

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

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of Sweden

High-level Meeting on the midterm comprehensive global review of the
implementation of the Programme of Action for the
Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

United Nations
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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Madam President,

My delegation fully aligns itself to the statement made earlier today by Finland on behalf of the European Union. In particular, I would like to reaffirm my country's full commitment to the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action. Clearly, the challenges facing the LDCs must be addressed in partnership between rich and poor countries. The Cotonou Strategy provides valuable input in this regard.

I would like to add to the EU statement, a few comments on Sweden's contribution to the efforts to eradicate poverty as well as some themes that my delegation believes are of importance to the development of the LDCs.

Madam President,

The Millennium Development Goals lie at the heart of Swedish development cooperation and go hand in hand with our commitment to implement the Brussels Programme of Action. The second report on Sweden's support to the achievement of the MDGs has just been released. The report establishes that Swedish development assistance in 2006 will reach one per cent of Gross National Income. Priority is given to the Least Developed Countries in the allocation of this assistance. The report is available in this room.

The High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence provides a unique opportunity to revitalize the support of the United Nations to the developing countries. If the UN can rise to the challenge of reform and become more effective at country level, it will be able to mobilize more development resources and ensure that more of its resources will reach the countries in need. The Least Developed Countries would be the primary beneficiaries of this scenario. Sweden will contribute to a constructive and fruitful consideration of the Panel's recommendations.

Income differences between the richest and the poorest countries, as well as within countries, have grown over the last 10 years. Widespread and deep income inequality is not only morally unjust, it is also inefficient. Economic growth is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for substantial and long-lasting reduction of income poverty. What we need is pro-poor growth. Focus should be on establishing an environment which is conducive to the creation of decent and productive jobs for poor people. This will in turn be a driver of growth.

Sweden strongly believes that the issue of migration and development should be on the agenda for discussions about how the situation in LDCs can be improved. We must acknowledge and build on the positive sides of international migration. As was emphasized by many delegations at the High-level Dialogue on Migration and Development a few days ago, the role of the diaspora, including remittances and returning migrants who put new skills and experiences at the service of their countries of origin, can have a significant positive impact on poverty reduction and development in the Least Developed Countries. Having said this, we must keep in mind that remittances are private money and should not be seen as a substitute for ODA.

Thank you.