



STATEMENT
BY

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of the STATE OF QATAR**

IN

**The high-level plenary meeting of the United Nations
General Assembly**

ON

**Africa's development needs:
State of implementation of various commitments,
challenges and the way forward
(Round table 4)**

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Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for convening this important debate on an issue that is considered at the heart of the concerns of the organization. I would also like to extend to His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations my thanks and appreciation for his efforts to enhance the performance of the organization.

Mr. President,

The difficult challenge facing the international community today is to maintain international peace and security while achieving economic welfare and sustainable development. There is no doubt that the maintenance of peace and security is almost impossible in an environment deprived of the minimum of decent living conditions. Poverty and destitution beget tensions that eventually lead to breach of international peace and security.

Mr. President,

Progress made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the African continent is not up to the required level, especially given that half of the period allowed for the achievement of these goals has passed. And as you know, the MDGs should be realized by 2015. The slow rate of progress towards the achievement of the MDGs is cause for great concern over the African continent. The adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000 is a laudable initiative by the international community to combat poverty, accelerate human development and facilitate the gradual and more effective integration of Africa, particularly in the mainstream of the global economy. While parts of Africa have achieved good results in attaining food security for their population, sub-Saharan Africa has little to show in terms of rates of progress, for they have not been able to achieve a sustainable reduction in poverty and hunger, provide universal primary education, decrease infant mortality rates, or improve maternal health. The question to be asked in this regard is whether the international community has done enough to accelerate development in Africa. If we are to judge from the state of implementation of various commitments to date, the answer would be negative.

Mr. President,

Sustaining economic growth is a prerequisite to finding the necessary resources to combat poverty and hunger. If the Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is necessary to strengthen the official development assistance provided to those countries. The donor community should be quicker in taking action if it is really willing to meet the commitments it made at the highest level in 2005 to double aid to Africa by 2010. Progress must be made also in the global trade talks on the Doha Round, and more equitable rules for foreign trade must be established. At the same time, sub-Saharan African countries need to ensure that their national development policies and strategies reflect clearly their obligations

not only towards the reduction of poverty, but also towards addressing the multidimensional causes and implications of poverty in an equitable manner.

Mr. President,

Our meeting today entails that we ascertain that the most critical action in the fight against poverty is to activate international partnerships to assist African nations in the implementation of programs and projects aimed at achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all in urban and rural areas alike. This has been emphasized by the world leaders at the 2005 World Summit.

Endorsed by the General Assembly of the United Nations as the political framework for Africa's Development, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) recognizes that the resolution of conflicts and promotion of peace and security are prerequisites for making any development or progress effort.

That partnership, as developed by the African leaders, requires the commitment of the African countries to the respect of human rights, good governance and democracy. Thus, Africans themselves would be responsible for the success of that collective African program, which would still count also on the effective and real contribution of the United Nations system and the international community as a whole, including the private sector and the civil society.

Finally, we believe that focus must be put on four pillars to help the African countries in their efforts to achieve development and, subsequently, the Millennium Development Goals.

The first pillar is the maintenance and increase of development assistance, while the second pillar is the international trade, since trade could constitute, under the right conditions, a powerful catalyst for development. It is worth mentioning that little significant outcome has been realized in this regard since the start of the Doha Development Round.

The third pillar relates to cooperation and security, for violent conflicts mar the lives of people. They are also a source of violation of human rights and an obstacle to progress towards the achievement of the sought-after development. A more effective international cooperation can help remove the barrier that violent conflicts erected in the face of progress towards those goals, thus creating conducive conditions to accelerate human development and real security.

Education, beyond any doubt, constitutes the fourth pillar in view of its role in poverty reduction. Education both in terms of quality and quantity is an essential component of the holistic approach to development.

I thank you, Mr. President.