



January 31, 2008

Dear Colleagues and Members,

We would like to thank you for registering as a participant in the e-discussion on *Achieving Sustainable Development* that will be launched on MDGNet on 4 February 2008. The Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN/DESA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are very excited to be supporting this unique and stimulating forum.

We believe development is a right of all people, but this development must not come at a cost to future generations. Therefore, it is imperative that *sustainable* development is the objective of our development efforts. It is widely agreed that achieving sustainable development requires a careful balance of three factors: economic growth, social development and environmental protection. However, in practice, sustainable development is very difficult to realize.

We would like this e-discussion to tap into the wealth of knowledge and experience of the many institutions and individuals, from all walks of life, around the world, and to gather and share lessons learned and good practices that can be used to strengthen and improve our *common* effort to attain sustainable development.

What makes this opportunity special?

First, in this e-discussion, everyone has an equal voice. We want to hear from all stakeholder groups, and we hope a constructive and informative debate will unfold as various perspectives are shared. Second, the outcome of this discussion will be fed into an intergovernmental process. Therefore, individuals and organizations that may not normally have the opportunity to take the floor at UN meetings will have an opportunity to contribute and share their ideas and viewpoints. The key conclusions, recommendations and innovative ideas that emerge from the forum will be shared with Member States. Third, participants can take part in this significant UN-organized exchange of views with the knowledge that they will not appreciably increase the size of their carbon footprint!

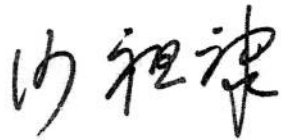
This e-discussion is being organized to help us prepare for the 2008 Annual Ministerial Review (AMR), to be held during the High-level Segment of the annual session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) this July in New York. This year, the AMR, which was established to assess progress in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, will focus on *implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development*.

The ideas and recommendations that emerge from this e-discussion will be made widely available on the internet and at the ECOSOC Substantive Session and may be considered for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General on the Annual Ministerial Review.

We invite you to make full use of this opportunity to share your insights with the Council and to learn from one another.

We thank you in advance for your participation and look forward to a stimulating and productive discussion.

Yours sincerely,



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Under-Secretary-General
Department for Economic and Social
Affairs



Kemal Derviş
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UNDP