

**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 convening this meeting today.

At the 2005 World Summit, World Leaders emphasized the indivisible link between security, development and human rights. Put simply, a world in which billions are suffering from poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease, and which is not advancing down the road of development, will not be a world of peace.

The concept of international human solidarity cuts to the front and center of the nexus between peace, development and human rights. It is a universal value, rooted in the foundation of democracy, dignity, sustainability and international cooperation, and connotes protection and security for all. As such, it can be applied to a broad range of “old” and new human challenges. We have seen that it holds the potential to unite the global community in addressing poverty, climate change, good governance and human rights, or in the fight against terrorism and HIV/AIDS pandemic, or in helping victims of natural disasters. Human solidarity should thus become a founding pillar of international cooperation for the 21st century.

Yet, today we see solidarity in crises around the world. One-fifth of the population survives on less than \$ 1 day, some 20 countries are involved in armed conflict, and poverty brings suffering to millions of people. These facts challenge us to start acting with tenacity in a spirit of proactive solidarity.

Solidarity acquires new meaning in the contemporary context of globalization and economic integration. Making globalization “a positive force for all” means, first and foremost, making it more equitable. And that, in turn, requires an end to approaching the social and human rights dimensions of globalization less as an afterthought. The interconnectivity of people is in some ways the most powerful product of globalization. This offers new opportunities to forge alliances that can unleash the potential for broader and faster economic and social development. But to have such impact, globalization and solidarity must go hand in hand so as to give our fellow human beings a chance to share in our prosperity.

The Nordic countries have a strong commitment to a path of human solidarity. We have spoken out in the name of equality and justice. And we have embarked on an extensive program of economic, political and social reform within our own countries. Our basic goal is to bring about a “global neighborhood” that empowers both men and women, and offers opportunity to all.

The United Nations itself is an embodiment of institutionalized solidarity. The Organization was founded on the basic premise of unity and harmony among its Members expressed in the concept of collective security that relies on the solidarity of its Members “to maintain international peace and security”. The UN system as whole should offer an exemplary leadership in giving tangibility to the universal values at the global level.

Today, one of the most visible manifestations of international solidarity and extension of opportunity is the United Nations Development Agenda, drawn from the Conferences and Summits held since the 1990s. It provides not only a comprehensive framework around which to mobilize the will to act for our common good but also the means for long-term development. This day would be a good beginning to recommit ourselves to the principle of human solidarity, which remains the foundation for collective action for the larger good of humanity.

Thank you.