

STATEMENT BY THE THE HONOURABLE TONGAI MUZENDA, DEPUTY MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE LABOUR AND SOCIAL SERVICES DURING THE INTERACTIVE HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE.

MODERATOR.

FELLOW PANELISTS.

HONOURABLE MINISTERS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

I thank you for inviting me to participate in this panel discussion on the three thematic issues.

1. The post 2015 development Agenda and Africa's Sustainable Development priorities.
2. Enhancing convergence between the post 2015 Development Agenda and the SDG process.
3. Strategies for ensuring that Africa's priorities are effectively articulated and negotiated at Global level.

It is our view that Sustainable Development Goals are an integral and indeed indispensable component of the post 2015 Development Agenda. With this mind we should take due care in identifying our Sustainable Development priorities.

Our first objective should be to ensure that the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals is successfully concluded or carried forward into the new development agenda. In this regard eradication of poverty in all its forms remains our greatest development challenge. Creation of decent jobs and economic growth are important factors to provide incomes to the poor to lift them out of grinding poverty. We should also undertake to eradicate hunger through improved agricultural production and food security. We also wish to ensure access to and affordable health care, clean water and sanitation, universal access to education and improvement of quality of education and mainstream Gender in all the three pillars of sustainable development. In addition to

the social goals and targets under the MDG framework, we should aspire to have social protection and inclusion for all.

In the economic pillar, the creation of decent jobs is dependent on sustained economic growth and structural transformation of our economies. We should adopt industrialisation as a strategy to add value to our abundant natural resources. It is mainly through such structural transformation that we can take the leap from being sources of raw materials to competitive suppliers of manufactured goods. To support the development of our economies we need to invest in infrastructure to address our energy deficits, improve access to clean water supplies and the transport network on the continent.

Climate change, desertification and land degradation and biodiversity losses have become major environmental challenges which demand that we introduce and enhance sustainable exploitation and management of natural resources by putting in place adaptation and mitigation measures. To achieve this, we need support in terms of resources, clean technology and capacity development.

The need for convergence between the post 2015 Development Agenda and the SDGs cannot be over emphasised. At Africa's level this convergence, coherence and coordination should be achieved through the High Level Committee. We note that at the global level, the discussions on SDGs are already underway within the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals under the framework of the United Nations. This process will culminate in a report to the General Assembly in September 2014. It is only logical that the goals be incorporated into the post 2015 Development Agenda when the process is launched in September 2015.

There is need for smooth and effective coordination between Addis Ababa, New York and other centres where issues of relevance to the future global development agenda are discussed to ensure that a consistent and coherent message is delivered. We should engage other developing countries within the framework of the G77 to harmonise our positions and where there is convergence utilise the leverage of these larger organisations to achieve our objectives. Our strength lies in our unity and our numbers.

I thank you.