

8 November 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Informal Briefing on the Secretary-General's Global Pulse
Initiative**

H.E Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Mr. Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary General for Planning and Policy Coordination,
Mr. Robert Kirkpatrick, Director, Global Pulse,
Ms. Zazie Schafer, Deputy Director, Global Pulse,
Ms. Makena Walker, Partnership Advisor, Global Pulse,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to welcome you to an informal briefing on the Secretary-General's Global Pulse initiative. This initiative is indeed an important response to new and emerging challenges.

Today's world differs in important ways from the world in 1992, when we made our Rio commitments and first aspired to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Today, we face new challenges ranging from the food and energy crisis, to the global recession, to climate change and increasing risk of natural disasters.

Of course, the ever-present challenge of poverty eradication looms large.

Multiple global crises have demonstrated once again that development progress is fragile and reversible. Populations who have worked for decades to be free from poverty may be driven back into its grip in a matter of months.

All these factors make the global situation today much more complex. To address them, we must collectively agree on a global and immediate response.

Last week I hosted an important briefing on advancing the United Nations Development Agenda beyond 2015.

During this meeting, Member States developed a consensual message highlighting the multifaceted and interdisciplinary support needed to accelerate progress in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 and beyond.

In the 21st Century, it is clear that one of the key questions we must ask ourselves as Governments is:

How can we achieve development that is both resilient and sustainable?

As we prepare for the 20-year review of the Rio Conference, we must assess whether we have the right instruments and tools to confront the new and emerging challenges of this decade.

Yet, as we are addressing unprecedented levels of global volatility, we are also witnessing useful innovation around the world. Such innovation is most welcome as we face these global challenges.

The United Nations is uniquely positioned to serve as a catalyst for learning how to apply this innovation to today's new development challenges.

The role of science, technology and innovation in achieving sustainable development cannot be overemphasized. However, this role is currently not yet fully exploited and needs more attention. In particular, regarding water management and sanitation, energy and public health.

I look forward to this briefing. The Global Pulse initiative is an example of how we, as the United Nations, can harness global innovation to help us better protect the poor and those living in the most vulnerable situations.

Thank you.