



**STATEMENT BY**

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

**AT THE**

**OPENING OF THE PLENARY DEBATE ON THE  
NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S  
DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD) AND ON THE DECADE  
TO ROLL BACK MALARIA**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

**NEW YORK, NEW YORK**

**13 OCTOBER 2005**

**Excellencies,**

**This meeting of the General Assembly has been called to provide an opportunity for debate on two matters. First, on the 2001 – 2010 Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, particularly in Africa. And second, on progress in implementation and international support for NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development.**

**Our deliberations are based on a number of helpful papers from the Secretary-General, including the Report of his Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD. I particularly commend the Panel for rooting its work in the realities of the lives of the poor. We should all have in mind that – and I quote – ‘success cannot be measured in the number of consultations, meetings and plans alone. The lives of people must change as a result of African and international support for NEPAD’.**

**On malaria, there has been welcome progress in recent years.**

- The number of treated bed nets distributed has increased massively during the past three years - ten fold in more than a dozen African countries. That is a good example of aid working, and making a very concrete difference to the lives of the poor.**
- The first African factory producing long-lasting bednets opened in late 2004.**
- Since 2001, 53 countries have begun using more effective malaria drugs, with support from WHO and donors. There is a worldwide**

**effort underway to ensure that there are sufficient amounts of the raw material available to meet growing demand.**

- There has been increased political momentum behind the international fight against malaria, not least because of leadership shown by African leaders.**
- And there have been a number of recent pledges to increase bilateral and multilateral funding to tackle malaria.**

**But the tragic fact remains that every thirty seconds a child somewhere in Africa dies of malaria. Malaria remains the biggest killer of children under five in Africa. All this despite the fact that we know how to prevent and treat malaria, and we know how to do it cheaply. So if we are to lift this unnecessary and unacceptable burden of disease from the world's poorest, we need a strong partnership backed up by renewed financial and political commitment.**

**Turning to NEPAD, I believe 2005 has been a year of increased momentum for the cause of development, and for Africa in particular. This was evident at the World Summit, where leader after leader from all over the world stressed the importance of tackling poverty.**

**As a result of the various Reports, Commissions and Summits through the year, real progress has been made. We now have a clearer sense than ever before of what needs to be done to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. But I also know that, particularly in much of sub-Saharan Africa, there must be a rapid acceleration of effort if the goals are to be met.**

**We have seen some welcome new commitments, both from developing countries and donors. The G8 Summit in Gleneagles made substantial commitments on aid volumes and debt. And African Union leaders, at their Summit in Sirte, made strong commitments on governance and on creating an environment conducive for investment and development.**

**Thanks in no small part to the African-owned agenda which NEPAD lays out, Africa is creating for itself a time of opportunity the like of which we have not seen for a generation. In 1998, 14 African countries were in a state of armed conflict or civil strife. Now the number engaged in major conflict is down to three. The African Union is taking an ever more active role in peace and security. And there is no better signal of Africa's determination to take responsibility for its development than the news that 23 African countries have signed up to the African Peer Review Mechanism, with AU leaders in Sirte urging all member states to join as quickly as possible.**

**Having made this progress, there is now a four-fold challenge before us.**

**First, we must ensure that the commitments made this year are implemented. I was pleased to learn that the Africa Partnership Forum meeting in London on 4 and 5 October agreed that there should be one Joint Action Plan covering both donor and African commitments, and that progress on the Action Plan would be reviewed each year beginning in October 2006.**

**Second, the world must ensure that the final challenge of 2005 is accomplished: achieving an outcome in the trade talks at Hong Kong in December which advances the cause of development in Africa and beyond.**

**Third, we must ensure that the momentum generated this year is maintained and built upon. All those who have a role to play – African governments, regional organizations, donors, the International Financial Institutions, civil society, the private sector – must step up to the challenge. Here at the United Nations, it simply will not do for us to say that we have now done development at the World Summit, and that we'll come back to it at another Review in five years' time. We must keep development high on the General Assembly's agenda this year. A top priority is to get the Peacebuilding Commission established by the end of the year, so that the international community is able to give those African states emerging from conflict the support they deserve. You will also know that the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Akram, has important plans on development, not least the Special Event to be held later this month on the food crisis in Africa.**

**And fourth, you must ensure the world hears the full story about what is happening in Africa. Yes, there are still enormous unmet needs. HIV/AIDS and TB, alongside malaria, continue to take a deadly toll. There are too many Africans whose lives are blighted by poverty, insecurity or a lack of human dignity. But we must also avoid a sense of helplessness and despair about Africa. The more you can get the message out about the many things you are doing to tackle corruption,**

**improve governance, attract investment and help your people lift themselves out of poverty, the stronger the chorus will be which demands you get the support you need.**