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Statement by Ambassador Sichan Siv, United States Representative to the Economic and Social Council, at the High-Level Segment of ECOSOC on "The Contribution of Human Resources Development, including in the Areas of Health and Education, to the Process of Development", July 2, 2002

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Thank you, Mr. President:

I am pleased to discuss a topic President Bush has made a central theme of his administration at home and abroad.

He believes that a nation's ability to expand economic opportunity, as well as contribute to the world economy, is founded on the health, education, and training of its citizens. More importantly, he understands that healthy, well-educated citizens are the mainstay of democracy and the rule of law.

We call this "human resources development." But of course, we are referring to people -- girls and boys, women and men, who have been properly nourished, immunized, cared for, and educated. This is what President Bush means when he uses the word "compassion."

The United States therefore wants to work with the world community to close the divide between nations that are making progress and those that are not. Developed and developing countries alike need to do more to nurture human capacity, especially through basic education.

In order to enhance our own national development, President Bush signed landmark legislation into law that promotes educational excellence. The "No Child Left Behind Act" turns federal spending on schools into a federal investment in improved student performance. It requires states to set high standards of achievement and create a system of accountability to measure results.

Similar steps are called for in the developing world. It is crucial that even poor countries -- perhaps I should say, *especially* poor countries -- devote adequate budgetary resources to education. The use of these financial resources then must be carefully monitored to ensure that they translate into positive learning outcomes. Where this is the case, we believe the World Bank and other donors should be prepared to significantly increase funding. The World Bank's plan to "fast track" universal primary completion in some ten countries is a welcome first step, as long as these countries are selected on the basis of credible performance and in coordination with other donors.

On June 20, President Bush announced a doubling of funds for the African Education Initiative inaugurated last July. This will bring total U.S. spending to \$200 million over the next five years. The African Education Initiative

- will train 420,000 teachers;
- provide more than 250,000 scholarships for African girls;
- partner with historically black colleges and universities in the United States to provide 4.5 million textbooks for children in Africa;
- and increase the role of parents in their children's education by working to make school systems more transparent and open to reforms.

The United States is proud to join with African governments to give their youth the advantages of literacy and learning. Education can transform a society, particularly when girls and women are fully included. Women who complete primary school are healthier than those who do not; their children attain higher education levels; they demonstrate higher agricultural, industrial, and domestic productivity; and they participate more actively in the democratic process.

A good education is critical, but so is good health. A monumental obstacle to Africa's development is HIV/AIDS.

Through an initiative announced by President Bush on June 19, the United States plans to dedicate an additional \$500 million to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV in twelve African countries and the Caribbean. This new initiative is focused in two areas:

- (1) increasing the availability of preventive care, including drug treatments; and
- (2) building healthcare delivery systems to reach as many women as possible.

We will work with African governments to pair hospitals in Africa with those in the United States. We will deploy volunteer medical professionals to assist and train their African counterparts. And we will support African efforts to recruit and pay African medical and graduate students to provide testing and treatment and care. And as we see what works, we will make more funding available.

This \$500 million commitment is the largest initiative to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV by any government in history. But it does not replace anything else we are doing.

- It will complement the nearly \$1 billion the United States will contribute this year to international efforts to combat HIV/AIDS.
- It will complement the \$2.5 billion we plan to spend on research and development of new drugs and treatments.
- It will complement the \$500 million the United States has committed to the Global Fund to fight AIDS and other infectious diseases.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are some of the key policy initiatives upon which President Bush has based his call for a new compact for global development. Without basic education and health services, no nation can prosper. But with basic education and health services, there is no limit to what can be achieved.

That said, let me underscore the point that these efforts must be undertaken jointly. They must

be defined by a new accountability for both wealthy and poor nations alike. They must be grounded in the reality that sound domestic policies, good governance, and the rule of law are fundamental to development, because they create the essential conditions for sustained economic growth and investment. As Secretary O'Neill said to you yesterday, they must be implemented without creating the next generation of highly indebted poor countries. In his words, "The reality is that essential investments in sectors such as education and healthcare cannot directly generate the revenue to service new debt. These projects should be funded by grants, not loans."

Every index of social, economic and democratic well-being will improve dramatically when we, the world's governments, hold ourselves accountable for the health and education of the young.

This is where development truly begins – in the strong bodies and creative minds of our children.

Thank you very much.