



NEW ZEALAND

United Nations ECOSOC Substantive Session 2007
High-level Segment

Annual Ministerial Review
*“Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through
the global partnership for development”*

Statement Delivered By

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ON BEHALF OF CANADA, AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND (CANZ)

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Mr President

It is my pleasure to speak today on behalf of the CANZ Group of countries, namely the Governments of Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

CANZ welcomes the holding of the inaugural Annual Ministerial Review, which is one of the fruits of our efforts towards creating a more effective Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), as mandated by the 2005 World Summit Outcome. We look forward to agreement on a multi-year programme of work to guide and focus the work of this new and important element of the Council's annual High-level Segment.

Mr President

In 2000, we all, as UN Member States undertook to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015. While some progress has been made, there are still over one billion people living in extreme poverty and over 850 million under-nourished and/or food-insecure. A disproportionate number of these are women and children. Moreover, there is a significant degree of variation in progress towards the eradication of poverty and hunger across regions, between countries, and among communities.

CANZ is concerned that, while the global response is encouraging, the challenge seems to be growing. Global figures mask regions and countries where not only the number, but also the proportion of poor and food insecure households has grown.

For example, and despite Asia's impressive recent economic performance, the Asia-Pacific region remains a particularly poor part of the world - 1.9 billion people live on less than US\$2 a day. Reinvigorating growth in Pacific island countries is a particular challenge.

We are also particularly concerned by the looming crisis faced by food import-dependent LDCs, most critically in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition to the expected doubling of its urban population by 2030, and the resultant stresses on health, water and sanitation-related capacities, the current upward trend in food and commodity prices will place pressure both on poor households, as well as governments, in endeavouring to ensure access to affordable food for rapidly growing urban populations.

CANZ believes there is a compelling need to improve the collaboration and effectiveness of the key multilateral food and agriculture agencies in support of strong nationally-led strategies for food security. We are encouraged to note the development of creative partnerships by the Rome-based agencies, which aim to build the capacity of poor farmers and countries to better supply and benefit from the rapidly growing proportion of local food procurement by UN agencies.

Mr President

CANZ agrees with the Report of the Secretary-General that development is a multifaceted and wide-ranging process, in which the different elements are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Naturally, the eradication of poverty and hunger is an important focus of our official development assistance efforts, including through the targeted delivery of aid and appropriate debt relief.

More broadly, our assistance is driven by the underlying premise that sustainable and broad-based economic growth, led by a dynamic private sector, is crucial for driving poverty reduction, and must be underpinned by peace, security and stable and effective government.

To this end, we encourage (i) improvements in governance, based on the rule of law, respect for human rights and environmental sustainability; (ii) sound economic and budgetary management and efforts to tackle corruption; (iii) broad participation in the benefits of economic growth; (iv) universal access to health and education services, including sexual and reproductive health; (v) continued efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women; and (vi) improvements in trade and economic policy, including openness to trade and investment.

On the latter, CANZ believes that an ambitious, truly liberalising, WTO Doha Round outcome is the best way to increase global incomes and more fully integrate developing countries into the world economy. According to World Bank estimates, an ambitious Doha outcome could lift global incomes by approximately US\$290 billion by 2015, with a significant portion of these gains flowing to developing countries, potentially delivering millions out of poverty.

Mr President

CANZ recognises that effective partnerships are essential in the global fight against poverty and hunger. Donors and recipient governments, international agencies, civil society and the private sector must all work together over the next 8 years to realise the goals we set for ourselves in 2000. CANZ is fully committed to playing its part.

Thank you.