

Statement by Kenya on the Green Economy during the Second Preparatory Meeting of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 Summit) held on March 7, 2011, New York

Mr. Chairman,

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to make this statement. Kenya delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Argentina on behalf of the G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

The overarching objective of the green economy is very attractive but certainly a challenging aspiration. Challenging because member states must answer some difficult questions such as

- Who and what will drive green economy? –Is it economic growth or environmental standards?
- Will changing the production patterns improve competitiveness of developing nations or will it usher new criteria for development assistance and international trade?
- How will it augment diversification since no size fits all?

Kenya has integrated the elements of Green Economy into our national development plans. In this regard, we believe that the green economy is a cross-cutting issue with economy-wide implications and is no substitute but complementary to sustainable development. In addition, we believe that the concept has the potential to transform the current unsustainable development patterns, restore economic resilience as well as mitigate the environmental crisis.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

So what do we need to do differently to achieve the green economy? Kenya believes that there is need for Member States to formulate national environmental legislations and policies compatible with green economy. The transition to green economy comes with huge challenges that requires international cooperation and coordination especially in the

mobilizing international finances and investments. We also believe that Member states, especially developing countries, should be supported in transfers and development of relevant technologies on areas such as renewable energy, construction, agriculture, waste managements etc and also in capacity building. There is need to share information on best practices, raise awareness through public education and participation as well as develop transitional measures that includes what happens in the interim and what remedies are needed. Finally, it is important to promote sustainable consumption patterns.

Mr. Chairman,

As country already suffering from adverse effects and impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, Kenya has chosen to progressively change its development model from the current carbon intensive to low carbon pathway by integrating and implementing various 'greening' strategies on natural capitals such as forests and biodiversity conservation, agriculture (organic farming) and fisheries, minimization and recycling of wastes, development of renewable energy plants and promotion of sustainable production and consumption through National Cleaner Production Centers in the country.

But the implementations of the projects have come with opportunities and challenges. The main challenges remain mobilization of huge financial resources for capacity building and technology transfers and adaptation to transitional measures. This makes transition to green economy a step by step journey, and should not be tied to roadmaps and timelines.

Mr. Chairman,

The overriding goal of developing countries remains economic and social development as well as eradication of poverty. Achieving this goal through green growth development pathway will not be easy for many developing countries without corresponding fulfillment of all international commitments including Agenda 21, the JPOI and the conclusion of the Doha Rounds. Kenya believes that transition should be backed by

requisite financial resources, capacity building and technology transfer and should not be implemented in a manner that causes an abrupt end or severe disruption to the current economic models. Thus it is important that there is renewed political commitment for sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, Kenya reiterates that new and emerging challenges should address the effects of recurrent crises as well as preventing new crises, achieving sustainable development, eradicating poverty and addressing inequalities. It should also be based on the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, including the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and the sovereign right of countries to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental and developmental policies.

I thank you.