



PERMANENT MISSION OF NIGERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

HIGH LEVEL REVIEW MEETING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE MAURITIUS STRATEGY FOR THE FURTHER
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND
DEVELOPING STATES

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 24, 2010.

Co-Chairs,

Nigeria wishes to commend the United Nations General Assembly for creating this special forum to deliberate on the sustainable development of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Nigeria wishes to identify with other member states on the issues and challenges facing the SIDS. Since the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992, considerable efforts have been made to bring into global focus the various challenges facing the SIDS. These countries share many of the characteristics of other developing countries but they face enormous challenges which are quite unique. These challenges include poor economic development, natural disasters, and in recent times the increasing threat of climate change.

Though Nigeria is not a small island developing State, we however have some special features and characteristics similar to those of SIDS. The entire southern part of Nigeria is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean, with a vast coastline, stretching from our border with Benin Republic in the South-West to our border with Cameroun in the South-East. Currently, over 90% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings come from exploration and exploitation of crude oil in this region. It is also the region with predominantly high level of economic activities. The rainforest and mangrove ecosystems of the region are endowed with rich culture and biodiversity. The distinct nature of this region has also prompted the government to set up the Niger Delta Commission for the sustainable development of the area. Thus, our unique ecological situation and geographical location make it even more compelling to identify with the SIDS and the challenges they face.

Nigeria is developing national programmes to address the increasing threat of climate change. These programmes contain key climate change adaptation measures. We are collaborating with some key stakeholders at national and international levels to develop Climate Change National Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (NASPA), which will address issues of infrastructure, natural resources, agriculture, health and sanitation, and other cross-sectoral matters.

Co-chairs,

The 1994 Barbados Programme of Action highlighted the special challenges and constraints that are responsible for the major setbacks in the socio-economic development of these states. The 2005 Mauritius Strategy sets forth actions and strategies in 19 priority areas, including the original themes of the Barbados Programme of Action.

The Secretary General's Report on the Five-Year Review of the Mauritius Strategy clearly indicate that the SIDS have continued to be highly vulnerable to external shocks and many of the gains recorded in economic development appear to have been threatened by the adverse impacts of climate change and natural disasters, as well as the recent global food, fuel and financial crises. Major constraints identified in the implementation of the strategy include declining levels of ODA in small states, lack of technical expertise, as well as financial and institutional challenges.

Co-Chair,

The issues presented for consideration in the Secretary General's Report are very necessary for our deliberation. There is need to strengthen support for national development planning within the governments of SIDS, particularly on building resilience to external shocks. There is need to support partnership initiatives at all levels. There is need to strengthen access to and provision of financial resources. There is need for adequate disaster risk reduction measures that can lead to economic savings and improve the sustainable livelihood of the local communities.

Finally, there is need to support developing countries as a whole by strengthening their capability in tackling the climate change challenges, particularly in the areas of institutional strengthening and funding. This will ensure among others, the development of an efficient and effective, robust information and data management system and networking for information exchange, sharing knowledge and experience at all levels.

Thank you.