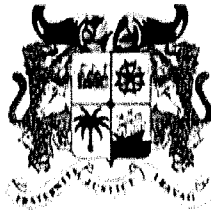


*Mission Permanente
de la République du Bénin
auprès des Nations Unies*



*Permanent Mission of
the Republic of Benin
to the United Nations*

SIXTY EIGHT SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ECOSOC

"Multi stakeholder dialogue"

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E.MR. JEAN -FRANCIS R. ZINSOU
AMBASSADOR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BENIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
CHAIR OF THE GLOBAL COORDINATION BUREAU OF LDCs**

NEW YORK, 15 April 2014

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Monsieur le Président,

Cette Déclaration que j'ai l'honneur de prononcer au nom du Groupe des PMA vient en complément de celle faite par le Distingué Représentant Permanent de la Bolivie au nom du Groupe des 77 et la Chine et à laquelle les PMA s'associent pleinement.

Mr. President,

Fourteen years ago, international consensus on MDGs triggered increased global attention and action to addressing sources of human deprivation. With less than 2 years to target date, the humanity, as a whole, has reached the MDG targets of halving extreme poverty and the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water, among other targets. Also, the world is within a striking distance of achieving the hunger reduction and a number of other targets. There has been considerable progress in women's empowerment, education and even child and maternal mortality rates in the last decade. While we rejoice at this collective progress, we are mindful that we need to do more, do better and do it quickly.

This overall picture conceals the varied level of performance, in particular, the limited rate of progress and daunting challenges LDCs face. Even for those targets where the world as a whole has done well, these countries lag far behind others. The scorecard on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) shows that the vast majority of LDCs will not meet most targets by 2015. Even today about 47 per cent of the people live below the poverty line in LDCs, compared to 23 per cent in developing countries. Similar is the challenge in terms of hunger. Maternal and child mortality rates are at best around half of what they were before in these countries.

It is against this background that discussions on the acceleration and successor of the MDGs have started. The ongoing discussions provide an excellent opportunity to bring into the mainstream, in an integrated manner, our common endeavor to eradicate extreme poverty, protect planet and ultimately raise the dignity of all humanity. We must deal with poverty, inequality, jobless growth, depletion of natural resources, gender discrimination, conflicts, disasters and climate change, and unsustainable production and consumption patterns in a holistic manner. Because this is the reality in which we all live daily and together, our fates are intertwined with one another.

This global campaign cannot be waged effectively and won decisively if it does not pay greater attention to the people in the most vulnerable countries on earth, namely the least developed countries. Also, no amount of efforts by a single stakeholder could ensure successful campaign. Renewed strengthened partnerships are therefore crucial, particular given the ongoing changes in global landscape, increasing the vulnerabilities of the LDCs.

Development is first and foremost the responsibility of the nations themselves. Therefore, national leadership and ownership will be crucial. However, in an integrated and globalised world of today, equally important is the international support and cooperation for the LDCs.

The means of implementation and the monitoring and accountability mechanisms to be deployed should also match the breadth and depth of the development agenda beyond 2015. This is even more relevant for LDCs, where the incidence of poverty and deprivation is the highest and capacity to deal with multidimensional challenges of sustainable development is limited.

The means of implementation should cover development finance, market access for their products and access to technology and technical assistance, but also innovative business models with a stronger engagement with the global financial market. Obstacles to access to that market for LDCs should be lifted.

Although, in the long run, domestic resources should constitute the most important part of development financing, ODA constitutes, in the short and medium-term, a critical element to the development finance in LDCs. In most LDCs, ODA accounts for at least 70 per cent of external flows. ODA volumes are also sizeable when set against domestically mobilized resources. The ratio of ODA as a share of government tax revenues stands over 40 per cent.

These two figures suggest that the ability of LDCs to deliver on the development agenda beyond 2015 will largely depend on the level of ODA flows channeled to this group of countries and its ability to leverage additional resources. It is worth noting that there has been a measurable progress in domestic resource mobilization in LDCs. Gross domestic savings was only around 18 per cent of GDP in 2000, but today it is around 19 to 20 per cent of GDP. There is a still long way to go to reach around 25-30 per cent, which other successful developing countries has sustained over an extended period of time.

The volume of ODA disbursed must therefore be based on needs, specifically the level of capacity constraints, incidence of poverty, domestic resource base and vulnerability. While delivery on commitment of 0.7 per cent of GNI is critical, allocating 50 per cent of total ODA to LDCs will be an important step towards that direction. Furthermore, financial support for adaptation and mitigation to climate change and other natural hazards needs to be provided to them on a priority basis, as climate change compounds the challenges the most vulnerable countries, including LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs, are confronted with. The climate change is a major development issue for them.

Besides quantity, continued improvement in the quality of ODA will also matter. Consistent with the Busan spirit, harmonization, alignment, national leadership and coherence need to be improved so as deliver greater impact of development assistance.

Given the huge resource requirements for the new agenda, there is a realization of the need to move towards an ODA-plus agenda. This means giving due attention to other means of implementation, namely trade, investment, technology transfer, innovative financing, remittances, South-South cooperation, private sector development and domestic resource mobilization.

Better market access should be extended through timely implementation of DFQF by all trading partners, together with improvement in the rules of origin as well as reduction of non-tariff barriers to trade. The ODA-plus agenda should also encompass trade facilitation and Aid for Trade. While welcoming the Bali package, there is a need for meaningful improvement in market access as well as supportive implementation of the trade facilitation measures in LDCs.

Similarly, an enhanced level of support for Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) for trade related assistance to LDCs will be crucial. Also channeling a larger share of Aid-for-Trade resources to LDCs, so as to assist these countries in removing their production and supply bottlenecks, will help better utilize market access opportunities.

In addition to trade, the development agenda beyond 2015 should make the case for Aid for Investment with facilitator provisions and arrangements in home and host countries to attract more and better FDI in these countries. Today, only US\$26 billion has gone to LDCs out of about 703 billion going to developing countries. That too is limited to a number of countries and in select extractive industries. An effective mechanism to ensure better transfer of technology, guaranteed access to sustainable resource flows from innovative financing are other important issues for LDCs for effective transformation.

In keeping with the growing capacity and resources of countries from the South, an enhanced level of South-South cooperation in terms of investment, technical cooperation, market access and institutional development will be of great importance and value to LDCs, complementing the North-South cooperation and establishing synergies for maximizing the impact of investments. Institutional and policy reforms to promote private sector engagement, and the broadening of domestic resource base would play a very important role in broadening the opportunities for LDCs.

The above agenda on partnerships should be translated into broader goals, which are underpinned with specific targets and measurable indicators, some of which LDC-specific. The set of goals, targets and indicators should be at the core of the monitoring and follow-up mechanisms and enable to assess efforts deployed by various stakeholders in living up to their respective commitments.

As such, the set of goals, targets and indicators will contribute to advancing effective mutual accountability. Effective mutual accountability requires effective global inclusive institutions where voices representing all relevant stakeholders are heard. A strengthened ECOSOC constitutes an obvious candidate in this regard. We should not lose sight of the High Level Political Forum in this

debate we should integrate it into our thinking so that it can take its right place in our efforts to streamline the global architecture in a way to give room to equity and sustainability.

I thank you for your attention.