

**High-Level Meeting on the Mid-term Comprehensive Global Review of the
Implementation of the Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries for the
Decade 2001-2010**

**Statement
by Mr. Todor Churov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of
Bulgaria**

Mme President, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I wish to join all those speakers who have already congratulated you and extended their wishes for success and expressed their readiness for support to your noble mission.

Let me at the outset stress that we fully associate ourselves with the statement made by the Finish presidency of the EU.

A year ago here in New York world leaders reaffirmed their determination to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015 and reiterated their commitment to address the special needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDC), particularly through the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2001-2010. The Brussels Programme proved to be a valuable tool for the achievement of the MDGs in key areas such as poverty eradication, reducing infant and child mortality, providing primary education, access to safe water, etc.

We consider the mid-term review of the Brussels Programme of Action timely and useful for taking stock of the achievements, identifying gaps and suggesting realistic solutions. We hope that this High Level Meeting will deepen the partnership between LDCs and their development partners and will assist the further progress in implementation of the commitments in the Brussels Programme.

My country commends the Secretary-General for his Report (A/61/173) on the implementation of the Programme of Action during its first five years. It contains substantial conclusions and results-oriented recommendations. Both least developed countries and their development partners have made progress in implementing their commitments. We welcome the fact that economic growth in a number of LDCs has risen towards the target of 7 per cent and look forward to further sustainable macroeconomic and financial stabilisation. Still, much more remains to be done by all of us since life has shown that MDGs are achievable only through concerted effort.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Bulgaria is strongly committed to the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action as part of a broader commitment to the global development agenda both within the UN and the EU. In its capacity of an acceding country to the EU Bulgaria has subscribed to the European Consensus on Development which also includes targets for increasing the volume of the Official Development Assistance (ODA). We are firmly convinced, however, that besides on the volume of aid, success in development also depends on quality and effectiveness of development assistance.

Assuming the obligation of an EU member, Bulgaria is in the process of building up a national capacity for providing development assistance. This process opens a window of

opportunity for new partnerships with developing countries, including the least developed ones, both on a multilateral and bilateral basis.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to share with you several points, stemming from Bulgaria's national experience in our transition from centralised to market economy, which I find relevant to this discussion:

First, in our country and the surrounding region sound financial and macroeconomic policies have proven to be an effective working tool for achieving long-term financial stability and for opening the way for sustained economic growth.

Second, the example of South East Europe has clearly shown that active regional and bilateral trans-border cooperation, aimed at modernized transport, telecommunications and energy infrastructure, provides a strong incentive for development. This is why we believe that South-South cooperation can be really effective in achieving LDCs' development goals.

Third, there is a direct link between security, conflict prevention and development. A stable, predictable and conflict-free environment is acting like a magnet for trade and foreign direct investment which contribute to job creation, promote economic growth and thus assist in raising the standard of life. Therefore, we would like to emphasise on the Brussels Program of Action's call for national policies and strategies to promote conflict prevention, peaceful settlement of disputes, reconciliation and post-war peace building.

Last but not least, good governance and promotion of democracy, rule of law and protection and promotion of human rights are identified by the international community as critical factors in reaching the Millennium Development Goals. Bulgaria's experience has proven the crucial importance of implementing these principles. We encourage their further integration into national implementation strategies.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

My country's successful economic performance and acquired expertise, along with the goal to become a donor of development assistance have motivated us to put forward our candidature to ECOSOC for the period 2007-2009. We are committed to contribute to the work of ECOSOC building on our experience in carrying out fundamental fiscal, economic and political reforms. This specific experience can be a valuable asset for translating our solidarity with developing countries into concrete action. We hope that in this quest to contribute to the work of the United Nations in the economic and social fields we can count on the support of the UN Member States.

Thank you for your attention!