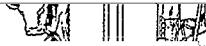


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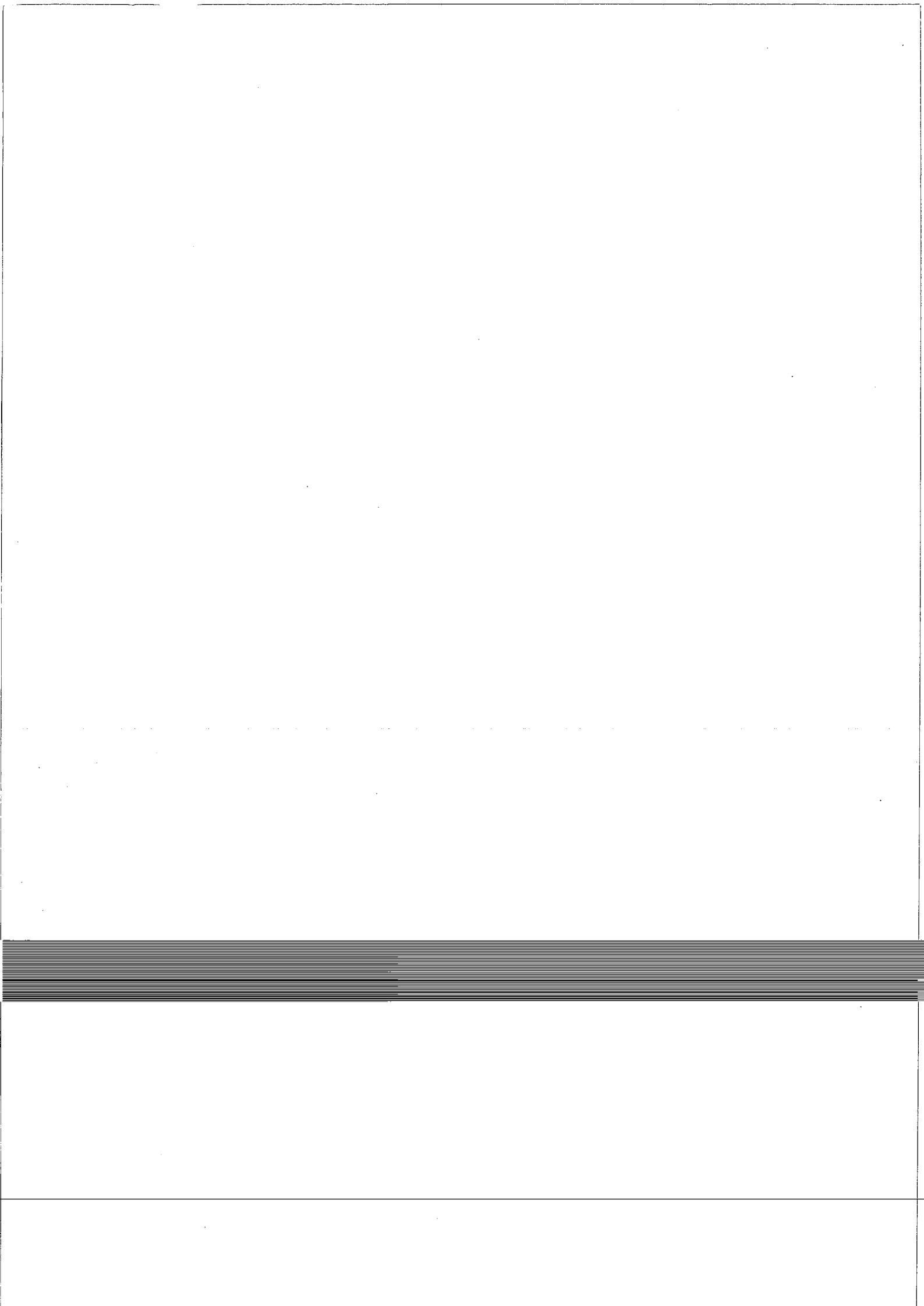
Statement

by

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Permanent Representative of Iceland
to the United Nations**

Substantive Session

**of the Economic and Social Council
Annual Ministerial Review**



High-level segment

Annual Ministerial Review

“Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development”

Mrs. President, ladies and gentlemen

It is a privilege for me to participate in the Annual Ministerial Review. I am pleased to see that we have avoided overlap and duplication of work. We welcome the first Annual Ministerial Review. I look forward to a fruitful session in New York next week.

The theme for the first Annual Ministerial Review is well chosen. It emphasizes the importance of the global partnership for development in reviewing the progress made in implementing the Millennium Development Goals and promoting stronger efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, and to achieve the global partnership for development. The Millennium Development Goal number 8 on a global partnership for development indicates that it is our common responsibility to work towards achieving the Millennium Goals. The global partnership rests on the principles of transparency, accountability, good governance, equity and commitment to poverty reduction. I would like to underline the fact that for the developing countries to achieve these Goals, it is absolutely critical that the developed countries deliver on their part.

There are many different ways to strengthen our common efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger; all very important, but time allows me to only highlight a few.

ODA

Increased Official Development Assistance (ODA) is crucial. Many developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, have little chance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals by the target date, unless significant additional resources are made

available. Beyond assistance, more investment is needed in reaching the UN target of zero point 7 per cent (0.7%) of GNI (Gross National Income) as soon as possible.

Gender equality

I would like to draw your special attention to the importance of promoting gender equality in development. It is a challenge that requires great care. There is however a long way to go. Women are still much more likely than men to be poor, malnourished and illiterate. They usually have less access than men to employment and they are far less likely than men to be politically active. Women's empowerment should be included in any national development strategy and ensuring gender equality is vital to sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals. We want to see more determined efforts by development partners and UN agencies to ensure gender equality. The work of UNIFEM must be given more weight within the UN. Iceland has increased its support to the work of UNIFEM in the past few years and we will increase our support even further.

Women play a central role in the development of the LDCs and experience has shown that the participation of women has a multiplier effect for their communities. For this reason we have increasingly directed our development cooperation to gender-specific projects in the LDCs. This has been done through our bilateral work and we have also supported the work of UNIFEM in these countries.

Food security

Food security has been an important aspect of our partnership for development. Fish is one of the principal sources of protein for many of the poorest. Iceland's bilateral fisheries projects have therefore continued to the improvement of food security and reduction of malnutrition. We have also increased our emphasis on food security through increased support for the UN

Education and capacity building are important tools for eradicating poverty and hunger. Education has been at the center of our development cooperation. Recognizing the close link between illiteracy and poverty, basic education and adult literacy programmes have also become a significant part of our bilateral development cooperation. A special emphasis has been placed on education and capacity building of people living in poverty. Projects in this

Iceland.

Mr. President, the list is much longer than time allows. There is no simple formula for