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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 25 :
“AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT, FOOD
SECURITY AND NUTRITION”

NEW YORK
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Mr. Chairperson,

1. Thank you for giving me the floor to address the topic of "Agriculture Development, Food Security and Nutrition". Namibia aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of Ecuador on behalf of the G77 and China.
2. My delegation takes note of the Report of the Secretary-General entitled: "Agriculture development, food security and nutrition" (A/72/303).

Mr. Chairperson,

3. My delegation is deeply concerned by warnings in the Secretary-General's report that globally 793 million people still suffer from hunger, and two (2) billion people experience undernourishment.
4. Worldwide hunger and malnutrition are driven by mounting pressures such as recurrent droughts and floods, conflict, and displacement from competition over natural resources, including water.
5. Sustainable Development Goal Two lays out clear benchmarks around food security that include a focus on the very young, market access for small scale farmers, access to land and facilitating technology.

Mr Chairperson,

6. Namibia faced a severe drought over three consecutive years from 2012 to 2015. In the process of addressing that crisis, all stakeholders were consulted resulting in what was termed a "Zero Hunger Strategic Review" which sought to develop a strategy for food security in the country. The Review culminated in a Zero Hunger Road Map which defines strategic actions around the vision of *a Namibia without Hunger* over the next five years.
7. The Road Map also reflects the principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the African Union 2063 Agenda and is, of course, aligned to our own National Development Plan.
8. Indeed, our budget allocations to overcome food and nutrition insecurity are clearly laid out in our current National Development Plan and the roll-out plan named the Harambee Prosperity Plan. In addition, Government has established the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management and a Food Bank under the supervision of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr. Chairperson,

9. In ensuring the health of mothers and infants the Namibian Ministry of Health and Social Services has a strong programme to promote exclusive breastfeeding, and young child nutrition needs.
10. Apart from the very young, the Namibian Government ensures that children, especially those from vulnerable homes, receive an education and are also assured of good nutrition at school through the School Feeding Programme.
11. With regard to the production and distribution of food, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry and several regional councils have established Fresh Produce Business Hubs that provide a marketing and trading platform for small-scale horticultural producers and traders. The fresh produce business hubs aim to handle large volumes of fresh produce and serve as a critical link between the retail industry and producers.
12. Apart from these programmes mentioned above, as part of a drought relief effort across Namibia during the period of 2015-2017, the Directorate of Disaster Risk Management distributed assistance to affected households, which they continue to do currently.

Mr. Chairperson,

13. In an effort to address the critical shortage of technical skilled labour force in the agricultural sector, the University of Namibia, Namibia's University of Science and Technology and the Namibia Training Authority provide accredited programmes in agriculture. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry has also intensified agricultural extension services to smallholder farmers by providing information on how to organize themselves into cooperatives, access credit and acquire agricultural implements such as tractors, including through rental and sharing schemes, to support the modernization of agriculture production.
14. The global economic situation together with the drought mentioned earlier, negatively impacted Namibian efforts to address food insecurity. In Namibia this is exacerbated by poor dietary diversity, insufficient consumption of micronutrients, inadequate care practices and limited access to clean water and sanitation. Programmes which include training and technical know-how, including for food fortification are being sought.
15. Unequal access to land, increased poverty and a skewed agricultural sector is a result of pre-colonial apartheid. This situation continues, despite efforts by the Ministry of Land Reform and Resettlement to acquire land for distribution through a willing-buyer, willing-seller scheme. The Ministry plans to convene a Second National Land Conference in 2018 to address this colonial legacy.

Mr. Chairperson,

16. In closing, the Namibian Government is in complete agreement with the message for SDG 2 and with the SG's Report on this subject. As stated in the Namibian Zero Hunger Road Map, there should be zero deaths in Namibia due to a lack of food. In line with the SG's Report, therefore, Namibia aims to establish strong and accountable institutions and policies, and calls on our partners to work together with us to ensure that this becomes a firm reality.

I thank you.