



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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(Translation)

Towards the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement by H.E. Wen Jiabao
Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China
At the UN High-Level Plenary Meeting on the
Millennium Development Goals

New York, 22 September 2010

Mr. President,
Dear Colleagues,

Ten years ago, in this very hall, world leaders held the UN Millennium Summit and made the solemn commitment of making the right to development a reality for everyone and freeing the entire human race from hunger and poverty. The Millennium Summit was a call for action to end global poverty and represented a milestone in the endeavor to promote the common development of mankind.

Time flies. Thanks to the concerted efforts of the international community over the past decade, many people who suffered from hunger now have access to basic necessities, many children who were denied education due to poverty now have their dream of going to school come true, and more and more AIDS patients have received timely treatment and care. That said, we must not lose sight of the fact that progress toward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is still uneven in different regions and fields. Many countries have yet to make visible headway in improving the health of women and children, achieving gender equality, and protecting the eco-environment. A considerable number of developing countries have been hit hard by the global financial crisis, natural disasters and volatilities

in the food and energy markets. And the global population living in hunger has increased. Achieving the MDGs therefore remains a long and uphill journey.

China, an active and sustained supporter of the UN initiative, has made tireless efforts to reach the MDGs. Since 1978, the number of Chinese living in absolute poverty has been lowered by over 200 million, accounting for 75% of the total population lifted out of poverty in developing countries. We have enhanced the institutional arrangements aimed at ensuring and improving people's well-being. We have extended the free nine-year compulsory education nationwide, introduced the rural cooperative medical care scheme for the 800 million farmers, and launched the rural old-age insurance program on a trial basis. Access of low-income groups to employment, housing and education has significantly improved.

On the other hand, we are keenly aware of the arduous tasks that we face in developing the economy and improving people's livelihood. China, with its large population, weak economic foundation and imbalances in development, is not yet a rich country. Its per capita GDP ranks about 100th in the world. By the Chinese government's standard, tens of millions of Chinese people are still below the poverty line. We are formulating the twelfth five-year plan on economic and social development and the program on poverty alleviation through development for the new decade, both of which will lay greater emphasis on poverty alleviation. We are convinced that the MDGs will be achieved as scheduled on the vast land of China.

Offering mutual support and assistance in times of adversity is a traditional virtue of the Chinese nation. Since the founding of the People's Republic over 60 years ago, we have, in an internationalist and humanitarian spirit, provided sincere and selfless assistance in multiple forms to other developing countries to the best of our ability. Such assistance has contributed to the economic development and people's well-being of the recipient countries, deepened China's friendship with them, and set a good example of South-South cooperation. The Chinese government will further strengthen and improve foreign assistance and contribute its due share to the early achievement of the MDGs throughout the world.

First, help improve the livelihood of people in developing countries. This is the primary objective of China's foreign assistance. To date, China has built over 150 schools, nearly 100 hospitals, more than 70 drinking water

facilities and 60-plus stadiums for other developing countries. We have sent a total of more than 20,000 medical personnel to nearly 70 countries, offering treatment to hundreds of millions of patients. In the coming five years, China will take the following steps in support of better livelihood for people in other developing countries: build 200 schools; dispatch 3,000 medical experts, train 5,000 local medical personnel and provide medical equipment and medicines to 100 hospitals, giving priority to women's and children's health and the prevention and treatment of malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS; build 200 clean energy and environmental protection projects; and increase assistance to small island developing states in disaster prevention and mitigation to help build up their capacity in countering climate change. Here, I would like to announce that China will, within the next three years, donate US\$14 million to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

Second, reduce and cancel debts of the least developed countries. By the end of 2009, the Chinese government had cancelled debts worth RMB25.6 billion yuan owed by 50 heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) and least developed countries (LDCs). We will cancel their debts associated with the outstanding governmental interest-free loans that mature in 2010.

Third, deepen financial cooperation with developing countries. To help other developing countries counter the international financial crisis, China has provided US\$10 billion in concessional loans to African countries and US\$15 billion of credit support to some ASEAN countries, including Viet Nam, Cambodia, the Laos and Indonesia. We have committed to contribute US\$50 billion to the IMF resources increase with an explicit request that the fund be used, first and foremost, to help LDCs. China will continue to extend financing support of a certain scale to developing countries in the form of concessional loans and preferential export buyer's credit.

Fourth, broaden economic and trade ties with developing countries. China has worked consistently to create conditions for developing countries to increase their exports to China through tariff relief and other measures. China has made the commitment of phasing in zero-tariff treatment to products under 95% of all tariff items from relevant LDCs. Since July 2010, we have given zero-tariff treatment to the exports from 33 LDCs under more than 4,700 tariff items, covering the vast majority of the products from these countries. In the future, we will give zero-tariff treatment to more products

and let more countries benefit from this arrangement. We will continue to encourage Chinese companies to expand investment in developing countries.

Fifth, strengthen agricultural cooperation with developing countries.

China has built more than 200 agricultural cooperation projects in developing countries and sent a large number of agro-technology experts to those countries, giving a strong boost to their agricultural development. In the next five years, China will dispatch 3,000 agricultural experts and technical staff, provide 5,000 agriculture-related training opportunities in China, and enhance, on a priority basis, cooperation with other developing countries in agricultural planning, hybrid rice, aquaculture, farmland water conservancy and agricultural machinery.

Sixth, help developing countries develop human resources. China has held over 4,000 training courses and trained 120,000 managerial and technical personnel in various professions for developing countries, helping the recipient countries build up human resources that are more valuable than gold. In the next five years, China will train another 80,000 professionals in various fields for developing countries. We will increase the number of scholarships and mid-career master's degree programs for people from developing countries, and provide training opportunities in China to 3,000 school principals and teachers.

Since July this year, Pakistan has been hit by serious floods, which inflicted heavy casualties and property losses. China is a friendly neighbor of Pakistan. Our hearts go out to the Pakistani people. In order to support Pakistan's efforts in fighting floods and rebuilding the country, China has decided to provide it with RMB320 million yuan of humanitarian assistance and has sent a relief team to the disaster-stricken areas. I wish to take this opportunity to announce that China will, on top of the pledged assistance, provide another US\$200 million of assistance to Pakistan.

Mr. President,
Dear Colleagues,

The next five years is crucial for the attainment of the MDGs. The international community must, with a greater sense of urgency and responsibility, take solid steps together in the following aspects to achieve common progress.

— **Identify work priorities.** The United Nations needs to put the achievement of the MDGs as scheduled on the top of its agenda and ensure that the process is not interrupted or delayed by other issues. The international community should give high priority to helping Africa achieve development and shake off poverty and should also scale up support for the LDCs. Developing countries should make the eradication of poverty through development a central task and keep enhancing capacities for self-development.

— **Honor official commitments.** To offer a loaf of bread is more useful than making an empty promise. Developed countries should fulfill in good faith their commitments, assume the main responsibility in assisting developing countries, raise the share of official development assistance in their gross national income to 0.7% at an early date, and provide long-term, stable and predictable financial assistance to developing countries. The assistance should be selfless and have no strings attached.

— **Improve the implementation mechanisms.** Institutional arrangements are an important guarantee for meeting the MDGs. The United Nations should continue to play a central role in international development cooperation. It is important to establish an assessment mechanism on the MDGs at an early date. International institutions need to strengthen coordination and cooperation with regional organizations to form a synergy in poverty alleviation through development.

— **Uphold a peaceful environment.** If a country does not have durable peace and stability, its people can hardly live and work in happiness and contentment. If the world does not have peace and stability, then the whole mankind can hardly achieve development and progress. Countries and nations should all discard past grievances, turn swords into ploughshares and resolve disputes by peaceful means.

Mr. President,
Dear Colleagues,

The adoption of the Millennium Declaration brought light to the people suffering from poverty around the world. It was a light of hope, a light of conscience, and a light of love. Today, we are gathered here again to make the light shine brightly across the globe and warm the heart of each and every one living in poverty. At this very moment, countless people, from Africa,

Asia and Latin America, and indeed from all places still under the shadow of hunger and poverty, are looking to us, their eyes full of expectation, and we cannot let them down. Let us work harder and cooperate more closely for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals on schedule and for the development and progress of all mankind.

Thank you.