

**Statement made by Lesotho on behalf of the Least Developed Countries at the
Opening of the Fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP15)**

Copenhagen,

07 December 2009

Madam President,
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

The Kingdom of Lesotho has the honour to speak on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group. We associate ourselves with the statements made by Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 & China, Algeria on behalf of the African group and Grenada on behalf of Small Islands Developing States.

I take this opportunity Madam President, to congratulate you upon your election to lead the UNFCCC process during the next 12 months. The 49 Member LDC Group recognizes your personal interest and contribution to UNFCCC process and has full confidence in your ability to steer the negotiations we are about to embark on to a successful conclusion. The Group therefore, wishes to assure you of its full cooperation and support, during the sessions here in Copenhagen and beyond.

Madam President, the LDC Group acknowledges that proceedings here are very important, particularly for posterity. We are privileged to be gathered here, and we have a responsibility to ensure that we do not betray the expectations of the anxious global population. Indeed our actions and decisions in this COP, in all their detail, shall be historic.

The world is watching this conference with keen interest that an agreement with the broadest acceptance is achieved. It is of critical importance that the culture of principles and rules that have guided us from Bali are maintained. It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the consultations and negotiations are

transparent, bottom up and Party driven to be inclusive. The climate change process belongs to us all.

Madam President, at this session, the Group will support continuation of and outcome based on the two track process of the Bali Road Map. We should ensure that expectations on these two tracks are met. We should stay faithful to the Kyoto Protocol and the LDCs maintain that it is time for its review as per Article 3.9 of this protocol.

Madam President, the LDC Group envisages a fair, inclusive, effective and equitable deal in Copenhagen that will benefit the climate and take into account the vulnerability of countries. This deal should be relevant to poverty reduction and sustainable development, and should address the achievement of the MDGs and future developmental goals that will be defined from time to time during this generation and beyond. Gender equity cannot be over emphasized.

For the LDCs, adaptation is the highest priority. The LDCs are expecting a legally binding agreement coming out of the LCA process that includes a substantial outcome on adaptation. The Convention commits developed countries to provide LDCs with financial, technological and capacity building support for adaptation. The LDCs suggest a scaled up finance to address climate change that should be at least 1.5% of the developed countries GDP. It should be additional to the ODA, and the bulk of this finance should be earmarked for adaptation activities by the LDC countries.

Madam President, almost all the LDCs have completed their NAPAs. But it is discouraging to note that only five projects are currently under implementation. More discouraging is that funds available for NAPA program as a whole amount to only about USD 200 million. We take this opportunity to thank those countries that have made contributions to the LDCF but we are hoping that the end of COP15 will result in renewed pledges that would be matched by action to contribute even more into the fund to realize the estimated budget of USD 2

billion needed by the LDCF to address the most immediate needs of the LDC Group.

Madam President, the enhanced action on finance is based on commitment by developed countries to massively scale up sustainable and predictable finance, which will be under the guidance of the COP. The finance regime should provide for easy access by LDCs and support urgent and long-term adaptation programmes that reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to present and future climate change impacts.

The LDCs desire equitable and transparent institutional arrangements that will facilitate access by LDCs to the means of implementation of the Convention in a coherent and enabling manner.

Madam President, mitigation is also an important issue to the LDCs and as such, we need greater efforts to reduce emissions to protect us all from the impacts of climate change. An agreement on technology development, diffusion and transfer must ensure access by LDC Group to affordable, appropriate and adaptable technologies for enhanced action on mitigation and adaptation to address the immediate needs of the LDCS.

Last but not least developed countries should commit to strengthening the institutional capacity as well as human capacity for the implementation of climate change programmes in LDCs. This should include establishment of an International Adaptation Centre and enhancement of Regional Centers of Excellence for climate change programmes. Enhanced meteorological services and early warning systems should be accorded ample attention. The Intellectual Property Rights issues should not be a barrier to access the technological transfer for LDC.

Thank you.