

Statement delivered by

**Mr. Mohamed A.A. Alahraf, Vice-Chairperson of the Bureau of the Eighteenth Session of the
Commission on Sustainable Development
(CSD-18)**

At the

Sixth Session of Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD-6)

And the

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Development (CSD-18)**

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Mr. Chairman

I thank you for the invitation you extended to me to attend this session. I also wish to thank our brothers in Ethiopia for facilitating our participation. We truly appreciate the efforts made by the under secretary general for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and his working group. Undoubtedly the topics of food security and sustainable development have an essential role to play in the realization of peace and stability, as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the African continent. Achieving progress in this regard is not easy, especially in the light of the emergence of dangerous challenges caused by various crises, such as the food and energy crisis, and the dangers posed by climate change, the deterioration of the environment, and the negative effects of the financial crisis.

Africa was not responsible for those crises, but they impose inevitable difficult conditions. Dealing with such conditions needs a new map and continuous efforts to achieve development in Africa, which is one of the most vulnerable regions to the negative repercussions of those crises, and the least prepared to face their negative consequences. Undoubtedly the African efforts aimed at tackling the issues of food security and sustainable development, enjoy the attention of the international community. The success and seriousness of such efforts will contribute considerably to the response of the international community to the development needs of Africa.

The Sirt declaration on investment in agriculture for economic growth and food security, issued by the thirteenth African summit, constitutes a supporting position for the joint African work directed towards addressing all the problems and challenges which stand in the face of realizing food security and reaching joint African integration.

There are numerous African programmes and mechanisms which can lead to the realization of food security, if they receive the necessary support. Indeed several African countries have achieved high levels of food production. Their successful programmes should be built upon and reinforced.

As for the second topic that the session will deal with, namely the drafting of the regional African declaration to be submitted to the 18th session of the commission on sustainable development, which will review the issues related to transportation, management of chemicals, waste management, minerals, and sustainable consumption and production, I would like to convey to you, in my capacity as vice chairman of the Bureau for the said session, the greetings of the chairman and the members of the Bureau and their appreciation for the efforts exerted by ECA. They look forward to your valuable contribution to the activities of the upcoming session of the commission on sustainable development.

In this respect, we think that highlighting the progress which Africa has achieved in the fields related to the topics presented before the 18th session of the commission should not preclude the fact that we still have to go a long way in order to fulfill the obligations contained in the recommendations of the Agenda 21, the follow up programme for the implementation of that Agenda, and the Johannesburg plan of implementation.

We have to concentrate in particular on the challenges and obstacles which have faced implementation on the national, regional, and international levels, as well as the approaches and priorities which should be taken into account in order to ensure implementation, in the light of the lessons learned from the applications of the programmes and plans in question.

It is important also to clarify the continent's need for adequate financing, technology transfer, capacity building, and the encouragement of devising programmes and plans, and their implementation, in order to qualify local expertise for the fulfillment of their obligations towards implementing the recommendations contained in the Agenda21, as well as those made by the world summit on sustainable development. These issues, however, must be dealt with in a balanced manner, in the context of the three pillars of sustainable development, namely economic growth, social development, and environmental protection.

The presence of an international consensus on the need for more procedures and measures to improve the health and living conditions of peoples and reduce environmental deterioration will contribute to the achievement of important results regarding the topics brought before the 18th session of the commission on sustainable development. It is important in this respect to renew the invitation for the enhancement of international cooperation in these areas, and assessment of the relevant international conventions and programmes, as well as the extent to which they contribute to responding to the needs of developing countries.

I would like to point out that in the context of the tasks entrusted to the Bureau of the 18th session of the commission; the Bureau has already convened its first meeting. It is also in the process of making the necessary organizational procedures for the session and the preparation for activities and events that will contribute to reaching an important final document. Furthermore, as far as the focus put on the follow up of the decisions and recommendations of the commission on sustainable development, we should not simply concentrate on the drafting of such decisions. It is essential to find out what has actually been implemented and reinforcing it, as well as ascertaining the implementation difficulties in order come up with the necessary solutions for them. We are confident that the ECA will give this topic the necessary attention it deserves. We further expect that the commission will shed light on this aspect during the upcoming session, through the documents it will submit in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman