



**STATEMENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU**

**BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
GUINEA-BISSAU TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT
THE UNITED NATIONS SUMMIT
FOR THE ADOPTION OF THE POST-2015
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

New York, September 26th 2015

Distinguish Co-Chair,

Mr. Secretary General of the United Nations,

Excellences,

Allow me on behalf of the President of Republic of Guinea-Bissau, H.E. Mr. José Mário Vaz, who unfortunately is not able to be present as we adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, because of personal engagement on ensuring that a new stable government is in place the fastest possible, to convey our appreciation to the Secretary General for organizing this Summit and also to congratulate you, Mr. Co-Chairs, President of Uganda Mr. Yoweri Museveni and Prime Minister of Denmark, Mr. Lars Lokke Rasmussen for conducting the work of this Summit.

Mr. Co-Chair,

After 70 years of the foundation of the United Nations, the Anniversary celebration couldn't be better than with this event, where we are all realizing that it is time to see the development issues with different eyes by taking everybody on board.

Poverty and hunger cannot be tolerated in a world where so many great technological achievements have been made. It could not be more timely to recognize that the achievement of the three pillars of sustainable development (Economic, Social and Environmental) is possible if we do it together by leaving no one behind, taking into account all the principles, such as the Principles of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Fifteen years ago the world leaders met in this same Hall and agreed on the MDG's to be achieved by 2015, and some countries specially the Least Developed Countries like my own, Guinea-Bissau, were not able to accomplish these goals for multitudes of reasons. Their fragilities which make them more prone to any internal and external shocks and their structural challenges made it more difficult to eradicate the extreme poverty and achieve these internationally agreed development goals, including the MDG's.

This time, we believe that we will commit to the SDGs with different perspectives and responsibilities to enable our countries a better chance for the achievement of all the 17 Goals that was built on the foundation of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, "The Future We Want." And we should essentially make them a continuity of the unaccomplished MDGs, with more precise implementation strategies.

The developed countries, our partners should do their part and honor the commitments on which concern to ODA and other funds for development such as the implementation of the Outcome of Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development as well as all other major International Conferences on Economic, Social and Environmental fields.

Mr. Co-Chair,

It is time for all of us to make strong effort to stand up, with the help of those more capable, and do more for our population by first recognizing of where we are in our development and put together concrete strategies for our countries to achieve these new goals.

In this perspective, Guinea-Bissau has already realize how far behind it stands and the government, through its Development Strategy Plan, "Terra Ranka" for 2015 - 2025, aims to overturn the three decades of poverty and instability into positive transformation within 10 years, in a bid to achieve political stability through inclusive development, and preservation of biodiversity. This ten year vision in which the SDGs are well incorporated is therefore a two-phased agenda for change, focusing on a multitude of areas such as peace and governance, biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources, urban infrastructure development, human development, business environment and a private sector development.

For a country that has been battling instability for so long, we believe that to achieve this development vision, a major reform of the justice, defense and security sectors, as well as the modernization of the State institutions is needed to strengthen our democracy and social cohesion, in order to maintain a sustainable peace, promote inclusive economic growth and lift our people out of poverty.

In this regard, we are calling upon our development partners and friends to stay with Guinea-Bissau and implement the outcome of the Donors Round Table on Guinea-Bissau held in Brussel last March by honoring the pledges made.

Mr. Co-Chair,

As we all agree that there is a need for more just world, we should also agree that there is a urgent need to narrow the gap between the rich and poor, to bring countries like ours much closer on development. However, the question remains on how it can be achieved without proper assistance and commitment from our partners.

How an African LDC like Guinea-Bissau with population of 1.7 million and poverty rate of 69.3% can do it without proper support and assistance? How can we do it without proper ODA and Foreign Direct Investment inflows? How can we do it without proper infrastructure and the basic services such as energy so that we can fit in today's world of technology? How can we have food security without proper agricultural technology for better production and protect our land from degradation? How can we do it with difficult access to international market for our mostly agricultural products? How can we manage our debts with conditionality of international financial institutions who supposed to help us?

The truth is, we cannot do it alone. Our partners are needed on board with full and honest commitment, as His Holiness Pope Francis said yesterday in this Hall, to make the SDGs a reality and create a just world where peace and sustainable development for all is possible. Peace and development goes hand on hand, they complement each other. And my country, Guinea-Bissau was able to demonstrate this reality that although we need strong support from our partners, with stability and good governance some improvement is possible. After the election of 2014, the government was able to improve the life of the population and bring up the GDP to more than 5% in a period of one year within its economic reform strategies.

The South-South and Triangular Cooperation are also essential for developing countries specially, for the LDCs due to the fact that it is easier for developing countries to understand the many constrains faced by the LDCs. At the same time

we should emphasize that, in no way should it be taken as a substitute to North-South Cooperation which is pivotal for the sustainable development of our countries.

It is important however to notice that each country is responsible for its own development and has the right to set its development strategy in accordance with its national priorities and level of development. To this end, coordination with national authorities and amongst donors is crucial to ensure better implementation and a Global Partnership for development.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The role of women is very important in all our societies and countries and they should be respected as equal partners in the development of our countries, especially as we are implementing the new Agenda. We should all commit to inclusive societies where women should be empowered with same rights as men.

Women should be included and accepted in all level of decision making process in our countries, in the parliaments, politics and other government business. Only with empowerment of women, starting from education of girls, a proper health care facilities and a reduction of childbearing deaths, our societies can achieve a sustainable development.

As most of our countries have a young population, the education and capacitation of youth from both genders is fundamental. Our countries need a strong support of the international community on education and capacity building for our young people, thus helping to reduce unemployment.

With more knowledge the youth concentrate on helping the development of their countries which in terms can reduce young people on the streets, reduce criminalities and youth violence. The future of a youth is education and the future of a nation is the youth.

Mr. Co-Chair,

For Guinea-Bissau, an LDC and SIDS, the recognized vulnerability of Small Islands Developing States is to be taken fully into account on this new agenda and a strong

commitment on the implementation of the "SAMOA Pathway" should be the right way to start.

As we aim for a just socio-economic world, we should promote a safe planet for the future generation of mankind, by finding solutions to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change. In many countries such as mine, sea level rise and coastal erosion is already a reality. For a Small Island State, this reality is a matter of survival which threatens the own existence of many islands and their people.

The Ocean acidification and overfishing are destroying our oceans and the future of our planet. The Islanders feel the first impact, but at the end we will all pay the high price with the destruction of the life support of our planet. We should ambitiously cut the greenhouse gas emission and promote adequate funding for adaptation, resilience and mitigation of Climate Change. We are looking forward to more commitments from our partners on the upcoming COP 21 of UNFCCC to be held in Paris late this year where nations should take full responsibility for a cleaner and safer planet for the present and future generation.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Many commitments have been made in this Hall and we all concluded by recognizing that there is still much to be done. As we accept the new challenges of the 2030 Agenda, let us try harder this time so that we do not fail the very poor of this world, again. Let us bring the hope to our children's generation with a real sustainable development for all.

I thank you