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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL  
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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## Statement

By

**H.E. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn,**  
**Prime Minister**  
**of the Federal Democratic Republic of**  
**Ethiopia**

At

**The 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General**  
**Assembly**

25 September 2014  
New York

***Mr. President,***

It is indeed a great pleasure seeing you in the Chair presiding over the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. I would like to express my warmest congratulations to you on your election to this high office. I know you are aware, as we are, you are assuming this responsibility at one of the most critical periods in the history of this organization, and that of multilateralism in general. Those of us in the Eastern Africa region know you very well as a friend and distinguished diplomat. We are confident that you will use your wisdom and experience to build consensus on a range of issues on the agenda of this historic session of the United Nations General Assembly and effectively guide its work.

Let me, therefore, assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation in the successful discharge of your heavy responsibilities. I also wish to commend your predecessor for the excellent contribution he made to ensure the success of the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. Indeed, it was a remarkable session which laid the foundation for the major task that lies ahead.

***Mr. President,***

This session is being held at an historic period when we have embarked upon a major undertaking to shape the future we want for the present and future generations. If we did what we must, it could be remembered in history as a session that helped us turn the corner in ensuring effective custodianship of the environment, economic justice and social responsibility. What we agreed more than two years ago in Rio must be what galvanizes our common effort. We said then that “poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”.

Last month marked the Five Hundred days until the target date of MDGs which we have agreed to achieve by the year 2015. In Africa, robust economic growth has been registered over the last decade and the stereotypical narrative about the continent is slowly changing. Africa is now the rising continent offering tremendous opportunities for trade and investment. Notable progress has also been made towards achieving the MDGs, including in my own country Ethiopia, there are nonetheless many remaining challenges such as with respect to reducing maternal death.

It is, therefore, necessary as we move forward in the negotiation to formulate the post 2015 Development Agenda, not to overlook the fact that the MDGs are still unfinished business. The Post 2015 Development Agenda would be fulsome when it rests on a satisfactory outcome in the implementation of the MDGs. Accordingly, the remaining months should be used to accelerate their implementation. Moreover, the Post 2015 Development Agenda would need to make provision for concluding those aspects of the MDGs that might have to be carried beyond 2015.

***Mr. President,***

What we have done so far in connection with laying the groundwork for the Post-2015 Development Agenda both at inter-governmental level and that of the Secretariat has been encouraging. The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals has successfully completed its work and the two Co-Chairs must be commended for the contribution they have made. It would be proper as the 68<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly has decided to use the Open Working Group's proposal as a basis for integrating Sustainable Development Goals into the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

I should also express appreciation to the Secretary-General for the effort he has made in this regard in conformity with the request contained in the outcome document of the 2010 MDG Summit. The work of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda has been significant. We are particularly appreciative of the invaluable contribution made by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

We look forward to the synthesis report by the Secretary-General which we trust would help facilitate effective conversation among member States and productive inter-governmental negotiation with the view to formulating a Post-2015 Development Agenda by next year, an agenda which reflects the interests of the present and future generations.

We have no doubt that a Post-2015 Development Agenda that responds to the major challenges the world faces has to rest on readiness to foster cooperation based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. It is difficult to imagine resolving the difficult but indispensable issues surrounding means of implementation absent flexibility on the question of CBDR.

One thing is clear in all this. The world has the capacity and the resources to effectively respond to the pressing needs we see, to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development for all. This has been affirmed by the report of the Inter-Governmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing. The Committee has not offered us definitive proposals but rather recommendations designed, as they say, to stimulate discussions.

It has nonetheless expressed hope for progress to be made on development financing at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to take place in Addis Ababa in July 2015. Let me affirm our commitment to do our best to ensure this historic and extremely critical conference succeeds. It appears to us pretty obvious that the effectiveness of the Post-2015 Agenda depends, among other things, on the success of this Addis Ababa Conference. At any rate, it is with that conviction that we will be proceeding to discharge our responsibility as the host country.

***Mr. President,***

This is also the time that we are striving to achieve an ambitious target that we have set for ourselves to reach a globally binding climate agreement by 2015 so as to limit the rise of global

temperature below 2 degree Celsius. Let me once again express my appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for convening the Climate Summit two days ago and I hope the outcome of the Summit will help us to make progress in achieving this fundamental objective by catalyzing action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthening climate resilience.

Needless to say that we in Africa are already facing the brunt of climate change and this is undermining our efforts to meet our development aspirations, including the Millennium Development Goals. For us, mitigation and adaptation remain a priority and we need urgent international support for our efforts in this regard. Although we have contributed virtually nothing to global warming, we are indeed playing a leading role in terms of mitigation by scaling up our efforts in renewable energy and promoting energy efficiency. It is only fair and proper that this be adequately recognized and supported.

The challenge posed by climate change no doubt requires leadership and political commitment at all levels. We have no choice but to rise up to this challenge by taking concrete actions to contribute to reducing emissions and demonstrating the necessary

political will to achieve a globally binding climate agreement by 2015. Failure is not an option.

***Mr. President,***

What we see here at the United Nations is readiness among the States of our world to think big and to focus on what unites us. This is what underlines the complex negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. In sharp contrast to this, what we are witnessing today is a general deterioration of the global security situation. The world is passing through a turbulent period, and this is not an exaggeration. The proliferation and intensity of conflicts has significantly increased.

In our part of the world, progress made over the past decade is being undermined by new cycles of violence and conflicts. The crisis in South Sudan is an example. We in the IGAD region are doing everything we can to resolve the South Sudanese crisis through peaceful means with the support of the United Nations, the African Union and international partners. But progress, let alone a breakthrough, has not been easy to come by. This situation highlights an often encountered challenge. Progress in peacemaking can hardly be contemplated when there is lack of sufficient

commitment to a peaceful resolution of a crisis by the parties to the conflict. But IGAD is determined to exert every possible effort to find a lasting solution to the crisis through an all-inclusive political dialogue.

In contrast to the situation in South Sudan and to much of the situations in many parts of the world, the situation in Somalia has been improving in the course of the year. *Al-Shabaab* may not have been entirely removed as a threat, but it has been greatly degraded. The recent set back it suffered is bound to speed up its demise.

The military gains made on the ground could not be sustained, however, without progress in the political track through the establishment of local administrations and the maintenance of law and order in the newly liberated areas. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of interim local administrations in central and south west Somalia in line with the provisional federal constitution. We need to continue to support Somalia to rebuild itself and make a successful transition by 2016.

Conflict, Mr. President, is not an exclusively African phenomenon. What is becoming obvious lately is how much the global security situation is becoming a source of concern. Never since the end of the cold war has the global security situation been as fragile as it is today. The threat of terrorism has affected ever greater and wider areas of the world. At no time over the last many decades has the need for effective cooperation at the international and regional levels been as pressing and as urgent as it is today. That the issue of "Foreign Fighters" has become a source of major concern to many is very obvious. What is required to make progress in addressing the challenge is readiness to forge cooperation which brooks no double standards. We need to be resolute in our determination to work together.

***Mr. President,***

All this means that at no time in recent memory has multilateralism been as immensely critical for the future of the world, as it is today. The fact that nations are driven by the pursuit of national interest has always been self-evident. But at this juncture in world history and in light of the so many common challenges we all face, we have more realistic option than

commitment to enlightened national interest which can be promoted only within the framework of multilateralism.

This in our view should be the sentiment we all share at the beginning of the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly. We cannot be oblivious to the nexus between our sustainable development agenda and the global situation of peace and security. Delivering on and implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda, which is the theme of this session, requires a peaceful and stable global environment.

It is also in this context that the threat of the spread of the Ebola Virus should be viewed. This is both a humanitarian and security challenge. Containing the spread of this deadly virus should be a matter of utmost priority.

Let me reiterate how it is so critical that we collectively address the myriad of peace and security challenges facing our world in order to facilitate progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in the remaining period and lay a solid foundation for the realization of our transformative agenda in the post-2015 era as well as achieve a meaningful climate agreement.

***Mr. President,***

I wish to conclude by stressing Ethiopia's commitment to multilateralism and to joining hands with all like-minded to contribute to regional and international peace and security and to the successful realization of the major project we have in connection with the Post-2015 Agenda. As a founding member of this Organization and as a member of the League of Nations by whom it was nonetheless abandoned, Ethiopia attaches the most highest priority to cooperation among peoples and countries with a view to addressing common challenges. It is our conviction that might does not make right. There is no substitute for the pursuit of mutual advantages as a signpost for a realistic and just foreign policy. This is our guide for all friendships and partnerships we have, and will continue to develop.

**I thank you**