

## **Ministerial Declaration-2008**

### **“Ministerial declaration”**

#### **“Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development”**

*We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegations participating in the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2008 of the Economic and Social Council, held in New York from 30 June to 3 July 2008, Having considered the themes of the high-level segment, ‘Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development’ and ‘Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development, taking into account current challenges’,*

*Conscious of the multiple, interrelated and mutually reinforcing challenges confronting the international community and their relationship to the themes chosen for the substantive session of 2008 of the Economic and Social Council and the need for a concerted and prompt response,*

*Welcoming the holding of the first Development Cooperation Forum and the second annual ministerial review,*

*Underscoring the need for coherence and coordination to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in addressing the current challenges and committed to ensuring that the Economic and Social Council discharges in a dynamic manner the responsibilities assigned to it by the Charter of the United Nations and reinforced in the 2005 World Summit Outcome<sup>1</sup> and General Assembly resolution 61/16 of 20 November 2006 on the strengthening of the Council,*

*Reaffirming the commitments to the global partnership for development as set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,<sup>2</sup> the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development<sup>3</sup> and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (‘Johannesburg Plan of Implementation’),<sup>4</sup>*

*Having considered*





Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,<sup>11</sup> as contained in article 2 thereof, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

16. We remain deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries including least developed countries and small island developing States and African countries, face increased risks from the negative effects of climate change and we further stress the need to urgently address adaptation needs relating to such effects.

17. We reaffirm that responses to climate change should be coordinated with social and economic development in an integrated manner, with a view to avoiding adverse impact on the latter, taking into full account the legitimate priority needs of developing countries for the achievement of sustained economic growth and the eradication of poverty.

18. We welcome the decisions adopted during the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007, including the Bali Action Plan, which launched a comprehensive process aimed at enabling the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties.<sup>12</sup> We take note of the work under way in the open-ended ad hoc working group of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change<sup>13</sup> established under decision 1/CMP.1.

opportunities posed by bio-fuels, in view of the world's food security, energy and sustainable development needs.

22. We express our concern at the current situation of soaring food prices and underline that the global food crisis poses a serious challenge to the fight against poverty and hunger as well as to the efforts by developing countries to attain food security and achieve the objectives of reducing by half the number of undernourished people by no later than 2015 and other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. We reiterate that the global food crisis has multiple and complex causes and that its consequences require a comprehensive and coordinated response in the short, medium and long term by national Governments and the international community.

23. The global food situation calls

urbanization, improving lives of slum-dwellers and encouraging practical solutions to these challenges.

26. We reaffirm the importance of investing in infrastructure for rural development and agriculture. We further recognize the importance of non-farming economic activities in eradicating poverty in rural areas. In this regard, we recognize the in-depth discussion at the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development and we look forward to recommendations of the Commission at its seventeenth session that will advance rural development.

27. We recognize that agriculture plays a crucial role in addressing the needs of a growing global population and is inextricably linked to poverty eradication, especially in developing countries. Integrated and sustainable agriculture and rural development approaches are therefore essential to achieving enhanced food security and food safety in an environmentally sustainable way.

28. We recognize the crucial importance of enhanced access of the rural poor, women and men, to productive assets, in particular land and water, and stress that priority attention should be given to the adoption of policies and the implementation of laws that guarantee well-defined and enforceable land- and water-use rights and promote legal security of tenure, while recognizing the existence of different national laws and/or systems of land access and tenure.

29. We call for the full, timely and effective achievement of the goals and targets of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,<sup>15</sup> the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,<sup>16</sup> the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,<sup>17</sup> and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States<sup>18</sup> so as to address the special needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

30. We recognize that poverty and inequality are a concern for all countries regardless of their level of development. We also recognize that middle-income countries are still faced with significant areas of poverty and that efforts to address these challenges should be supported.

31. We emphasize the need for continued, coordinated and effective international support for achieving the development goals in countries emerging from conflict and in those recovering from natural disasters.

32. We remain concerned that many countries in Africa are currently not on track to achieve, by 2015, any of the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and, in this regard, emphasize that concerted efforts and continued support are required to fulfill the commitments to address the special needs of Africa. We welcome the efforts by development partners to strengthen cooperation with the New Partnership for Africa's Development<sup>19</sup> and the progress made by the African countries in fulfilling their commitments in respect of the implementation of the New Partnership. In this regard, we look forward to the convening of the high-level meeting on the theme: 'Africa's development needs: implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward', scheduled for 22 September 2008, which will review the implementation of all commitments made by and to Africa with a view to comprehensively addressing the special development needs of the continent.

33. We call upon all countries to promote good governance, which is essential for sustainable development, and reaffirm that sound economic policies, solid democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people and improved infrastructure are the basis for sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and employment-creation and that freedom, peace and security, domestic stability, respect for human rights, including the right to development, the rule of law, gender equality and market-oriented policies and an overall commitment to just and democratic societies, are also essential and mutually reinforcing.

34. We reaffirm that good governance at the international level is fundamental for achieving sustainable development; that in order to ensure a dynamic and enabling international economic environment, it is important to promote global economic governance through addressing the issue of the international finance, trade, technology and investment patterns that have an impact on the development prospects of developing countries; and that, to that end, the international community should take all necessary and appropriate measures, including ensuring support for structural and macroeconomic reform, achieving a comprehensive solution to the external debt problem and increasing the market access of developing countries.

35. We reaffirm the commitments made in the Doha Ministerial Declaration,<sup>20</sup> the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration<sup>21</sup> and the decision of the General Council of the World Trade Organization of 1 August 2004<sup>22</sup> to meaningfully integrate the developing and the least developed countries into the multilateral trading system and call for the successful and early conclusion of the Doha Round of trade negotiations, with the full realization of the development dimensions of the Doha Work Programme.<sup>23</sup>

36. We call for the early conclusion and successful development-oriented outcome of the Doha Round of trade negotiations, adhering fully to

the agreed mandate in the Doha Ministerial Declaration, within the framework adopted by the General Council of the World Trade Organization in its decision of 1 August 2004 and the Hong Kong Ministerial Declaration.

37. We reaffirm our commitment to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, access to, and the development, transfer and diffusion of, environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, as set out in chapter 34 of Agenda 21.<sup>24</sup>

38. We recognize that appropriate, affordable and sustainable agricultural technologies can play an important role in helping Member States alleviate poverty, eradicate hunger and mitigate the global food crisis, and call upon the international community to make greater efforts to promote development and transfer of appropriate technologies.

39. We strongly stress that increased financial resources should be mobilized for meeting the priority objectives of sustainable development.

40. We reaffirm that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized in the achievement of sustainable development. We also recognize that national efforts should be complemented by supportive global programmes, measures and policies aimed at expanding the development opportunities of developing countries, while taking into account national conditions and ensuring respect for national ownership, strategies and sovereignty.

41. We reiterate that in our



commitments, including the commitments made by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2015 and to reach the target of at least 0.5 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance by 2010, as well as the target of 0.15-0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to least developed countries, and urge those developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts in this regard in accordance with their commitments.

43. We welcome the efforts of some developed countries, which are on target to meet the commitments made in terms of increased official development assistance.

44. We further welcome recent efforts and initiatives to enhance the quality of aid and to increase its impact, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and resolve to take concrete, effective and timely action in implementing all agreed commitments on aid effectiveness, with clear monitoring and deadlines, including through further aligning assistance with countries' strategies, building institutional capacities, reducing transaction costs and eliminating bureaucratic procedures, making progress on untying aid, enhancing the absorptive capacity and financial management of recipient countries and strengthening the focus on development results.

45. We also emphasize the special importance of a timely, effective, comprehensive and durable solution to the debt problems of developing countries, since debt financing and debt relief can contribute to economic growth and development.

46. We welcome the fact that the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative have enabled heavily indebted poor countries to increase their expenditures on health, education and other social services consistent with national priorities, development plans and internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

### **Closure of the high-level segment**

120. At the 20th meeting, on 3 July, the President of the Council made a concluding statement and declared the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2008 of the Council closed.

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#### *Note*

1 See General Assembly resolution 60/1.



Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

*18 Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

19 A/57/304, annex.

20 See A/C.2/56/7, annex.

21 World Trade Organization document WT/MIN (05)/DEC. Available from <http://docsonline.wto.org>.

22 World Trade Organization document WT/L/579. Available from