



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CUBA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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STATEMENT BY ALBERTO OSVALDO NARANJO PAZ, VICE-MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OF CUBA. Economic and Social Council. Substantive session for 2008. "Promoting an integrated approach to rural development in developing countries for poverty eradication and sustainable development, taking into account current challenges". New York 2 July 2008.

Mr. President,

Allow me at the outset to convey to you my delegation's appreciation for your efficient leadership in carrying out the works of this annual ministerial session, which is devoted to an issue of paramount importance for all.

The Cuban delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the delegation of Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the G-77. However, we would like to add some question that we consider to be of vital importance.

Sustainable development for all cannot be achieved while the current unsustainable production and consumption patterns prevail, whereby a few developed countries consume and squander 80% of the wealth generated while at the same time millions of human beings in the developing world remain marginalized and without access to elemental basic services.

The ultra-orthodox logic of the market as the end and as the only solution to all problems must be substituted by a comprehensive approach wherein economic development advances in parallel with social development and guarantees the protection of the environment for future generations.

Developing countries are not responsible for the problem created. The solution to the vital challenge threatening humanity today cannot lie in denying development to those who need it most. We have common, but differentiated responsibilities. Those who, in an unjust and selfish manner, have hoarded wealth and technologies and are responsible for 76% of green-house gas emissions, accumulated since 1850, must shoulder the main responsibility in this effort.

The developed countries must honor the commitments undertaken in Kyoto on mitigation matters and contribute significantly to mobilizing additional resources to further adaptation efforts in the countries of the South.

Mr. President,

Much has been talked about the efforts related to financing for development, and little about the principles governing the international cooperation that should favor it.

In the current circumstances, and following the recommendations for transfer of knowledge and technology practices by international cooperation for more than a century, outrageous amounts of financial resources are drained from developing countries towards the first world.

While in 2005 the Official Development Assistance reached US\$ 107.1 billion and US\$ 104.4 billion in 2006, the developing countries paid out US\$ 2.7 trillion in debt service, for an annual average of US\$ 345 billion. Thus, indebtedness grew to reach, at the end of 2007, US\$ 2.3 trillion. The question of who finances whom continues to be as relevant as in 2002, when in Monterrey, Mexico shy promises to address this issue were made.

Developing countries are imposed all sorts of recipes, many are obliged to open their markets and to disregard their farmers, and their legitimate leaders are even attacked if they try to work genuinely to eradicate inequalities and to foster their national capacities.

The developing world, as it has been acknowledged more than once, needs fresh and additional resources, under preferential conditions and without conditioning, and under novel approaches and principles for international cooperation.

Mr. President,

The world food crisis has captured the interest of the international community during these days.

The World Food Summit, held in Rome in 1996, called upon eradicating hunger in all countries. Halving the number of malnourished people by 2015 was a temporary goal.

As time went by and with the curious support of the world's main developed economies, the rhetoric has only focused on the temporary goal. It has almost been forgotten that, according to FAO itself, the world produces enough food to nourish everyone, and it could provide food to 12 billion human beings, that is, twice the current world population.

Thus, the current food crisis is yet another evidence of the unsustainable economic and political world order. The crisis will not be solved as long as the rich countries refuse to remove the huge subsidies to their agriculture, their large agribusiness transnational corporations control the prices, technologies, standards, certifications, distribution channels and the financing sources of the world food production, and their governments impose the international rules for food trade as well as the technologies and inputs to produce it.

The crisis will not be solved as long as speculation in the raw materials market remains, stimulated by the sinister idea of turning food into fuel to satiate the rich countries' appetite for gas, and as long as oil prices continue to rise

influenced by the illegal war in Iraq and the speculative practices of the great international capital.

Despite all the abovementioned facts, the main beneficiaries refuse to address the structural causes of this phenomenon.

Mr. President,

International cooperation plays a decisive role in the promotion of sustainable development. It should respect the national priorities and should not be manipulated for underhanded political interests.

Cuba, despite being a poor country and enduring an over 50-years-long genocidal policy of blockade on its economic and social development, has shared its scarce resources with other brotherly peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, using the following principles for cooperation to achieve sustainable development:

- Solidarity and integration instead of competition,
- Generating knowledge where it is to be applied,
- Recognizing tacit knowledge and local talents,
- Sharing what we have rather than giving our surpluses,
- Respect for the interest and needs of those who require cooperation, without conditionings.

Since 1961, more than 50 000 youths from 129 have graduated in Cuba, 30 000 of them are from Sub-Saharan Africa and more than 10 000 are from Latin-America and the Caribbean. Currently, there are 30 000 students from 123 countries. Under the widely-known Operation Miracle, more than a million patients have undergone eye surgery, recovering their sight.

If our country has been capable of supporting our brothers and sisters with its limited resources, what could be achieved with just a fraction of the trillion dollars spent in arms every year?

Mr. President,

The attention to development issues demands a radical change in the way it is addressed.

It is necessary to struggle for a more just and equitable new international economic order. We must establish true solidarity among the peoples, and only then, our dreams will become the reality of tomorrow.

Thank you very much