

Intervention at the ECOSOC Special Event on Africa and LDC
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The facts on morbidity and mortality of the vulnerable populations in Africa and the LDCs are well known to everybody who cares to know.

We also are aware of the remarkable progress that has been made in the past decade in improving the health of poor people in low- and middle income countries. Responsible for the successes achieved was a coalition of motivated actors from the international community, multi-lateral organizations, national governments, NGOs and the private sector. Let us be proud of the progress made – we know what it needs in resources, skills and political will to get things done.

We, however, also know that the progress achieved was not equally distributed among the countries neither has it been fairly distributed within the countries. Different qualities of governance, different priorities in the allocation of scarce resources and differences in the cost-effectiveness of the approaches chosen have led to significant differences in the health development performance for the world's poor. Unfortunately many rich countries have not lived up to the commitments they made – and there are leaders and laggards within the private sector and within civil society.

In view of the negative impact of the current financial and economic crisis as well as of the fact that the world population will grow by another 3 billion people in the next 50 years there is a lot of reason for concern that we will not make the progress that could be achieved and would be desirable.

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IN THIS SITUATION IT IS VERY IMPORTANT

- to learn from the best practices known and apply the lessons learned wherever we work;
- to be aware that there is a distribution of responsibility and division of duty in well organized societies and to make sure that we are not trying to push one actor's responsibility to another actors responsibility portfolio;
- to use all possibilities for cooperation in good faith in order to take advantage of the feasible synergies and the plurality of resources, skills and experience we can bring together;

The private sector is expected to be part of the solution and not part of the problem. This means first of all to compete with integrity, be profitable, socially responsibly and environmentally sustainable in their core competence.

The pharmaceutical industry will have to be a credible and visible actor in the fight against poverty and for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially the health-related ones. This means to be successful in research and development, in order to come up with innovative and better medicines and new vaccines needed so badly.

Enlightened companies will offer preferential pricing systems for the essential drugs needed in the fight against poverty diseases, they will contribute with pro-bono research and also give donations.

Enlightened nations and actors of civil society will give incentives to those companies who live up to societal expectations, offer and deliver solutions that can make a difference in cooperation with the other actors needed for sustainable success.