

12 October 2006

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
on the 2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing
Countries, Particularly in Africa; New Partnerships for Africa's
Development; Progress in Implementation and International Support;
Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and
Sustainable Development in Africa**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The General Assembly meets today to discuss three inter-related agenda items, namely [Item 48]: 2001-2010: Decade to rollback Malaria in Developing countries, particularly in Africa; [Item 62 (a)]: New partnership for Africa's development: progress in implementation and international support, and finally [Item 62(b)]: Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) marked the first time that an African development framework had emerged as the focal and rallying point for the international community's support for the continent and as a basis for a new partnership. It is an Africa-owned and led process that reflects African leaders' common vision and shared commitment to eradicating poverty and to placing their countries, both individually and collectively, on the path to sustainable growth and development.

Its adoption five years ago was a promise of a new socio-economic revival for Africa - a multi-stakeholder partnership for a region that is still striving to overcome years of conflict, political instability, diseases and poor economic performance. Much has been achieved since its adoption, yet more needs to be done to translate commitments and vision into concrete measures and to build on the momentum generated in 2005, designated as the "Year of Africa".

The present report on NEPAD is the Secretary General's 4th Consolidated Report on the Progress in the Implementation of and in International Support for NEPAD. It is encouraging to note that the report recognizes progress in the key priority areas of NEPAD ranging from infrastructure to information and communication technologies, to education and health, environment, agriculture, science and technology, gender mainstreaming and the African Peer Review Mechanism. The report reflects the recognition of the progress made since last year, but also underlines the importance of undertaking policy measures to accelerate its implementation.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The World Health Organization report you have before you today states that malaria remains largely a killer of children and poor people and continues to threaten the lives of at least three billion people in 107 countries and territories. Each year more than 500 million people suffer from acute malaria resulting in the loss of over a million lives, 86% of which occur in Sub-Saharan Africa.

It saddens me to say that at least 3000 children die from malaria everyday mostly in Africa. International efforts since the beginning of the decade have faced some serious obstacles and setbacks, however with the establishment of the global malaria program by the World Health Organization at the beginning of 2006, providing a cohesive and strengthened response to the needs of malaria-endemic Member States, and the launching in February of the WHO Guidelines for the treatment of malaria, some hopeful signs have emerged.

Lastly we have before us today the report titled Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. The report notes that, while steady progress is being made in preventing, managing and resolving conflict and in building and consolidating peace, increased and concerted action is needed to prevent simmering crises from escalating and to ensure that the hard-won peace in countries emerging from conflict becomes irreversible.

I fully concur with the Secretary General that peace agreements must involve a broader group of national stakeholders and go beyond political and security issues by considering critical economic dimensions at an early stage. Peace agreements that committed all signatory parties to genuinely addressing the need for transparent natural resource and revenue management mechanisms, equitable distribution of resources, poverty reduction and anti-corruption measures would lead to earlier and more sustainable peace dividends for the population and thereby reduce the likelihood of the recurrence of conflict.

I am convinced that the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, whose fund was launched yesterday, will ensure that countries do not face a shortfall in assistance and prevent them from lapsing into major conflict.

The report also directs our attention to the relationship between conflict and natural resources, the impact of youth unemployment on conflict, and the challenges of DDR all of which are cross-cutting issues requiring our sustained engagement. I concur with the report that achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2010 will require greater political will and increased technical and financial assistance to African countries, regional organizations and civil society.

Conflicts, diseases and poor economic growth have plagued many African countries for decades and have hampered the region's quest for a durable peace and sustainable development. The adoption of NEPAD five years ago has provided the framework for a better future but as the Secretary-General states in his report greater efforts are required to effectively address the

obstacles that hinder progress - youth unemployment, the devastating social, economic and political impact of the HIV/AIDS, the illicit exploitation of natural resources, and the illegal flows of small arms. We need to tackle systematically in a coherent manner these obstacles to achieve tangible and sustainable results.

Thank you.