

17 June 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,
at the Follow-Up Meeting “Financing Development to Achieve the
MDGs”**

Excellencies, and distinguished delegates thank you for coming to this important event and for your contributions. I would also like to thank and all those involved with arranging this meeting and the State and people of Qatar as our generous hosts.

This meeting is timely and important because it is taking place at the midpoint between 2000 and 2015 – when we have committed to achieving the MDGs – but also because it is a staging post to the Ministerial meeting on Financing for Development taking place in Doha in 2008.

By hosting this meeting the government of Qatar is making an important contribution to the process, and galvanizing international support for the achievement of the MDGs.

The meeting has helped to raise awareness about the need for delivering on commitment and making additional contributions among the emerging donors in the Middle East. There has also been a frank exchange of views between donors and partner countries about the challenges ahead and how these can be best addressed.

Many speakers have elaborated on the need for the donor community to meet the international commitments that have been made on financing development; and also for developing countries to meet their commitments – made within a framework of mutual accountability – to put in place inclusive and accountable governance structures and sound policies.

The Monterrey Consensus looked at financing development from many angles: domestic and external resources, public and private, and also governance frameworks that influence the ability to mobilize resources, and how those resources are allocated.

There is a need to increase aid in line with the Gleneagles and other pledges, and also improve its quality in line with the Paris Declaration.

Aid delivered in line with donor priorities and not in line with country priorities – including through multilateral channels – will be less effective at reducing poverty, will constrain national policy space, and will undermine domestic accountability.

While this meeting has reaffirmed the importance of delivering the commitments on aid, it is also an opportunity to emphasize a key message. Notwithstanding uneven progress between and

within regions, and on the Goals themselves, it is still within our grasp to achieve the MDGs. The MDGs can be met if the right policies are put in place and supported by sufficient resources.

I outlined many of the successful examples of scaling up in my introductory statement. During the meeting we also heard in presentations from ESCWA, DFID, the World Bank, Millennium Villages and the OECD about the progress already made and challenges ahead to achieve the MDGs by 2015. I would personally like to thank the presenters for their important contribution.

I would also like to emphasize that the United Nations has been helping governments to develop ambitious, MDG-based national development strategies, and supporting practical initiatives to scale-up to meet the MDGs.

In summary, the MDGs can be met if political will is displayed on all sides. While the Monterrey Consensus outlined many areas in which progress must be made, an important area in the foreseeable future is meeting the existing international commitments on aid.

It is my personal hope that the Financing for Development meeting in Doha next year will be successful in re-focusing attention on this most pressing global challenge. In the remainder of my Presidency of the General Assembly I will continue to work on this important issue to ensure that the international community lives up to the high expectations of many people in developing countries.