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MALAWI

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY H.E. STEVE D. MATENJE, SC
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ON THE AGENDA ITEM 55: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

SECOND COMMITTEE

UNITED NATIONS

2ND NOVEMBER, 2009

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the various reports that are before this Committee under this agenda item 55. My delegation is hopeful that the recommendations and conclusions outlined in those reports will enhance deliberations on this important agenda item.

At the outset, I wish to associate my delegation with the statements by Sudan, Zambia, Nepal and Lesotho, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, African Group, the Group of Least Developed Countries and the Southern African Development Community, respectively. However, allow me to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

Malawi considers sustainable development to be central to the achievement of its national development agenda as outlined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy which is linked to the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Over the years, Malawi has made commendable efforts to achieve the MDGs but it is still faced with many development challenges which threaten to reverse the gains made so far.

Wide-spread poverty, rapid population growth and urbanization, pandemics such as HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, and serious environmental threats, including deforestation and climate change,

continue to undermine our efforts to achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions, in particular in the area of food production and poverty eradication.

Eradicating poverty is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and has to be addressed in an integrated and comprehensive manner, taking fully into account the legitimate priority needs of the least developed countries such as my own country, Malawi. This includes the urgent need to combat climate change.

Mr. Chairman,

With a rural-based and rain-fed agriculture dependent economy, Malawi has no time to waste. The longer the delay in taking action to combat climate change, the more sustainable development would become elusive, especially to its most vulnerable people particularly women, children, elderly people and persons with disabilities in rural areas where they live and work and suffer from environmental degradation.

In this regard, since 2004, Malawi has been strongly committed to implementing an effective response to the threats and challenges it faces. In response to the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and other international instruments on sustainable development, the Malawi Government has since 2004 continued to put in place effective policies, strategies and programmes on mitigation and adaptation to climate change with a view to assisting smallholder farmers to adopt sustainable agricultural practices for increasing agricultural productivity, protecting the environment and achieving economic growth they need to free themselves from abject poverty.

The Malawi Government has made it a point to mainstream gender in all the policies, strategies and programmes in recognition of the important role of women in natural resource management and in the choice of appropriate technologies for promoting sustainable development.

Furthermore, as the world is moving towards low carbon economies, the Malawi Government is leaving no stone unturned in the search for affordable alternative and renewable sources of energy. For example, it is encouraging women, especially in the rural areas, to use fuel-saving locally-made technologies in order to reduce their dependence on fuel wood as part of the fight against deforestation.

Mr. Chairman,

Since by its nature, climate change is a cross-border developmental issue, it should be addressed in the broader context of the international sustainable development agenda and with utmost urgency. Indeed, long-term threats to the global environment are a common concern of all countries, but we need to address them on the basis of the Rio principle of "common but differentiated responsibility". Nothing can be fairer and more equitable than that principle.

Mr. Chairman,

For these reasons, Malawi looks forward to a successful outcome of the United Nations Conference on Climate Change to be held in Copenhagen in December this year. We believe that a renewed global and binding consensus is required to tackle the challenges that lie ahead, including reducing greenhouse emissions in accordance with the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Malawi also welcomes the decision to hold the 4th United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in 2011 to take stock of the implementation by the international community of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

In the meantime, we call upon our cooperating partners to fulfill all their ODA-related commitments and make available to the least developed countries adequate and predictable financial resources, technical expertise and environmentally-sound technologies for strengthening sustainable development.

In conclusion, while Malawi's greenhouse gas emissions are too insignificant to cause any worry, we stand ready to commit our efforts to the development and implementation of appropriate measures at a national level in partnership with our development partners as part of our contribution to global efforts to preserve our fragile planet for future generations from whom we have borrowed it.

I thank you for your attention.