



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

AT

**THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS OF THE
PLENARY ON DEVELOPMENT AND ECOSOC
REFORM**

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

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Fellow Co-Chair and dear delegates,

I am grateful that I was invited to come to you and I will just make some general informal remarks. We are in the midst of negotiations on a number of issues and there tends to be an emphasis on one particular issue at one particular moment. We heard mention of the Peacebuilding Commission and that was what we were hugely engaged with in December and now is the time where we are dealing very much with the Human Rights Council. But I want to make a few points that I think are important, about the importance of the subjects that you deal with.

Your discussions here, I understand from my colleagues, have been all in all positive and constructive and I thank you for this spirit in which you have approached these discussions and I thank the Co-Chairs for their open, transparent and inclusive way, that they have guided the process. This is a hugely important part of the Summit follow-up. ECOSOC reform is a vital part of the overall reform package. We can't have a reformed United Nations, in my view, without a reformed ECOSOC. I know that the President of ECOSOC, Ambassador Hachani, is keen to implement the reforms as soon as you give him the green light in your work here with this draft resolution.

As I have stated earlier several times, this year 2006 must be a year of implementation. We are good at producing words in this Organization, and I think it is very crucial that in these areas of economic and social affairs and

development we translate our words to action. 2005 was the year of commitments, very much commitments, welcomed commitments. 2005 was also the year of the 2005 Summit Outcome that we have to now implement. I wrote in my letter, as you may recall the 3rd of November, that by the end of 2006 national government and the international community must have tangibly accelerated implementation in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. So now in early 2006 we are really at a rather historic juncture if we are to take this challenge seriously and there is no time to lose.

While these resolutions are more about framework and mechanisms we should always keep in mind the realities in the outside world, which such frameworks and mechanisms are intended to address and this goes very much of course for the field of development. The cost of a failure to implement our commitments on development will be measured in lives needlessly lost or blighted by poverty, disease, lack of opportunity, lack of jobs, lack of education. I have seen for myself much of this during my time, not least for the United Nations. I saw it in Somalia, Sudan, Mozambique, 1992, 1993, 1994, and these images are with me always. I am sure we can all recall the chilling statistics that were brought to the world's attention in 2005, the fact that a child dies somewhere in the world, unnecessarily of course, every three seconds. And that 1.2 billion people worldwide don't have this, this glass of clean water within reach – 300 million of them south of Sahara. The choice is for a woman to trek for miles, as you know, to get sometimes polluted water.

It is now nearly five months since the World Summit took place. I don't want to push delegations, you, faster than you can go, and I don't want to set artificial deadlines. But I urge you to move as quickly as possible so that ECOSOC can begin implementing its reforms and so that a clear framework for follow-up to our commitments on development is in place and can be put to immediate use in our work.

I therefore look to you to move forward in a spirit of flexibility and cooperation and to work interactively with each other as much as possible, both informally and in these consultations. I will continue to follow your deliberations closely and wish you great imagination and great inspiration for the next stage of your important work. Thank you very much and keep up that good work.