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**INTERVENTION BY  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE DR. MOTSOAHAE THOMAS  
THABANE, PRIME MINISTER OF  
THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO  
DELIVERED AT  
THE UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS  
(FOLLOW UP EFFORTS MADE TO ACHIEVE THE  
MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS)  
25 SEPTEMBER, 2013**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Co- Chairs,**

1. At the outset, allow me to congratulate the President of the General Assembly for convening this important event.
2. We meet today to take stock of progress made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and what steps or approaches can be taken by national, regional and international development agencies, including UN agencies, to accelerate their achievement by the 2015 deadline.

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**Co- Chairs,**

3. It is encouraging to note that some remarkable progress has been made on some of the goals. Today, fewer children are out of school, significant strides have been made in the areas of maternal health, reducing child mortality and others. However, the gains made are at risk due to a number of factors. The ever increasing rate of unemployment due to the constricting job markets, climate change, and the fragile world economy are some of the challenges that we have to overcome, if we were to sustain our achievements, let alone make advancement on other goals.
4. It is of utmost importance to focus on the MDGs that are most off-track, particularly in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), which face the stiffest development challenges. In this regard, I wish to point out, Mr. Chairman, that as a Least Developed Country, our performance on the MDGs in Lesotho is fraught with many socio-economic challenges. The scourge of HIV and AIDS continues to ravage and undermine our efforts in achieving all the MDGs. Lesotho has increasing poverty levels due to, inter alia; increasing numbers of HIV and AIDS orphans, rising numbers of maternal deaths, land degradation and food insecurity. Unemployment rate has been persistently hovering over 25% with the youth in the majority.

5. Looking beyond 2015, Lesotho has taken steps to emancipate herself from the chains of poverty. The Government is working on national development agenda that focuses among others on; food security, development of productive capacity and increasing access to basic services. We shall redouble our efforts in reducing poverty, HIV and AIDS, child mortality and maternal mortality.
6. Achievement of the MDGS shall never be a reality unless a new vision and a responsive global development framework are put in place. We cannot continue with the business as usual trajectory. A new rationale for development needs to be conceived, articulated and implemented. We must recognize the importance of international cooperation in support of national efforts geared towards achieving the MDGs
7. The nature and scope of international and regional cooperation should be interpreted in a broad sense, to include strengthening the productive capacity of small economies, sharing of best experiences, as well as access to scientific and technical knowledge; needless to mention the need for the increase of the Official Development Assistance (ODA). In the like manner, the importance of completing the Doha Round of trade negotiations cannot be over-emphasised.

**Co-Chairs,**

8. Let me conclude by pointing out that fulfilling our promises and targets is an imperative of our time. We need to redouble our efforts to make even greater progress in achieving the MDGs if we were to meet the needs of the world poorest people. Our success in achieving the MDGs will build a very firm foundation for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**I THANK YOU**