



MALAWI

STATEMENT

BY

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AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY DURING THE GENERAL
DEBATE OF THE HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT OF ECOSOC

ON THE THEME

*“PROMOTING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO RURAL
DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FOR POVERTY
ERADICATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, TAKING
INTO ACCOUNT CURRENT CHALLENGES”*

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(Check against delivery)

Mr. President,

From the outset let me congratulate you on the excellent manner in which you are steering the proceedings of this session. My delegation fully supports the statement delivered by Antigua and Barbuda and on behalf of the G77 and China, and the Africa Group, respectively, on this crucial theme of the *“promotion of an integrated approach to rural development in achieving poverty eradication and sustainable development in developing countries”*.

Let me also thank the Secretary General for his comprehensive reports that are before the Council during this session. And let me make a few remarks on the efforts my government is making in the achievement of sustainable development.

Mr. President,

Malawi is a least developed country with an agricultural based economy. It has a population of about 10.8 million people, 85% of whom lives in rural areas. 65% of the population is under the national weighted average poverty line, and the majority of them are women. These population demographics have exacerbated poverty. The reduction of poverty in the rural areas is, therefore, of paramount importance to the Malawi Government. To overcome this problem, and in order to promote sustainable socioeconomic development in rural areas, the government has developed an Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy aimed at resuscitating rural economies and advancing economic growth in rural areas.

The Government recognizes that in addition to the private sector, the rural areas are potential engines of economic growth upon the implementation of Malawi's national development agenda.

It is for this reason that the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, a nationally-owned development strategy, identifies six interrelated and inseparable priority areas necessary for scaling up the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. These are:

1. Agriculture and food Security
2. Irrigation and Water Development
3. Integrated Rural Development
4. Transport Infrastructure Development
5. Energy Generation and Supply
6. Management of HIV and AIDS and Nutrition Disorders

These six priority areas were carefully and thoughtfully selected to ensure that rural areas, in particular, are given adequate attention in our efforts to get our people, the majority of which live in the rural areas, out of extreme poverty within the shortest time possible. This means achieving the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs

Mr. President,

Malawi appreciates the support it has received from the development partners including the United Nations to achieve her development aspirations as articulated in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy.

However, more needs to be done. In particular, we appeal for additional and adequate resources from our development partners to turn our natural resource wealth into sustainable economic growth that will enable us achieve our national development aspirations particularly with regard to the six priority areas outlined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy. On our part, we have with limited resources succeeded in ensuring food security at both household and national levels through a targeted agricultural subsidy programme during the last three years. We have also embarked on a programme to diversify agricultural production and encourage investment in the agricultural sector in order to sustain economic growth in our country. Malawi's experience demonstrates that investing in small-holder agriculture is key towards sustained economic growth in Least Developed Countries.

Mr. President,

While development aid from our development partners is no doubt very important and, in fact, appreciated by Malawi, access of the least developing countries to the international markets on equitable terms is essential for sustainable development and poverty reduction in those countries. Malawi wishes to take this opportunity as it has done before to call for the removal of agricultural subsidies in the developed countries in order to make agricultural products from developing countries competitive on the world market.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to call upon the donor countries to improve access of both developing countries and the least developed countries, like Malawi, to international markets and development finance which is essential for sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Thank you for your attention.