

Islamic Republic of

I R A N

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

**Statement by
H.E. Manouchehr Mottaki, Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Islamic Republic of Iran**

**At the High Level Segment of ECOSOC
New York - 2 July 2008**

.....

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great pleasure for me to address the high-level segment of ECOSOC on the theme of "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development". This meeting is taking place at a time when the international community is facing with serious socio-economic and environmental challenges that could endanger timely achievement of internationally agreed development goals by developing countries.

The world economy is also teetering on the brink of a severe global economic downturn making the achievement of the sustainable development goals a formidable task for countries. The sharp rise in commodity prices appears to be the most important factor affecting inflation around the world, and the growth of the world economy is expected to decline markedly, to 1.8 and 2.1 percent in the outlook for 2008 and 2009, according to recent UN reports. The unfolding food crisis also endangers the achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs) by reversing some of the progress made so far in that regard. This crisis is a great humanitarian concern, and in light of the rapid population growth may also pose a threat to social and political stability in many countries.

In the absence of strong political commitments followed by effective actions by all stakeholders, these challenges could prevent us to maintain a strong pace for sustainable development and the timely achievement of the MDGs, in particular in least developed countries. Obviously, we should not remain indifferent to the situation of such a dire nature. Overcoming these obstacles requires collective will, vigorous cooperation, and effective implementation of the major global agreements on sustainable development.

Mr. President,

Before we think about the future, we should vigilantly see where we stand now. A brief glance at the current state of global affairs shows us a bleak feature of the today's world. Two decades after the end of the cold war and the subsequent calls for and expectations of brighter future through the establishment of a new order, the world still faces many problems and constraints that have constantly hampered the attainment of many important goals including the sustainable development. The old order has gone, but the new one has failed to present us a safe and promising future. The reasons for this failure are too obvious to elaborate. Ambitious and hegemonic policies of certain powers to impact, and even form, the new order have played a significant part in the today's unjust world. This well indicates the failure of the world affair's leadership by certain powers. The management of the world should be carefully scrutinized in order to find its shortcomings. The political aspect of the management of the world affairs today is non-democratic and faces serious constraints in the decision- making processes, and in economic aspects the said management is characterized with injustices and a deep gap between the rich and the poor.

In fact, in the course of the last two decades, the world not only has lost many unique opportunities, but as a result of unfair policies and practices of certain powers has faced with serious problems causing more concern than ever. A case in point is the increase in the nominal price of oil and food throughout the world.

Various reasons have been suggested by the experts for the emergence of this situation, such as: the intervention of transnational and intermediary oil companies in the market, the negative impact of the policies of the big powers on the security of the world's oil-rich regions, or the increase in the world demand. The reality is however that at least in the past four years, the wrong economic and international policies of certain powers have contributed to the increase in the price of the crude oil, and the world's financial and trade system has been serving the interests of such powers. In these circumstances, the poorest countries suffer the most and the big powers benefit the most, including through draining the financial resources of the former.

Failure to fulfill commitments under the international instruments with regard to sustainable development is another serious concern. We concur with the Secretary General that the long-term global problem of climate change has not been effectively addressed and very few countries are on track to meet even the very limited targets of the Kyoto Protocol, much less has been achieved regarding the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions required to effectively stabilize the global climate in the long term. It is crucial for developed countries to fulfill their commitment and substantially reduce greenhouse gas emissions within the post Kyoto agreement, and to develop adaptation strategies and to increase financial and technological support to developing countries.

Establishment of effective and meaningful partnerships among countries is a major element of success for achieving sustainable development goals. South-South partnership is of utmost importance for developing countries. In this vein, and as an expression of solidarity with energy consuming developing countries to achieve internationally agreed development goals, many oil producing countries have undertaken various measures to minimize the impacts of volatile energy prices on energy consuming countries through bilateral and multilateral means including through OPEC Fund.

As an excellent example of south-south cooperation between OPEC countries and energy consuming developing countries, OPEC Fund has helped to address part of the economic problems of these countries. Such meaningful cooperation happens at the time that some major developed countries point their fingers towards energy producing countries for the high energy prices. I wish to reiterate that the current uncertainties prevailing in the energy market are basically not supply-related but are due to many factors such as fluctuating commercial stock levels, depreciation of dollar and energy taxation policies in developed countries. It is worthy to mention that the rate of taxation to the end price of one liter of crude oil in some major consuming developed countries in 2007 ranged from 26% to 55 %. That means the income of some of these countries from the sale of one liter of oil in the year 2007, was substantially more than what oil producing countries got from the sale of their oil. The same trend continues to date.

Mr. President,

In 1971, financial and trade system of Breton Woods which was based on direct relation between dollar and gold came to the end. Today, we are also witnessing the demise of an order that followed this period and has been based, in an unwritten and unofficial fashion, on the world economic and financial management led by certain powers. In such circumstances, our role and responsibility, as the members of the international community who seek to attain sustainable development, necessitate to craft a trade and financial system that would be conducive to achieve this goal.

Indeed, sustainable development as well as global peace and stability require envisaging a favorable and encouraging trade and financial system. ECOSOC, as a major organ of the United Nations, along with other relevant international bodies, should spare no efforts to work on the ideas and initiatives that aim at promoting a new financial and trade order that can help the achievement of sustainable development. By doing so, the credibility and integrity of international organizations, especially the UN, will be greatly enhanced worldwide.

We have major international meetings ahead of us that are related to the achievement of the sustainable development goals namely; High Level Event on the review of MDGs during the GA-63, Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha, and next year the Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change. These meetings provide a new opportunity for developed countries to take the lead in making their patterns of consumption and production more sustainable, and based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as the polluter pays principle, to actively address the concerns of developing nations in their efforts to achieve sustainable development goals.

To support such collective endeavor, it is imperative for the ECOSOC and its machinery to assume a leading role in promoting dialogue and cooperation among all stakeholders to achieve internationally agreed development goals through identifying and addressing technical, financial, and political barriers to the development efforts of developing countries. The ECOSOC, in light of its mandate for system-wide coordination, is best suited to enforce sustainable development policy integration in the UN system, and to systematically monitor the progress made in this regard.

Thank you Mr. President.