



**Bangladesh
(on behalf of LDCs)**

**Statement by Her Excellency Ismat Jahan,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bangladesh
at the High-level Segment of CSD-17
General Assembly Hall
10:00 am-1:00pm, 13 May 2009, New York**

Madam Chairperson,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of LDCs. The Group aligns itself with the statement of Sudan, made on behalf of G-77 and China.

2. The CSD-17 is taking place in the midst of a severe global recession. All projections are resounding pessimistic scenario. This has emerged on the heels of mutually devastating crises such as food and energy crisis and persistent threats posed by global climate change. The developing countries particularly the LDCs are being affected disproportionately. LDC exports are falling, outflow of migration is decreasing, influx of returnees is increasing, private capital flows are reversing to negative, ODA is feared to decelerate, debt burden and debt servicing obligations are also rising significantly. Their fiscal space is narrow, and in many instances, eroding. The social and human dimension of the impacts will be unimaginable high and long-lasting. The current thematic clusters of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa are therefore crucial for the LDCs.

3. Agricultural sector would not be immune from the effects of the unfolding global financial crisis. This will affect access to credit and other capital inputs for farmers and rural households. The crisis also has a strong food security dimension, especially because more retrenchments, unemployment and poverty will bring greater pressure to bear on the affordability of food for a larger number of people. It is therefore, imperative that any recovery and stimulus package takes into account the specific conditions and problems of rural areas where agriculture is the main economic activity. We would like to emphasize the need for continued maintaining and upgrading rural infrastructure, both physical and institutional, such as roads, marketing chains, storage facilities, soil conservation and development of water sources to enhance the resilience of agricultural sector.

4. The agriculture sector of LDCs is primarily rain-fed and thus, its productivity is highly vulnerable to climate change. Climate change further intensifies the frequency and severity of droughts, floods and other extreme weather events. Rainfall becomes more variable. IPCC report has projected that heavy precipitation will trigger soil erosion, land degradation and water logging. The Sea-level rise will lead to increased salinization of irrigation water. Land and land-use systems will be severely affected. It will diminish productivity, biodiversity and other

ecosystem services. The food security and livelihood security in LDCs, particular those in Sub-Saharan Africa, will be seriously affected. These factors further magnify the challenges the LDCs face in attaining the MDGs and other IADGs. An ambitious emission cuts along with adequate financing for adaptation is needed to address these challenges. We all look forward to Copenhagen for such an outcome.

5. Immediate action is needed to develop efficient agricultural production across the developing world. Investment in agriculture and rural development should be significantly scaled up. We are concerned that external assistance to agriculture, in real terms, has been on the decline since 1980s. Agriculture accounted for 16 per cent of bilateral assistance in 1980 which is reduced to 3 percent in 2006. Agricultural exports from developing countries continue to face high tariff and non-tariff restrictions. These must be reversed.

6. A number of LDCs, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa are suffering from droughts, desertification and land degradation. Adverse climatic conditions also result in drought induced agriculture failure, diminished food security, heightened hunger and increased mortality. The interface between climate change, drought and desertification need to be addressed to assist affected rural communities in raising their ability to adapt to climate change. National governments need to develop effective drought early warning systems that integrate precipitation and other climatic parameters. Regional cooperation is critically important in this regard. Development of high-yielding drought- and pest-tolerant crops is also crucial.

7. In the current global context, increased global partnership is needed more than ever before to address the challenges relating to current cluster of CSD. In this regard, we would underscore the followings:

First: developed countries must fulfill the ODA commitment of 0.7% to developing countries and 0.2% of GNI to LDCs by 2010; **second:** all LDC external debts must be cancelled forthwith without discrimination or conditionalities; **third:** developed countries and developing ones which are in a position to do so must provide duty-free, and quota free market access to all products from all LDCs, unilaterally and without discriminations, even before the conclusion of the Doha Round; **fourth:** current IP regime must provide access to appropriate technologies and technical know-how at an affordable cost; **fifth:** LDCs should be provided with necessary support in building their climate resilient development, disaster preparedness and early warning system **Sixth:** Providing access to finance particularly for rural poor. Microcredit has great potentials in this regard and **finally** mainstreaming gender in agriculture, land use and better environmental management.

I thank you Madam Chairperson.