



ECUADOR

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
ECONOMIST RAFAEL CORREA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR
AT THE SIXTY-SECOND SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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** Check against delivery*

Mister President, Heads of State and Government, Representatives of the Governments of the world, Excellencies,

Allow to begin my statement today by reflecting on the commitment to fight against poverty in force since September, 2000 when 189 countries signed the Declaration of the Millennium Development Goals. Due to this agreement, we committed ourselves to fulfill, until the year of 2015, several basic goals in the road towards Human Development.

Today, at the head of a democratic, ethical and nationalistic Citizen Revolution, we would like to invite you to critically reflect on the definition of the MDG, its limitations and dangers caused by the design of minimum agendas that eventually give basis to the profound social and economic asymmetries of our planet.

The first limitation of the MDG's rests on the fact that, as strategy to diminish poverty, they represent a minimum framework. Our goal goes beyond those minimums, deepening key objectives and incorporating several others. To focus exclusively in minimum agendas as suggested by MDG may imply a high risk that would please certain consciences but limit the desires of profound social changes.

In this regard, we can assume that there are two characteristics that describe peoples' lives. One that deals with indispensable capabilities of human beings to subsist within a society, abilities without which life could not even be called human. A second aspect has to do with the capabilities that enable each one of us to develop our potential within a society. We are, therefore, talking not only about subsistence but on the right of people to enjoy a human life worthy of being lived.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

Having the goal of living with one dollar, plus one cent, in order to overcome extreme poverty or avoid a premature death, as gathered by MDG, does not mean leading a decent life. The development of public policies, in a country which tries to make radical changes, as in our case Ecuador, cannot be content with reaching minimum objectives, although obviously no one can deny that preventing the premature death of boys and girls or of nursing mothers is without a doubt a fundamental goal.

However, by focusing only on these, we are taking the risk to poorly accept human life as simply a process of resistance with a goal to prolong people lives by adding some hours to their existence. Therefore, we propose common goals that should be based on social maximums and not on life minimums. For example, we believe that it is possible to share different identities, to build and recover public spaces, to guarantee access to justice, to have an appropriate job that allows or guarantees our right to earn our own livelihoods, to have time for contemplation, artistic creation and leisure, among other goals found in the National Development Plan of Ecuador enforced by my government. It is by this way that

we relinquish the idea that the present is only a pure historic fatality in front of which we must surrender our efforts in our search for basic goals.

Furthermore, the perspective to stick to minimums also supposes legitimizing the reality in which we live that said minimums do not seek to overcome the distances neither the relations of power among citizens and their societies. Therefore, we also advocate for the recognition of the equal dignity of all the human beings. Granting to some people unequal rights must be always a temporary objective and must not ever be considered the *modus operandi* of public policy because it assumes that the "beneficiary" is placed in a position of subordination and indignity with respect to the others. In other words, it assumes not recognizing an equal human dignity with respect to the rest. It is not by chance that the World Bank always elaborates "poverty reports" and has never thought of publishing "inequality reports".

The best strategy to reduce poverty levels with dignity is to shorten social, economic, territorial, environmental and cultural gap differences. Thus, one of our government's main goals is diminish inequalities in an endogenous development framework, an economic inclusion and socio-territorial cohesion domestically as well as worldwide.

In this sense, what the government of the Citizen Revolution wishes to impose in Ecuador is the empire of human rights and universal values. The long sad neo-liberal night, in its privatizing and excluding efforts, forgot that said universal values and human rights, and by advocating for a staunch defense of the market, it proposed social programs that ended up fragmenting society in as many parts as there are social groups. A national project and a change in power relations within a society, does not mean an addition of fragments pretending that, they will make sense and coherence and, by luck, the parts of the puzzle will be assembled even without the complete number of pieces. It is indispensable to draw a shared project that must be constantly redesigned having us all precisely as parts of it.

In Ecuador, therefore, we proposed the creation of a democratic and participative National Plan for Development as we understand that without public participation of all citizens in fundamental decisions of our society, no country could legitimize and turn efficient said political decisions. In other words, we must change a political practice applied by traditional sectors, with their technocracy and elitism, to return the voice and action to those who must be sovereign owners, actors and beneficiaries of our public policies.

I would like to point out that MDG miss a vision of development tied to consumption criteria and strategy linked to economic liberation processes. Our view development in a different way: understanding development as a way to welfare for all, peace and harmony with the nature and fostering measures to prolong human lives. In this sense, we gladly debated in this Assembly on the devastating and unjust effects of climate changes. Ecuador has brought a concrete and innovative contribution to reduce CO2 emissions to preserve biodiversity with our Yasuni-ITT project.

This initiative stresses the commitment to maintain 920 million oil barrels without exploitation in order to avoid emission of approximately 111 million tons of carbon due to fossils combustion. However, this will imply a decrease in the amount of 720 million dollars of foreign investment that will affect the Ecuadorian economy significantly. We are ready to undertake this enormous sacrifice by only demanding the international community co-responsibility and minimum compensation for the environmentally generated goods. This extraordinary initiative should set an example to be followed by the international community in order to reduce global warming in our planet at the same time inaugurating a new economic logic in the XXI century that is to compensate for the generation of value and not only on the generation of commodities.

The United Nations General Assembly adopted a few days ago the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which was cosponsored and actively negotiated by Ecuador. This legal instrument has waited more than twenty years for its approval and will be a fundamental base for the protection of human rights of our indigenous peoples.

The welfare we are dealing with now means that the liberties, opportunities and real potential for the individuals will widen in order of them to achieve their desired goals. In this sense, there is a paradox: on one hand, free flow of goods and capitals searching maximum profits crashes against the punishment people receive on their freedom to travel globally in search for a better life, can not be tolerated. The Government of Ecuador does not believe on illegal human beings and is actively working to promote changes on shameful international migration laws, bearing in mind obviously that our great responsibility is to build a country that offer guarantees for a worthy life as a mechanism to prevent migration caused by poverty and exclusion.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

The end of ideologies, the end of history has not come true as many try to preach worldwide. Conservative sectors tend to make us believe that the world we live today is the best urging us to give up any attempt to change in order to build our future history. We advocate then for building solutions and commitments that allow us to search for better lives and organize a different global society. Our concept of development forces us then to recognize, understand and value each other, so as to enable self-realization and the construction of a shared future.

It is on the occasion of building this new world, this dream, that Ecuador would like to invite you all today.

Thank you very much.