



PERMANENT MISSION OF
JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT BY

THE MOST HONOURABLE
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IN THE

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"For a Stronger and more Effective United Nations"

Mr. President,

I congratulate you on your assumption of the Presidency of the current session of the General Assembly. May I also express our deep appreciation to H.E. Jean Ping for guiding the work of the General Assembly during its 59th Session.

I am honoured to address the General Assembly today in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of 77 and China.

Five years ago, I was among the leaders of nations — rich and poor — who met here under the auspices of the United Nations and made a compact to rid the world of the most dehumanising conditions afflicting a large portion of mankind. This was a solemn pledge made by us to the most disadvantaged peoples of our world — the poor, the hungry, the illiterate, the homeless, the sick; to infants, mothers, the unborn - and to nature - that which must sustain the existence of the whole human race.

PROGRESS ON THE MAJOR GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Mr President,

This year's Human Development Report (UNDP) reveals that one-fifth of humanity survive on less than US\$1 per day and 2.5 billion people fail to earn US\$2 daily.

The recent High-Level Review Meeting has revealed that we have made slight progress, more so in a few regions, to meet some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). But we are nowhere on track to achieve the promises of any of the major development-oriented UN conferences or summits. Progress has been uneven. At the current pace, some regions and countries will miss several of the MDGs by decades. In certain areas, such as the elimination of hunger, we would be centuries away.

The infant mortality; maternal mortality; HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and other infectious diseases; environmental sustainability are all targets that we are likely to miss globally.

Limited financial resources, debt, restricted asymmetrical trade opportunities, and HIV/AIDS have been identified as major inhibiting factors. Beyond these constraints, many developing countries have suffered devastating natural disasters in the last five years. These have disrupted economic growth, damaged production, destroyed social infrastructure and dislocated populations. They have caused economic losses amounting to years of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

The development goals and targets cannot be met within the time-frames in the absence of a massive addition of resources - financial and professional. No one can remain safe and secure or even content while living in an oasis of wealth surrounded by a desert of poverty.

FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President,

We agreed in Monterrey on a comprehensive approach to mobilise the financing needed for real global development which specified the contributions required from developing and developed countries.

Our review has revealed that the developing countries, as a group, have delivered on their commitments. Most have achieved a level of economic growth and have increased domestic resources and foreign exchange reserves. There has been a strengthened focus on South/South cooperation which has seen trade among developing countries growing faster than their total export trade and an increasing flow of investment.

At the Second South Summit in Qatar in June, we agreed on a major programme of South/South cooperation. This is already having results. I cite two examples.

First, the Governments of Qatar, China and India pledged, at the Summit, donations to launch "The South Fund for Development and Humanitarian Assistance".

Second, last week, in Montego Bay, Jamaica, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela signed, with several Caribbean Governments, the Petrocaribe Energy Cooperation Agreement to enhance energy security, facilitate socio-economic development and advance regional economic integration in the Caribbean. This is a most positive initiative at a time of high and volatile energy prices and insecure supplies.

From our partners in the developed world, there has been a gradual recovery of private foreign direct investment and in the provision of Official Development Assistance. We welcome the increase in debt relief, including debt cancellation, to many of the most Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC)s, as well as the renewed focus on Africa and on HIV/AIDS.

However, the review has also revealed some trends which are cause for anxiety and therefore worthy of our attention:

First, a significant part of the resources mobilised by the developing countries has been used to finance debt servicing payments to the multilateral development banks and to increase foreign exchange reserves held in developed countries. This has led to net transfers to the developed countries every year since 1998;

Second, foreign direct investment has been concentrated and is becoming almost confined in the larger, faster-growing developing countries;

Third, the increase in ODA has largely been the result of resources targeted for emergency assistance, debt relief and technical assistance. Together they accounted for fifty cents of every aid dollar in 2004.

Fourth, debt relief has been limited to those HIPC countries which have satisfied IMF conditions for disbursements;

Fifth, the terms of trade continue to work against commodity and preference dependent developing countries; and

Sixth, the sudden erosion of trade preferences has created significant economic hardships for many developing countries without the resources or time to diversify their export base.

The net result is that there has been insufficient new resources available to the vast majority of developing countries to invest in meeting long-term development goals.

Mr. President,

Policy space for developing countries to act effectively, the timing and quality of the resource flows, are also important. In this regard the G-77 and China calls for the elimination of aid conditionalities which constrict the policy options for developing countries and the real effectiveness of development cooperation.

Further, we stress the need to cease the use of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries. It is wrong to apply the weight of economic power to pressure developing countries for political purposes. They cause severe hardships and jeopardise development efforts, including the achievement of the MDGs.

COUNTRIES WITH UNIQUE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Mr. President, there are developing countries which face peculiar, if not exclusive, development challenges.

The G-77 and China has consistently argued that Africa, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face special and tremendous challenges. These are magnified in a globalised, liberalised and competitive international economic environment and with increasing incidents of more devastating natural disasters.

The arguments are gaining acceptance. There are now internationally agreed programmes for the last three named groups and an emerging consensus for a special programme for Africa under African leadership. The special programmes for these

groups of countries have been reaffirmed in our High-Level Plenary. We now need to implement them with urgency.

TRADE

Mr. President,

We have long recognised that export trade is the most sustainable source of resources for development as well as the best stimulant to investment and employment. The current international trading rules and systems are stacked against developing countries.

We must resolve to transform international trade into an engine of growth. The policies, rules and modalities of global trade must have development focus. Why have we failed so miserably to fulfil the Doha Mandate for a Development Round?

We are sending only the feeblest of messages from the High-Level Plenary to our Trade Ministers; but unless they are given firm instructions to afford special and differential treatment for developing countries the December meeting in Hong Kong will, like Seattle and Cancun, yield a dismal collapse.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

We agreed in Monterrey that it was necessary to reform and make the international economic system more coherent and supportive of the development policies of Member States. We agreed that it was necessary to increase the voice and participation of developing countries in the international financial and trade institutions. Yet nothing has happened. We cannot allow the Bretton Woods Institutions to remain forever impervious to our calls. To attain the agreed development objectives, there must be a renunciation of the ill-conceived policies imposed on a number of developing countries under structural adjustment programmes three decades ago.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President,

We might dispute the causes, the sharing of responsibility, but no longer the awesome reality of climate change. The evidence that climate change poses a long term challenge to every part of the globe is irrefutable.

Developing countries have maintained that climate change and other unsustainable pressures on our environment demand urgent attention. Developed countries must take the lead in changing production and consumption patterns in an approach to the development and transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries on a preferential basis; in the level of commitment and support to fight against desertification and land degradation; and in the resources to be devoted to

the management of waste and in the change towards the promotion of a culture of recycling.

We will keep on pressing for the development and adoption of strategies that mitigate and build resilience to the impact of climate change.

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

I have spoken thus far on development issues. But these are closely related to other critical areas of the international agenda. One such area is disarmament and arms control which is in danger of becoming a neglected and forgotten goal of the United Nations. The link between disarmament and development is even more relevant today. The figures are startling. Roughly one trillion dollars is now annually spent on weapons and military equipment of all kinds, consuming a massive share of the world's resources. If such resources were channelled into development, the world would not only be more prosperous, it would be much safer and more secure.

Our concern is not just about nuclear weapons. It is also about the proliferation of guns of every description which endanger the lives of ordinary citizens, undermine the rule of law and threaten social stability. Those who manufacture these weapons must exercise greater controls and support anti-proliferation efforts.

REFORM OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. President,

The United Nations was established to bring peace and security to this world and to play a major role in promoting development. The United Nations must not allow, as has appeared in recent years, any part of its mandate to be usurped.

The Bretton Woods Institutions and the GATT, now the World Trade Organisation, have taken dominant positions on policies in areas of their specialisation. These policies however have far ranging implications across the economic, social and environmental spectrum. There is a glaring gap in overall international development policy-making, and in the capacity to secure coherence across the development, finance, trade and technology areas.

With renewed priority to development and the MDGs, UN reform should empower the Organisation, by providing the resources and a clear mandate to do at least three things in this area.

First, it should ensure system-wide coherence, including with the BWIs and the WTO, in respect of the policies and operational activities which impact the achievement of the agreed development goals;

Second, it should bring the resources of the development oriented arms of the UN system to focus on development priorities identified by Member States; and

Third, it should promote dialogue and partnership, review trends particularly in resource mobilisation and implement measures to ensure that the development goals can be met within the agreed time-frames.

These should be the responsibility of a revitalised ECOSOC.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. President,

The future of generations to come rests not so much on the vigour of our debate and the declarations we make, but on the action we take in making the United Nations stronger and more effective.

All our citizens are demanding that collectively we emerge with a clear vision, that we display the courage and unrelenting commitment to build a world of peace, of justice and equity which we can inhabit together in true harmony.

They are convinced that it is within our power to rid the only planet where human life prevails of hunger, ignorance and disease. They believe we can afford shelter to the homeless and eradicate poverty everywhere -- that once we have the political will and determination; we can prevent genocide, combat terrorism – that irrespective of gender, race, colour or religious creed, we can ensure for every person the inalienable right of human dignity.

Let us here resolve to build one world where every man, woman and child can realise the true purpose and enjoy the fulfilment of life.

Let us pledge that the time for action is now and sound the trumpet of hope for all mankind.

I thank you.