



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

**COORDINATION SEGMENT OF THE 2008 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ON THE THEME:**

**THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN IMPLEMENTING THE
MINISTERIAL DECLARATION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THE
SUBSTANTIVE SESSION OF 2007 OF THE COUNCIL**

NEW YORK, JULY 8, 2008

Mr. President,

On behalf of my delegation, I join other speakers in commending you and members of your Bureau for the able manner you have been conducting this meeting. My delegation aligns itself with the statements of Ethiopia and Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the African Group and the Group of 77 & China respectively.

The comprehensive and analytical report of the Secretary-General has certainly set the stage for this very important debate on the role of the United Nations system in implementing the 2007 Ministerial Declaration on strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through global partnership for development. The critical issue is how well has the UN system played this role?

In our estimation, in spite of some challenges, which the report was candid enough to highlight, the UN system could be said to have recorded modest success. This success was however stymied by deficits in global partnership for development, lack of coherence and coordinated approach on the part of the UN system and the multiple crises caused by the international financial turmoil, high food prices, high fuel prices and the devastating effects of climate change.

Mr. President,

Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger is as enormous a task as it is critical to the larger goal of attaining sustainable development. It is a compelling task that requires effective and systemic coordination of development policies and strategies at the national, regional and global levels. In this respect we commend the Secretary-General for setting-up the United Nations Millennium Development Goal Gap Task Force, with the main focus of tracking existing international commitments made under Goal 8 to support the achievement of MDGs.

Mr. President,

We are similarly encouraged by the laudable initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in setting-up the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group, under his able chairmanship, in order to scale-up progress to achieve MDGs in Africa and to implement existing commitments. We hasten to say that the Group has struck the right chord by as well taking up the task of implementing existing commitments to Africa, which we believe, if fully redeemed will go a long way in assisting the continent to achieve all the MDGs. More importantly also, the Group is to address 'gaps in day-to-day operational

collaboration between the United Nations system organizations and the international financial institutions'.

Mr. President,

Our national experience has shown that increased production in agricultural sector and development of infrastructure are critical to poverty eradication. As agriculture is intrinsically linked to rural development and employment generation, my delegation believes that a strategy that accords attention to the small-scale farmer, but at the same time complimenting it with mechanised farming, will not only address the food crisis in developing countries but also herald the green revolution in Africa. Infrastructure not only facilitates a boost in agriculture but is also essential in industrial development. Furthermore, we firmly hold the view that inclusive international trade, aid for trade, infusion of foreign investment in productive sectors, transfer of renewable technologies and equitable disbursement of adaptation fund will greatly enhance sustainable development and achievement of the MDGs.

Finally, we reiterate that the role of the United Nations system in the eradication of poverty and hunger would be more successful if the UN system could in a coherent manner ensure the implementation of all commitments made to developing countries; and accord priority to agriculture, infrastructure and rural development in their normative and operational activities. For UN to play this role, it will have to be at the vanguard of mobilizing, championing and coordinating interventions aimed at poverty eradication, capacity building and sharing best practices.

I thank you