



PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
PERMANENT MISSION AT GENEVA

**Speech by Ambassador LI Baodong,
Head of the Chinese Delegation
At the Annual Ministerial Review of the High
Level Segment of the Substantive Session of
ECOSOC**

Geneva, 4th July 2007

(Translation)

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Chinese Government, I wish to extend my congratulations to the First Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC and my appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your efforts for this meeting. I would also like to endorse the statement made by the Pakistani Representative on behalf of G77 and China.

The UN's 60th anniversary Summit affirmed that security, development and human rights are the three pillars of the UN work. The Summit also stressed the need for a more effective ECOSOC as a principal body for policy dialogue, review and coordination, aiming to promote economic and social development and speed up the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The First Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC is an important indication that the Summit Outcome is being implemented.

As economic globalization is deepening, international development cooperation faces new opportunities and challenges. Since 1990s, the international community has held a number of conferences that set the MDGs, a timetable and a roadmap for international development cooperation. Progress has been made towards the goals of international cooperation on development. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated in his report this year that most countries and regions would be able to attain MDGs as scheduled in 2015. This is an encouraging prospect. In addition, since 2001, the world economy has kept growing, and developing countries in particular, have maintained sound momentum for growth. All this will help facilitate international cooperation on development and realize the goal of common development. In the meantime, we must be soberly aware of challenges such as deepening imbalance in the global economy, shortage of energy and other resources, growing instability of the international financial market, stagnation of the Doha round of negotiations and the rise of economic nationalism. Moreover, there are non-traditional challenges such as climate change, deteriorating environment, epidemics and aging of population.

Mr. President,

Poverty elimination is on top of the agenda of the MDGs. To realize

the goal of reducing by half the proportion of people living in hunger and poverty by 2015, we have only less than eight years left. However, there are still one billion people living in extreme poverty. We have a long way to go to eliminate poverty. This first Annual Ministerial Review, with the theme "Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development", could carry out a mid-term review and discuss plans for future cooperation. This is very important and highly relevant. In this connection, I would like to make the following proposals:

First, move toward a true global partnership for development. The core of the global partnership for development lies in common responsibility and cooperation. Developing countries have the primary responsibility for their own development. They should formulate a comprehensive strategy for poverty alleviation and include it in the overall development planning. On the other hand, the international community, from the perspective of inter-dependence and common development, should reform the existing international economic system and allow developing countries greater voice and participation to ensure sound economic globalization and create an enabling external environment for poverty elimination and economic growth of developing countries.

Second, provide efficient financial and technological support to developing countries. Lack of capital and technology has long hindered the poverty-alleviation efforts and economic growth of developing nations. According to the report of the UN Secretary-General, attainment of MDGs by 2015 is hampered by a huge funding shortfall. As the total amount of global Official Development Assistance (ODA) decreased in 2006, US\$650 billion flew from developing countries to developed ones. This is a worrisome prospect. To address this shortfall, developed countries should fulfill their commitment of devoting 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) to ODA, and delivering 0.15-0.2% of their ODA to the Least Developed Countries (LDC). Moreover, developed countries should rise above the short-sighted commercial interests, ease technology monopoly and step up transfer of technology so that some key technologies can be affordable and applicable to developing countries.

Third, push forward the Doha Round of trade negotiations. A successful Doha Round is conducive to the steady growth of the world economy and an orderly conduct of international trade. The Doha Round is now at a critical juncture. Success or failure, all hinges on the political will and coordination of all the parties. The developed members, in

particular the major trading members, should show greater political goodwill, place priority on the agricultural issue and try to achieve substantial progress. Being a development round, the Doha negotiations should see to it that the developing members get tangible benefits and that the global economy grows in a balanced and harmonious manner.

Fourth, coordinate development policies. All relevant parties should better coordinate their policies and pool the existing resources so that all positive factors may work together for the same goal. The United Nations has a large role to play in this regard. China supports the UN in strengthening its dialogue and cooperation with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and other relevant international development institutions, and in making use of the new mechanisms such as the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum to study and design specific “means of implementation” and monitor the follow-up to international development goals. All this will contribute to global poverty alleviation and development.

Mr. President,

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to poverty alleviation and development. Ever since the adoption of the reform and opening-up policy, we have achieved great progress in the poverty-relief endeavors, as evidenced by the reduction of poor population from 250 million in 1978 to 21.48 million in 2006 and the poverty rate from 30% to 2.3%. China’s achievements in poverty-reduction not only benefit the Chinese people but also contribute to the world cause of poverty-elimination. In the course of poverty alleviation and development, we have gained the following experiences that work well under the country’s conditions.

1. Government guidance. The Chinese Government has put forward a scientific outlook on development, calling for comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable development. In its effort to build a harmonious socialist society, poverty relief is on top of the agenda. The Chinese Government has drawn up the *Eighth Seven-Year Plan for Poverty Alleviation (1994-2000)*, the *Development-Oriented Poverty Alleviation Program in Rural China (2001-2010)*, and other important documents. It has also designated 592 counties and 148, 000 villages for priority poverty-relief assistance in a planned way. Over the past 20-odd years, fund earmarked for poverty relief has risen from RMB1.9 billion in 1986 to RMB13.7 billion in 2006, with an accumulative input of 139.3

billion yuan. The importance the government attaches to the work and its great input have ensured effective poverty-relief endeavors.

2. Public participation. We encourage public institutions and organizations to participate in the development of poor areas. The most important programs include targeted poverty alleviation programs launched by Party and government departments and institutions at various levels and state-owned enterprises, and poverty alleviation program through cooperation between the eastern and the western regions. Other initiatives in various forms are equally effective. To name a few: Poverty Alleviation Through Education, Project Hope, Glorious Scheme and Women's Action for the Poor. All these efforts have made remarkable contribution to reducing and eliminating poverty in China and promoting development in poor areas.

3. Self-reliance. The government spurs local officials and people in poor areas to rely on themselves and work hard to improve their working and living conditions. The targeted people in poverty alleviation and development projects must play a major role and be involved in policy-making, institutional building and management.

4. Development-oriented poverty alleviation. We encourage and help the poor people to improve conditions, grow the economy, increase income and accumulate fund for their own development. Taking account of the practical needs of the poor rural areas, we organize and implement poverty alleviation and development programs village by village. We take effective measures to strengthen skill training for the labor force in poor areas, assist them in seeking employment in non-agricultural industries and encourage the establishment of bases for agricultural product processing in those areas.

5. Coordinated development. Economic development should go along with development in science, technology, culture, education, and health. There are multiple causes for poverty. To address them, we call on all concerned to work together to promote all-round development and create conditions for effective poverty alleviation while focusing on economic growth.

In addition, the Chinese Government has integrated poverty relief into the efforts for sustainable development. The newly released *National Climate Change Program* fully elaborates on China's measures to tackle climate change including economic restructuring, raising energy efficiency, development and utilization of hydropower and other

renewable energy resources. These measures have not only created an enabling environment for poverty alleviation, but will also play an important role in mitigating climate change and achieving sustainable development.

However, we are clearly aware that China is the biggest developing country and that its development still faces many difficulties and challenges due to imbalance between urban and rural areas, among different regions, between economic growth and social progress. China's per capita GDP has just reached US\$2,000. There are 21.48 million poor people and 35.50 million low-income farmers in rural areas and more than 22 million urban citizens living on the minimum living allowance. There are more than 80 million people with disabilities and 24 million job seekers in cities each year. You can see, China has a long way to go to eliminate poverty. We will continue to step up our efforts in poverty alleviation according to the principle of putting people first. In particular, we will pay more attention and give support to poor women, children, ethnic minorities and the disabled. We will further improve their basic living conditions, raise their educational level and help them increase income. We will scale up our input in poverty alleviation and engage people from all walks of life in poverty reduction and development.

Mr. President,

Poverty alleviation in China is an important part of the global efforts. China not only actively supports the world cause of poverty alleviation, but also participates in its international cooperation. Over the past years, China has conducted productive cooperation in this area with other countries and international organizations. At the 2004 Global Conference on Scaling up Poverty Reduction in China, China pledged US\$20 million donation to the Asian Development Bank to set up China Special Fund for Poverty Reduction and Regional Cooperation. The International Poverty Reduction Centre was officially set up in Beijing in 2005, which provides a new platform for international cooperation in poverty alleviation. As China's economy grows further, China will, according to the principle of equality, mutual benefit and common development, continue to actively participate in international cooperation, share experiences, conduct practical cooperation, diversify means of poverty relief and make unremitting efforts to achieve further progress in the global cause of poverty alleviation.

Thank you, Mr. President.