



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
315 Lexington Avenue ♦ New York ♦ N.Y. 10016 ♦ (212) 689-7215 ♦ FAX (212) 689-9073

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CUBA,  
H.E. Mr. ABELARDO MORENO.**

**Agenda item 3 a: Follow-Up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly: Priority theme: promoting social integration.**

**Commission for Social Development (47th session)  
5 February 2009**

Madam Chairman,

Allow me to congratulate you and the rest of the Bureau members, as well as to express our support to the statement by Sudan on behalf of the G-77.

Social integration is unquestionably a crucial factor in social development, as stipulated in the Copenhagen Summit in 1995. However, nearly fifteen years later, social integration continues to be a chimera in many countries, particularly in most of developing nations.

The call in the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, applies only to some, instead of being a reality for all.

The marginalization of a great number of nations in the South of the Planet, as a result of the prevailing unjust and exclusive international order, is the first factor which poses a threat to the achievement of a true social integration, and is at the very core of social exclusion and economic and social inequity, problems referred to in the Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.5/2009/2).

Despite the commitments made in Copenhagen to resolve the alarming social problems in the countries of the South, the unjust international order imposed by industrialized countries makes possible that hunger, extreme poverty, illiteracy, insalubrity and early death, among many other phenomena, remain a constant feature in a high number of UN member countries. The neoliberal globalization and, most recently, the global economic crisis generated in the major power centers, only make the situation worse.

How can we build more just societies where all persons have equal opportunities, including economic opportunities, and where inequality and exclusion are eradicated, while selfishness, injustice, hegemonic pretensions, inequity, wastefulness, and excessive consumerism of a few, that is, those who have more, continue to prevail and grow stronger at the international level?

How is it possible that developed countries are allowed to continue with their demagogic claims on alleged political freedoms and rights, while little or nothing is done to change the terrible reality of the South?

What sort of social integration could be achieved in the developing world, when it concentrates the majority of the 1.4 billion people surviving with less than one dollar a day, the over 900 million hungry people and the 3 billion people who continue to suffer from water scarcity?

This situation will only change when the most powerful countries surrender their privileges and wastefulness, so that millions of people in the developing countries can have a decent meal, learn to read and write, or simply work. The 80 % of the world population will remain marginalized if this unsustainable world order, perpetuating the hardships of the South, is not changed and if the right of peoples to international solidarity and to the special and differential treatment for developing countries is not acknowledged.

There will only be progress in social integration when the powerful nations meet their commitments with respect to the Official Development Assistance, instead of assigning just the 0.28% of their Gross National Income to this purpose, and when they stop subsidizing their agricultural productions with almost 300 billion dollars, spending three dollars a day in raising a cow, while more than one sixth of humankind outlives with less than one. We will advance only when we, developing countries, cease to use one fifth of our exports to pay an external debt we have paid several times.

The industrialized countries, currently promoting multi-million dollar financial plans to save the big, corrupt and irresponsible bankers through public intervention measures previously contraindicated for our countries, have the resources to assist the development of our peoples. What is needed is the political will to do it, thus perpetuating inequity and social exclusion.

In the industrialized nations there is also social exclusion. It is trapped in the pockets of poverty which, in many occasions, include the immigrants.

Madam Chairman,

Since 1959, Cuba has undertaken socio-economic changes in order to build up a just and solidarity-driven society, facing threats, aggressions and a criminal and long blockade imposed by the United States which reaffirms itself as the main obstacle for a more accelerated social advancement in Cuba. This policy is imposed with all severity even when a few months ago Cuba was lashed by three intense hurricanes devastating its agriculture and seriously affecting part of its infrastructure and damaging or destroying more than 400 thousand houses.

However, thanks to our work of equity and welfare, justice and dignity, we managed to harmonize the economic growth with the social development, leaving no citizen behind, even in the hardest times. In Cuba, nobody is left to his/her fate.

Today, the entire Cuban population has access to free health care and education, has a life expectancy of more than 77 years and an infant mortality rate of 4.7 per a thousand live births. Our children are protected against 13 preventable diseases; there is a 100% in primary schooling and 99% in secondary schooling; 842 thousand Cubans, over 7% of our population, are university graduates; and 750 thousand adults are studying in our universities. More than 95% of the country is electrified and Cuba has already achieved the condition of full employment, with a 1.6% unemployment rate.

More than two thirds of the State's budget is devoted to advance education, health, social security and assistance, culture, sports, as well as scientific and technical research. Moreover, more than 200 social programs are being implemented so as to continue improving the most varied social development areas.

Cuba is proud to have a profoundly popular and participatory democracy, where the people has the power and all human rights, not a few, are promoted and protected. The political institutionalization was established based on the widest people's participation and control, ensuring that every Cuban, without exception, has a direct and full participation in the country's decision-making and eradicating the exclusion and discrimination.

Madam Chairman,

To contribute to the social advancement of other countries and, thus, to an effective social integration, more than 270 thousand Cuban collaborators have rendered cooperation services in 154 countries since 1961. Today, 41 thousand Cuban healthcare, sports and education professionals provide cooperation services in 97 nations and 6 overseas territories from all continents; more than 31 thousand of them collaborate in the area of healthcare in 71 countries.

A scholarship program in Cuba has also benefited tens of thousands youths from the Third World, including almost 23 thousand currently studying medicine in Cuba. Hundreds of thousands of foreign patients suffering from different ophthalmologic conditions have undergone surgery in Cuba and recovered their vision, free of charge. Cuba has also undertaken programs to provide advice on literacy and intermediate-level education and other activities in countries of different development levels all over the world.

Therefore, Madam Chairman, to achieve social integration, solidarity must be the key word.

Thank you.

