Statement by

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On behalf of the Group II African Countries
My remarks are devoted principally to the topics included on the agenda for our meeting today, September 24, 2011, namely (i) Implications of *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development* for the World Bank Group; (ii) Moving Jobs Center Stage: Background Paper; and (iii) the World Bank Corporate Scorecard: Integrated Results and Performance Framework.


We wish to acknowledge at the outset that gender equality (GE) is an asset contributing to economic growth and poverty reduction, and we reiterate our firm support for it being taken further into account in the work of the World Bank Group (WBG).

We congratulate the World Bank for the remarkable progress it has made on the GE issue by placing it at the core of its research policies and programs, making the Bank the largest multilateral donor for the promotion of gender equality.

From a methodological standpoint, we suggest that the implications for the WBG of *World Development Report (WDR) 2012* be revised and include, among others (i) a summary of the recommendations made in the report; (ii) more substantive arguments on the importance of GE for development; (iii) an overview of what the WBG has already accomplished; and (iv) a description of the new direction that the WBG intends to take in order better to more clearly define this problem.

As regards the global initiatives to support national programs, the document should emphasize the need for effective partnerships to supplement these efforts, including with the United Nations system, and gather opinions on respective roles and responsibilities. It would also benefit from stressing the importance for client countries to assume ownership of all the processes and programs, and to build capacities for gathering gender data at the country level.

It is crucial to ensure broad and geographically balanced dissemination of the *WDR 2012* and to ensure that external dissemination is adapted to country needs and respectful of countries’ values and priorities.

We appreciate the point made in the *WDR 2012* that GE is not a systematic process in the economic growth dynamic, but instead calls for strong leadership from governments and a firmer commitment from the development partners. We further take note of the fact that the report on GE is not only of capital importance for economic development, but also for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

We would also like to stress two important points, namely (i) the need for the Bank to develop practical solutions so as to ensure that the gender issue is systematically reflected in client countries’ strategies and in poverty reduction strategy papers, as well as in country partnership documentation; and (ii) the need for more balanced treatment of the notion of gender, in particular its masculine component, which appears to have been obscured in the *WDR 2012*; for example, with regard to fragile states and countries affected by
conflicts, the Bank could develop strategies for countering the high risks associated with boys, who are very often compelled to become child soldiers or drug traffickers.

Finally, we think that adequate financing will be essential for there to be successful implementation of the recommendations of the report, particularly in IDA countries and countries that are fragile or emerging from conflicts. Taking account of the partnerships proposed in the document does not specifically address the issue of the additional financing requirements. For example, implementation of the Fast Track Initiative (FTI) in the education sector showed solid performance in part owing to a sizable contribution of financial resources. We therefore suggest that the WBG contemplate a similar initiative for the promotion of gender equality.

Moving Jobs Center Stage: Background Paper

We salute the choice of the topic of Jobs for the World Development Report (WDR) 2013 and note that this topic is of great interest for Africa and for our group in particular.

We underscore the urgency for the development community as a whole to identify innovative ideas and develop creative policies and instruments to enable developing countries to address their unemployment problems. To this end, the time is particularly propitious for the WBG to rethink and make jobs a central development priority.

In our view, the WDR 2013 could focus on the following issues, among others: (i) What is the link between growth and jobs, and which policies are favorable for employment? How can growth and employment be improved by the development of new technologies? (ii) Why is it that growth is not always accompanied by a reduction in inequalities? What are the successful experiences with job creation and what lessons for the future can be drawn from them? How can growth be made more inclusive? (iii) What roles would be played by the public and private sectors? (iv) What are the obstacles to entrepreneurship and to employment in sectors that offer potentially high wages? (v) What are the challenges posed by the imbalance between the supply of and demand for labor? (vi) What is the impact of “brain drain”? (vi) How do we achieve growth and employment without, in so doing, neglecting the concept of “decent work” and the fundamental principles and conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO)?

We wish to observe that it is important for the WDR 2013 to recognize that while the job creation issue has relevance for all countries, its policy imperatives and implications differ from one country to the next in light of differences in income levels and resource availability. To this end, the report should make recommendations on the application of policies adapted to the circumstances of each country.

Finally, we hope that the report will be comprehensive and innovative on the issue of informal employment. Indeed, in the developing countries and economies in transition, the share of the informal sector is sizable, and in recent decades the level of informal sector employment has grown more rapidly than formal sector employment. Despite in-depth studies on the informal sector, we still know little about it, and it is essential to formulate appropriate policies and programs that would ultimately make it possible to involve the informal sector in the creation of more and better jobs.

World Bank Corporate Scorecard: Integrated Results and Performance Framework

We congratulate the World Bank teams on their production of a report of excellent quality.
Our group has long espoused the notion that achieving results should be the core focus of all Bank activities. In this connection, we are pleased that after a lengthy period of consultation, the Bank’s Corporate Scorecard has at last been finalized. We congratulate the Bank staff for the work it carried out. We think it is a promising document and trust that it will improve as a learning tool so as to strengthen the Bank’s contributions to achieving development outcomes.

We recognize the challenges posed by the choice of indicators and their weighting for purposes of evaluating the Bank’s priorities and effectiveness. With time, we think it would be important for Bank staff to re-examine the various indicators in light of changing Bank priorities and improvements in data quality.