

**REMARKS ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN SOLIDARITY DAY
20 December 2006 (observed on 15 December 2006)**

By

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Vice President of ECOSOC

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank Ambassador Hachani, President of ECOSOC for undertaking this initiative.

Solidarity is a word that has probably been embraced in our parlance because it is a simple way to express a deeply complex relationship among human beings. Literally it means *communities being perfectly united or at one, especially in interests, sympathies, or aspirations*.

In my view, two events have been excellent lead-ins to this first observance of the International Human Solidarity Day: the 27 November meeting organized by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Sheikha Haya Rashed al Khalifa, on “*Partnerships towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals: Taking stock, moving forward*” and the 29 November special event organized by the Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) in cooperation with the DESA Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination on “*Our Common Humanity in the Information Age: Principles and Values for Development*”.

Not only did each discuss solidarity as a principle explicitly, they were each in their own right a microcosm of solidarity and cooperation. The message was clear: we are all in this together.

Both meetings brought together a multitude of actors to consider the nature of our moral obligations to alleviate poverty, end hunger, improve health, ensure access to clean water, and otherwise fulfil the internationally agreed development goals. They also discussed how best to work in concert to achieve the aspirations articulated in the MDGs and to achieve a peaceful, stable world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

War affects us all. Security and development are two sides of the same coin. Conflict hampers our ability to achieve the MDGs. There is no redeeming value in bloodshed, fear, suffering and pain. There are countless wounds that need to be healed once guns are put aside. Solidarity must be demonstrated by the international community and its partners to assist countries emerging from conflict to repair their war-torn societies, rebuild their cities and villages, and restore hope.

I wish to reiterate my gratitude towards the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, one of ECOSOC's Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on Countries Emerging from Conflict, for its tremendous efforts to consolidate stability in my country and support economic and social development. Without this partnership, progress would not be possible.

This International Day of Solidarity is intended to bring attention to the affliction of extreme poverty, the greatest global challenge facing the world today. Let us not forget all the innocent victims of violence and conflict who find, in the aftermath of war, their homes destroyed, infrastructure in disrepair, livelihoods destroyed, families ripped apart, governments in turmoil. On this Day, we must act as *communities perfectly united* to bring peace and development to all the world's peoples.