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Statement delivered by

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Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Government of Mexico on behalf of the delegation of Lesotho, for the warm hospitality we continue to enjoy from the people of Mexico in this scenic city of Cancun. I would also like to congratulate you, Madam President, upon your election to the high office of this 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Madam President,

We have travelled to Cancun carrying a heavy load of responsibility on behalf of the global populace to address the adverse impacts of climate change. We have been talking for a decade and half while our communities look up to us with great expectations to deliver. It is an undeniable fact that impacts of climate change are increasing. One might ask, are we becoming so used to disasters that we have become callous in our senses? For how long are we going to delay taking decisive action on climate change?

Madam President,

Let me briefly share with you the experiences of my country, Lesotho. We are a landlocked, least developed country, with a very fragile ecosystem. Our climate is highly variable with occurrences of extreme temperature variations ranging from

more than 37 degrees Celsius in summer to -25 degrees Celsius in winter respectively. We are regular victims of floods, droughts and strong winds. In this regard, we find ourselves confronted with daunting climate change effects that threaten the essential elements of our socio-economic development, which include among others; water scarcity, food insecurity and ill health and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Our scenic mountains are gradually loosing their beauty due to loss of biodiversity while the marginal 10% of our arable land is rapidly reduced by the increased land degradation and desertification.

Madam President,

It is however, pleasing to also inform this august meeting that Lesotho has not sat back to lament its vulnerability. Despite the limited financial resources and competing socio-economic needs, the Government of Lesotho has made a commitment to address the imperatives brought about by climate change. In this connection, we are engaged in exploiting renewable energies such as hydro, solar and wind power. We have a very ambitious plan to exploit wind energy in particular. We have also started in projects that address early warning systems, through the support of LDC Fund.

Madam President,

It is against this background that my country has thrown itself in the deep end to join hands with the international community, in working towards a lasting solution to save our Mother Earth. It is our collective resolve to take decisive action on climate change to reduce emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and to implement effective steps to adapt to climate change. We have a collective responsibility, although differentiated, to halt the negative impacts of climate change.

Madam President,

Cancun is **not and should not** be a place for failure. The ground work has been done to inform the decisions that will take us a step further from Copenhagen to Durban and beyond. Lesotho notes with appreciation the decisions on the LDC Fund and Matters relating to the LDCs. We look forward to the establishment of the Adaptation Framework for Implementation which will lend a helping hand to countries requiring special attention such as Lesotho. It is our expectation that the agreement to establish the new Climate Change Fund will lead to a flow of funds to support adaptation programmes.

Madam President,

I would like to stress the following:

The provision of financial, technological and capacity building support by developed country Parties for adaptation in the developing countries is a commitment under the Convention that must be urgently fulfilled.

(i) The Convention recognizes the special needs of the Least Developed Countries. It is through the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund that we, the least developed and the developing countries, can best be assisted. These funds must, therefore, be maintained and strengthened.

(ii) The Cancun outcome must provide new, additional, sustainable, accessible and predictable finance to support a comprehensive international programme on adaptation.

(iii) We strongly support the continuation of the Kyoto Protocol

(iv) It is our hope that this conference will result in fair and effective conclusions that will benefit the vulnerable countries and our shared planet.

Finally, **Madam President**, I would like to assure you that Lesotho remains committed to the UNFCCC process and we will fully engage in the negotiations with the hope of coming up with a legally binding agreement here in Cancun or soon thereafter.

We have a choice to have a balanced successful outcome here in Cancun and leave this beautiful city with our heads high or to have a mediocre outcome that will put us all to shame! **LET US CHOOSE TO BE SUCCESSFUL.**

I thank you for your attention.