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Focus Area #2: Sustainable Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition

Statement by Mr Waruna Sri Dhanapala, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, New York

1st April 2014

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Mr Co-Chair,

My delegation associated itself with the statement delivered by the Preeminent Representative of Bolivia on behalf of G77 and China.

Let me touch upon a couple of action areas you have proposed, which should be included under a future Goal on advancing agriculture, food security and nutrition. A universal goal of 100% food security by 2030 must be supported with means of implementation, especially considering the countries that are lagging behind.

Sri Lanka endorses the sub area (b) on ending child malnutrition and stunting. This area must be given top priority not only in the social development framework but also as a solid investment in a country's future workforce and intellectual capacity. A target on breast feeding for all children below six months of age by 2030 appears to be practical. This would be a transformational step from the MDGs. We wish to highlight the need for reflecting nutrition requirements of adolescents, youth and women under a similar target.

Action area (c), a target for increasing agriculture productivity is essential in view of considering the ever increasing land degradation and the reduction in farmland sizes. Action area (l) on reducing post-harvest crop losses and food waste too can be considered under agricultural productivity and also under sustainable consumption and production - Focus area 14. Therefore, a comparative incremental target of doubling the farmland productivity per unit by 2030 could be encouraged. Indeed, this has a clear cross linkage to water management and science, technology and innovation. Both rural and urban agriculture practices could be considered under this target. A special attention must be given to family farming and smallholder agriculture entrepreneurs.

Means of implementation could be accommodated in these particular areas. Improving efficiency of water use of agriculture could be treated under a possible target similar to that of the farmland productivity, i. e. to double the food production by 2013, while utilizing the current or further reduced amounts of irrigation water.

Mr Co-chair, Action area (e) - Eliminating toxic chemicals is a valid target for the focus area #2, but should not be confined to agriculture, food security and nutrition. For example, the focus area 9 - industrialization - could also accompany a similar target. A transformative target of reducing chemical fertilizer and other agrochemicals is more appropriate. Many developing countries which are lagging behind in agricultural productivity cannot shift to

such a zero goal, as their immediate social and economic interests take priority over environmental concerns.

We welcome the recognition of the need for full consultation with local communities in the areas of enhancing adherence to internationally recognized guidelines on land tenure governance and fisheries and forests. This is in action area (i). Without such consultation, these crucial areas could not be sustained. Strong national institutions must be established with appropriate and effective multi stakeholder engagements.

Mr. Co-chair,

Under water and sanitation (Focus area 6), my delegation wishes to place high importance particularly on action areas d, e, j and k., while the cross-cutting nature of this focus area is treated carefully. Some of these areas could be further merged under Means of Implementation.

I thank you Mr Co-Chair.