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DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
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DEVELOPMENT**

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to introduce agenda item 3 (a), entitled “Review of further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the Outcome of the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly.”

The concept of social development forged at Copenhagen was one of the most inclusive and far-reaching attempts to fully capture the meaning of development. It includes all dimensions required by society to improve the quality of life of its individual members while simultaneously fostering social justice, cohesion and integration, promoting productive employment and empowering the social groups that make up its citizenship.

Ten years later, it seems fit to review the progress achieved and regress noted. If the Social Summit did raise high hopes and expectations and transformed these into actual commitments for the improvement of the human condition, today, while these hopes and expectations are perhaps not dashed, they are certainly diminished as a number

of trends are negatively affecting social development. Notably among these, the persistent reality of socioeconomic deprivation and inequality among individuals, social groups, entire communities, countries and even some continents. In addition, threats to civil liberties derived from security interests are on the rise.

Thus, the Secretary General's Report on "Review of the further implementation of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the Twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly" ,contained in document E/CN.5/2005/6, presents an attempt to describe and analyze progress achieved in fostering the people-centred approach embraced in Copenhagen.

Besides contributing to the Commission's deliberations on the priority theme, the report has also been prepared to assist the Commission to respond to the General Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council, which called upon the Commission to transmit to the Assembly, through the ECOSOC, the substantive outcome of its review to the 60th session of the General Assembly, including to the high-level plenary meeting of the review of the Millennium Declaration in September 2005.

In the preparation for this review, an expert group meeting was convened by the Secretariat in June 2004 in New York in the framework of the International Forum for Social Development on the theme *Equity, Inequalities and Interdependence*. The results of this meeting have been incorporated in the report, and this afternoon, I will present briefly the findings of the Forum to this Commission.

Mr. Chairman,

While the report covers the implementation of each of the ten commitments contained in the Copenhagen Declaration, it does so in a broader and more comprehensive manner rather than following a strict commitment by commitment approach. The report contains four chapters. Chapter one describes the comprehensive policy framework for social development set forth by the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. It presents social development as an international regime; analyzes the policy framework with respect to the values, principles and goals of equity and equality; and analyzes the Millennium Development Goals from a social development perspective.

Chapter two examines the enabling environment for social development. It analyzes both the political, institutional and economic environment prevailing at the international, regional and national level. Chapter three presents major trends in social development since Copenhagen with respect to poverty, employment, social integration, gender equality and education and health, and examines factors that have influenced these trends. Chapter four looks at the way forward. It proposes an agenda for social development that deepens the people-centred approach advanced by the Social Summit. Specific policy recommendations are made with respect to governance issues central to an enabling environment for social development; to the three core issues of poverty eradication, employment and social integration; and a special focus on Africa.

In addition to these four chapters, an Annex is included for reference. Part one of the Annex presents a brief historical background on the international agenda on social

development leading up to, and including, the Social Summit; part two presents the ten commitments from the Copenhagen Declaration in their original wordings; and part three briefly outlines the significance of the five-year review of implementation after the Summit at the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly held in Geneva in 2000.

Going back to chapter four of the Report, several recommendations have been put forward for consideration by the Commission, which may wish to reaffirm the need for a people-centred approach to development and for its urgent and concrete implementation through coordinated and coherent efforts by the international community.

In this context, the Commission may also wish to stress that people-centred development calls for a number of requirements, including: a revisiting of the perennial and still elusive question of a proper integration of economic and social policies, notably through the relationships between macro-economic policies and social development goals; a better understanding and better management of the social dimensions and consequences of the interdependence of nations in an increasingly globalized world; and also a renewed conception of the relations between the public and the private spheres and of the role of States, notably in the formulation and implementation of social policies.

The Commission may also wish to recommend to the General Assembly, through ECOSOC, that due consideration be given to a people-centred approach and its requirements when it undertakes its special event in 2005 in the context of the 5 year review of the Millennium Declaration.

More specifically, the Secretary General's Report proposes the overarching policy objective of *strengthening the prospects of an enabling environment for people-centred development* to counter the imbalance between the pace of globalization and the asymmetries which have resulted from the regulatory framework prevailing today. At the political and institutional level, emphasis should be placed on the equitable distribution of the benefits in an increasingly open world economy, with actions that promote democratic participation by all countries and peoples in the decision-making processes that govern international relations. Implementing people-centered development calls for an approach that places the highest priority on the long-term objectives of social development.

Actions to strengthen the enabling environment must necessarily be accompanied by specific measures in the three core issues of the Social Summit, which remain fundamental for the promotion of social development. Thus, for the attainment of the commitments made in Copenhagen in these core areas, implementing people-centred development requires also:

- *Intensifying integrated strategies and policies directly fostering poverty reduction and eradication*, rather than assuming the potential benefits of a trickle-down outcome of other policies intended to promote economic growth and development.
- *Guaranteeing the existence of employment opportunities for all* through an employment strategy which aims to promote decent work under conditions of

equity, security and dignity should be a fundamental component of any development strategy.

- ***Fostering social integration and cohesion***, which requires that policymakers take into consideration the importance of explicit policies to counter both the negative effects of globalization on social development and the new threats posed by market-driven reforms, as there are signs that these are producing and reinforcing new patterns of social exclusion.

Last but not least, the ten-year Review of the Social Summit reveals that the gap between Africa and the rest of the world has remained, and even widened in some aspects, a predicament that is clearly unacceptable. Thus, the Report calls for a special ***Focus on Africa***. Foremost among the key areas of international action is the commitment that technical and financial assistance will be earmarked in explicit quantitative targets to guarantee, within the framework of NEPAD, a favourable environment for social and economic development in Africa.

In short, there is no doubt that the Social Summit represented a crucial turning point for the way in which the world community approached development and the social condition of humankind, placing people where they rightfully belong, at the centre of development. However, if Copenhagen can be viewed today, ten years later, as having been a clear watershed in the international agenda, the actual realization of the commitments adopted in 1995 has lagged far behind. Member States have now, more

than ever, a renewed opportunity of closing the “implementation gap” so constantly acknowledged in the current discourse on development.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I do not wish to close my remarks without expressing our appreciation to the many United Nations agencies and entities for their valuable contributions to the ten-year review of Copenhagen. In response to the Secretariat’s request, 19 UN agencies/funds and programmes have submitted to us their initiatives which they have taken in implementing the Copenhagen commitments, and some have identified issues to be further pursued. These contributions can be found on the tables in the back and side of this room. Also, to facilitate the Commission in this regard, the Secretariat has prepared a compilation of these contributions by capturing them under each of the ten commitments. I understand that this compilation has been distributed desk to desk.. I hope delegations will find these background documents useful, informative and of value.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.