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STATEMENT

BY

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AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE**

**72ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

SECOND COMMITTEE

**AGENDA ITEM 19 (a-j):
“SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”**

**NEW YORK
9 October 2017**

Mr. Chair,

1. At the onset, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Second Committee of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I equally wish to seize this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor for his able stewardship and a job well done in executing his mandates. You and your current team can count on the full cooperation of my delegation during your stewardship of the work of the Second Committee.
2. Namibia associates itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of Ecuador on behalf of G77 and China, and Egypt on behalf of the African States respectively.

Mr. Chair,

3. As we focus on implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so that no one is left behind, including other international commitments which requires a revitalised global partnerships, promising that we will leave no-one behind in doing so. According to the Secretary-General's Report E/2017/66 entitled: "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)", particularly on progress of goal 13 in 2017, indicates that many countries have begun implementing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies.
4. However, the current effects of global warming continue to threaten environment across the world. We the developing countries face many challenges such as increased frequent destructive drought and floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes caused by climate change.

~~5. I call for the highest political commitment to the Paris Agreement so that~~
action to address climate change fully supports the achievement of the SDGs for the benefit of all, particularly for developing countries, Africa, small and vulnerable states. I also urge Parties to the Paris Agreement that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible.

Mr. Chair,

6. Desertification, Land degradation, Drought (DLDD) has many causes, and results in reduced productive potential of the land. Its consequence increase poverty, desertification, famine, drought, and migration, to mention just a few. Africa is the most affected continent on DLDD matters, which if not managed have potential impact on the Economic and Social developmental gains. Linkages between DLDD in line with African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development must be addressed, prioritized and implemented.
7. The sixth pillar in the AU Agenda 2063 entitled: "Environment sustainability natural resources management and disaster risk management" is aimed at building upon the achievements and draw lessons from various efforts such as Lagos Plan of Action and the Abuja Treaty and further provides the coordination platform for rationalization and integration of all on-going continental development programmes.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Namibia recently came out of its worse drought and floods in 4 years. This experience has impacted on us economically, but also negatively affected some of our development achievements. This is amongst the reasons why addressing drought mitigation is a matter of priority that was incorporated in the Namib Declaration which was adopted as Decision 36 of COP 11 in 2013, and Namibia has taken the implementation of the Namib Declaration very seriously.

9. Let me take this opportunity to inform you that Namibia in partnership with the African Union, and the UNCCD hosted the first ever African Drought Conference last year August. This event resulted in two major outputs, namely the adoption of the Strategic Framework for Drought Risk Management and Enhancing Resilience in Africa, as well as the Windhoek Declaration for Enhancing Resilience to Drought.

10. I restate that to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including Goal 15 and target 15.3, which serves as an accelerator to ending poverty and hunger, tackling inequality, empowering women and stimulating economic growth, we need to continue promoting sustainable land management, and the restoration of degraded land in order to combat desertification, land degradation. We also need to develop a binding Protocol on drought management under the auspices of the UNCCD to decisively tackle the issue of drought which underpins much of our humanitarian crises on the continent, and most importantly to achieve our SDGs. I would like to call for a Decision of the Parties to the Convention to set this process in motion.

~~1.1 In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the commitment of the Government~~
of China for the successfully hosting of the 13th meeting of the Parties to the UNCCD (COP13) in Ordos, China last month. My delegation also welcomes the Ordos Declaration, the new UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework and the Land Degradation Neutrality Fund adopted at COP13. We look forward to hosting of the COP23 by the Government of Fiji later this year.

I thank you.