

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT RECEPTION TO LAUNCH
THE MICROSOFT AFRICA STRATEGY**

New York, 14 May 2007

Thank you Amir for your kind words.

Mr. Orlando Ayala, (Senior Vice President, Emerging Segments Market Development,
Microsoft Corporation)

Mr. Akhtar Badshah (Senior Director, Global Community Affairs, Microsoft Corporation)

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you all to the United Nations this evening.

And I am especially pleased at the reason we are here: the launch by Microsoft of its strategy for investment in Africa.

African development is one of the highest priorities of the United Nations. We will need to work on many fronts if Africa's people are to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, triumph over poverty and enjoy sustainable peace and well-being.

The challenges we face include the spread of diseases such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis. We need to build up Africa's human resources through education. And we need create jobs and strengthen Africa's industrial capacity.

It is clear that high levels of official development assistance will need to be part of the picture as we move ahead. But as all know, foreign direct investment today is 12 times greater – I repeat, 12 times greater -- than ODA. In 2006, ODA totaled 104 billion dollars, while FDI reached 1.2 trillion dollars.

For more than two decades, Microsoft has been supporting many important programmes in Africa encompassing education, employment and local technology innovation. Its investments are making a difference.

I am delighted that Microsoft is working with the United Nations Office for Partnerships, which is facilitating innovative alliances for the entire UN system.

Microsoft has engaged with government leaders and non-governmental organizations across the continent. Together, they have reached agreements, forged partnerships and adopted new approaches to addressing some of Africa's most pressing issues.

Recently, the company announced that it is increasing its commitment and investments to bring new social and economic opportunities to developing and emerging segments around the world through Microsoft Unlimited Potential. Africa will be a key focus for this programme, and we welcome this important initiative. I thank everyone involved in making it possible, and look forward to the positive results it will no doubt bring for the men, women and children of Africa.

Thank you very much.