, over the years government has set aside substantial amount of resources to drive several agricultural programmes aimed at eradicating poverty. In 2008 the Government of Botswana specifically introduced the integrated support programme for arable agriculture development (ISPAAD) to address the challenges facing arable farmers and boost production and productivity. This programme targets farmers and assists them with capitalization of their farming operations, tillage and acquisition of inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, fencing materials, crop management.

13. Under the livestock sub-sector, the Government introduced the Limited Management and infrastructure development (LIMID) programme, where farmers are assisted with various packages such as livestock infrastructure development.

14. In order to achieve food security, Botswana needs the assistance of the international community to sustain these initiatives especially in the area of irrigation, crop science and agricultural technology.

Mr. Chairman,

15. We do agree with the Secretary General's report that issues of nutrition go beyond calories intake, they go hand in hand with the economic, social and environmental factors that prevent people from consuming and fully benefiting from healthy diets.

16. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive agenda. It is in this regard that we believe that these issues should be at the center of the Post 2015 development agenda.

17. I thank you for your attention