



**STATEMENT BY**

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

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

**AT THE**

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

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

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**Excellencies,**

**We have heard the last speaker in the debate on the items before the Assembly. We have heard a total of 43 speakers in that debate. It is of course impossible to summarize the rich and comprehensive discussion we have had. However, allow me to list some key points that I think have emerged from this important debate.**

**First, with regard to malaria, speakers strongly welcomed the real progress that has been made recently. But there was also equally strong recognition that stepped-up action is needed to prevent the unnecessary deaths of so many people, particularly children in Africa.**

**Secondly, there has been recognition that the scourge of HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other communicable disease threatens to reverse the gains being made in development. Stronger public health systems are needed for prevention, treatment, care and research, as well as for the resources necessary to do all that.**

**Thirdly, it was widely recognized that the New Partnership for Africa's Development has changed the nature of discussions on development. There is now a spirit of genuine partnership and African ownership. For example, the African Peer Review Mechanism was frequently cited as an illustration of the way things are changing in that regard.**

**Fourthly, I want in particular to commend African progress in the areas of peace and security, which was noted by many speakers – for instance,**

**the African Union's Peace and Security Council and progress towards an early-warning system and an African standby force. We welcome the African Union's goal of a conflict-free Africa by 2010. The Assembly will recall that the figures pertaining to conflict were rather high in 1998 but have now gone from, I think, 14 to 3. I think that is also an interesting aspect of how we can live up to Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Let us remember that regional organizations and arrangements are part of the Charter. I believe that is an illustration of what this means in practice.**

**Fifthly, there was a broad call for the rapid establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, on which very important consultations and negotiations are taking place. But there has also been a strong message from this Hall about the importance of establishing the Commission quickly.**

**There has been a welcome increase in interest in Africa's priorities, especially the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme and the new international consortium on infrastructure.**

**The recent commitments on official development assistance (ODA) were widely welcomed, including the commitment to double ODA to Africa and the commitments by many donors to reach the target of 0.7 per cent in ODA. Speakers welcomed the progress made earlier this year at Paris on the effectiveness of aid and increased flows of donor funding as budget support. There were calls for further work to ensure that the donor system, including the United Nations system, is well coordinated.**

**In addition, speakers welcomed African commitments on governance, anti-corruption measures and the creation of a good climate for investment.**

**But there was strong emphasis on the need to keep up momentum and preserve the sense of urgency in our work, as well as on the need to monitor implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting and the particular commitments made to Africa. In that regard, I welcome the role of the new African Partnership Forum.**

**With regard to debt, speakers welcomed the progress made this year, in particular the G-8 debt initiative. But there were also calls for action on the issue of debt in all heavily indebted African countries.**

**On trade, from the very beginning to the end of our debate there was a strong push for a breakthrough at Hong Kong.**

**With regard to foreign direct investment, there was a concern that only 3 per cent of such flows are going to Africa. There were expressions of hope and determination, in some cases, to work to change that situation.**

**Lastly, we heard many good and practical examples of South-South cooperation as a very valuable complement to ongoing donor support. We therefore have national efforts, good regional efforts, good South-**

**South cooperation and, it is to be hoped, good cooperation between donor and recipient countries.**

**All those matters were raised during our discussion. There is a need to continue to monitor progress on those issues. I am sure that the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council will continue to carry out that monitoring.**

**I think that, coming after the summit meeting, this debate was timely in maintaining the momentum on the very important issues of development, not least the issues relating to the African continent and to fighting the scourge of malaria and other communicable diseases.**

**I thank representatives for making this debate a meaningful one. Let us carry its message during our continued work. I also thank members for their participation.**