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Statement by

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At

**The General Debate
2008 ECOSOC Substantive Session**

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Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

On behalf of the Delegation of Mozambique, allow me to begin by expressing our deep appreciation to you, Mr. President, and through you, to all other members of the Bureau, for your leadership in conducting the work of ECOSOC since your election in January 2008.

By operationalizing the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), thus implementing fully, together with the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) launched last year in Geneva, all new functions of ECOSOC mandated by the 2005 World Summit, have been put in place. Therefore, the 2008 ECOSOC substantive session constitutes an opportunity to enhance the relevance and to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations' role in promoting policy dialogue and providing guidance for the international community to address the most pressing global challenges of today's world.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G77 and China, as well as by Bangladesh, on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Mozambique shares, in particular, the concerns of the Group of G77 and China over the failure to implement mitigating measures to reverse the negative impact of climate change, as well as the risks of the combined global crisis on finance, fuel and food that could hamper the gains achieved so far and further delaying progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Therefore, we hope the present Council's session focus on "implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regards to sustainable development" and "promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development" will contribute to identify the implementation gaps and obstacles to translate commitments into concrete measures and policy options that could speed up impetus towards achieving the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs.

Poverty eradication is the greatest challenge facing many developing countries today, particularly in Africa, and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. While national governments continue to shoulder the primary responsibility for fighting poverty in their respective countries, concerted efforts are required at the regional and global levels to enable the world achieve its poverty-related targets.

As indicated in the Report of the Secretary-General, the situation in Africa is a mix of some success stories in progress towards the MDGs and country-variations with no records of significant improvement in poverty reduction, social development and quality of life. Millions of people still live in slum-life conditions, primary enrolment rates remain the lowest in the world, with gender disparity and an HIV prevalence rate that is the highest.

Addressing and reversing these challenges and making practical steps require a concerted and sustained global effort. For this to happen, the need to reiterate all commitments on sustainable development and share the responsibilities between developed and developing countries remains as crucial as ever.

While developing countries are doing their part by developing national development and poverty reduction strategies, and guaranteeing transparent and efficient use of assistance made available, developed countries should undertake their share of responsibilities by fulfilling their commitments, particularly in terms of disbursement of the internationally agreed development assistance and in creating an enabling international environment for sustainable development.

Mr. President,

The world is witnessing an unprecedented crisis with a tremendous impact on overall global economy. The oil price crisis, the food shortages and the combined effects of both, represent a serious threat to our collective security, especially for the weaker economies. Moreover, the prospects of a significant decline in the growth of the world economy this year and likely in 2007 pose an additional challenge to all of us. This trend, if not properly addressed, will further exacerbate the already negative picture of the world economy, leaving the future of most of us with much uncertainty, as it will undermine our efforts to maintain a sustainable economic growth and the eradication of poverty.

The impact of these contingencies is more visible and painful in the Least Developed Countries, such as Mozambique, where the shortage of financial resources makes it impossible to sustain the unrelenting increases in the international commodity prices.

We therefore look forward to the United Nations and ECOSOC in particular, to lead the international community as a whole to bear its responsibility and take appropriate measures to alleviate the consequences posed by this threat, particularly in non-oil producing countries.

Mr. President,

Despite these challenges, in Mozambique, the overall economic performance was reasonably good in 2007 with continued growth reaching about 7% of the real GDP. The growth rates were driven by good performance in transport and communications and construction sectors. Poor performance in traditional sectors of the economy, such as agriculture, may have negative implications on the welfare of the population, despite the efforts to mitigate the impacts of drought and floods.

As stated in Secretary-General's Report, Mozambique is part of sub-Saharan Africa, where agricultural sector still remains the main employer. Food production continues at the subsistence level. Therefore, investment in agriculture and rural infrastructure should be significantly scaled up to enhance agricultural production and improve the livelihood of rural poor people.

In this regard, there is need to take a broader view of the food and agriculture system, which encompasses an integrated approach to investing in improving productivity and efficiency at all stages of the commodity value chains, from research and development to input markets, farm level production, produce processing, storage, handling, transport and distribution to the final consumer.

Mr. President,

We live in an ever unbalanced world in which developing countries find themselves in a vicious cycle of dependency and vulnerability that undermine the efforts to address challenges such as political instability,

economic growth, poverty eradication, HIV/AIDS, malaria and other pandemic diseases, as well as humanitarian disasters and environmental degradation. These challenges require concerted action and common strategies based on global partnerships that can decrease the growing disparities between the rich and the poor and, ultimately, make globalization work for the benefit of all.

Today, the broad goals of sustainable development call for a wide range of partnership among all relevant stakeholders for international cooperation for development, so as to finally put our countries on the path to sustained growth and improved living conditions for our peoples. This can only be achieved through concerted and coordinated efforts that draw from the interest and strengths of all countries.

Therefore, the AMR and DCF provide us with a unique opportunity to make new inroads, learning from each other's experience to address nowadays and future challenges of our common house, the Earth Planet.

I thank you.