

Statement by H.E.Mr. Ali Hachani

President of Economic and Social Council

Launch of the International Human Solidarity Day

10 November 2006

**Mme Chairperson
Mme President of the General Assembly
Your Excellency Mr. Lech WALESIA
Your Excellency Mr. OCAMPO
Distinguish Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen**

I would like to thank the Second Committee of the General Assembly for organizing the launch of the International Human Solidarity Day. It is quite fitting, since it was in this Committee that the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty was launched in 1996. The Committee has also been home to the process of monitoring, reviewing and enriching the activities associated with the Decade. One important element to the enrichment to the Decade has been the inclusion of the concept of Solidarity which is crucial in the fight against poverty. Solidarity includes the concepts of compassion and collective responsibility. In a world increasingly pushed towards individualism and market economics, the renewal of solidarity is a sign of hope especially for those who find it more difficult to pull themselves out of a life of poverty, disease and deprivation. In developing countries the inability of the marginalized to benefit from the new patterns of development risks leaving whole strata of the populations outside the stream of the development thus jeopardizing stability, harmony, and peace.

By proclaiming, in its Resolution 60/290, the “International Day of Human Solidarity”, the General assembly has conferred more visibility to the concept of Solidarity. The Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Final Document emphasized the value of partnership and Solidarity in helping reach the MDGs especially the goals relating to halving extreme poverty and hunger.

It is not fortuitous that since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, initiatives building on the concept of Solidarity have flourished. The establishment by the General Assembly of the World Solidarity Fund, the launching of the “Initiative against hunger and poverty”, “the contribution of solidarity: international Drug Purchase Facility UNITAID” and the “Digital Solidarity Fund” are only a few examples of mechanisms of which Solidarity appears as a common denominator. The value of Solidarity has thus acquired a multidimensional and operational meaning including the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

**Mme Chairperson
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Governments, private sector, civil society and individual citizens must re-learn the art of voluntarily helping the neediest not just through assistance but mainly through adequate programmes aimed at giving them the means to sustain themselves in the long run.

Tunisia, my country, is proud to have been among those developing countries which realized very early the need for such programmes when it launched, almost fifteen years ago, its National Solidarity Fund which was a great success in bringing down poverty to its present level of less than 4% of the population.

The International Community, on its part, adopted a similar approach when it established by its resolution 57/265 of 20th December 2002 the World Solidarity Fund. And, although this Fund still lacks resources to become operational, its existence is testimony to the need for effective innovative financial mechanisms complementing traditional ones in order to eradicate the scourge of poverty within the date limits set in the Millennium Declaration and the Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit.

On the other hand the World Summit for Social Development also emphasized that poverty eradication is not possible without simultaneously working for social inclusion, which requires solidarity with often excluded groups, such as the disabled; the elderly and youth. Inter-generational solidarity is of great importance as well. The Beijing conference on the advancement of women and the subsequent work to promote gender equality and mainstreaming has been another important facet of solidarity. We have thus put in this context greater emphasis on social protection, gender equality and concern for issues such as youth employment.

In short, the principles of Solidarity should be applied through different mechanisms in order to achieve the goal of poverty eradication.

**Mme Chairperson
Ladies and Gentlemen**

As President of ECOSOC it is my pleasure to inform you of the relevant work of the Council especially in light of the central role given to the Council in the follow up of the World Summit. Monitoring the progress of the MDGs, and promoting development cooperation are two of the important future responsibilities of the Council. The Economic and Social Council is committed to pursue its efforts to help the international community in reaching the goals established by the UN Summits and Conferences. The goals spelled out in the Conferences include the nurturing of a global partnership for development which is solidarity between the North and South to create an international environment favourable to the growth of developing countries and its impact on poverty alleviation. Through action on finance, trade and debt, developed countries can make a significant dent on the burdens faced by developing countries.

We hope that the International Human solidarity Day, we are launching here and which the General Assembly decided to be on the 20th of December each year will create the necessary impetus for the International Community to give a new appreciation of the value of human Solidarity.

The ECOSOC is planning to play its rightful role in the celebration of the day and within the Council we are planning to organize an event on 15 December which will build upon and contribute to the momentum being created today.

Thank you