

ADDRESS BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR MOSHE RAM
HEAD OF DELEGATION**

**TO THE
TWELFTH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE
AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD XII)**

**23 APRIL 2008
ACCRA, GHANA**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Secretary-General, Honorable Ministers, Heads of Delegation, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor to take part in UNCTAD's twelfth quadrennial conference here in Ghana. As a member of UNCTAD, Israel has much to offer in the field of technical assistance and technology transfer, especially considering its own development history.

In a very timely coincidence, 50 years ago, in 1958, the woman who would become Israel's first female Prime Minister, Golda Meir, paid a visit to Accra, and became enchanted by the diversity of the Ghanaian culture. She also recognized the need to establish a sustainable framework for Israeli-African cooperation in the field of

development, which is still going strong, five decades later. That visit inspired my government to establish Israel's Center for International Cooperation - MASHAV.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite the uncertainty in the global political situation and economic markets, one thing is certain - Israel remains committed to capacity building and developing partnerships in the region and elsewhere, and continues to search for common ground through technical and development cooperation.

As participating creditors in the World Bank and IMF's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), we seek to find ways to reduce the debt of some of the world's least

developed countries. Israel has already contributed to debt relief programs for a number of African countries, and will continue to consider additional debt relief, to the extent that resources allow.

We have also contributed to the International Development Association, lending our hand in efforts to assist countries in the critical fields of public health, HIV control and education. Furthermore, Israeli-based NGOs and civil society organizations continue to participate in cross border humanitarian and development activities, such as humanitarian aid in emergency situations and capacity building in the medical field.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of our greatest strengths vis-à-vis our developing country partners lies in directly sharing the know-how and technologies for achieving economic growth, which provided for the basis of Israel's own rapid development.

As a small country with limited natural resources, we believe that capacity-building activities and investment in human resources are the preferred way to achieve maximum impact in development. Education leads to empowerment - the best guarantee of sustainable growth.

Through MASHAV, we have trained thousands of professionals from all over the world, particularly from developing countries and countries with economies in

transition. Training is offered in a variety of disciplines, including agriculture, education, economic and social development, rural and urban development, medicine and public health, and science and technology.

Israel's "model" for technical assistance and training is based on a "customer oriented" approach to development, which is tailored to address the concerns of our partners.

My country believes in continuous sharing of know how, and investment in local human capital. This human capital stays in the region and further disseminates the skills they gained from their unique training experience, increasing its impact on both the local and regional level. As the old proverb states: "other people may be there to help you, teach you, guide you along your path, but the lessons to be learned will always be yours."

For the past five decades—and recently, in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals—Israel has consistently put its own creative solutions at the disposal of the developing world so that together we can work towards alleviating poverty, securing food, and furthering prosperity,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

My delegation is particularly proud of the Israeli-initiated socio-economic resolution adopted in December 2007 by the UN General Assembly, which calls upon the developed countries to make their knowledge and know-how in the field of agricultural technology more accessible to the

developing world, in particular in the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.

In the spirit of the first goal of the MDGs - the eradication of poverty and elimination of hunger, - we are eager to transfer our innovations in the areas of agriculture, combatting desertification, rural development, irrigation, medical development, computer technology and the empowerment of women, as reflected for many years in Israel's contribution to developing nations, particularly in Africa. This resolution compliments Israel's development agenda and the role it plays on the bureau of the forthcoming 16th session Commission on Sustainable Development next month.

In this regard, UNCTAD is an appropriate forum to reiterate Israel's readiness to share the expertise we have accumulated. The commitment to working together, regardless of geographical borders and politics, inspires my country's institutions and individuals to reach out for long term sustainable assistance, where desired.

Thank you.