

20 September 2010

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki,  
President of the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
on the High-Level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development  
Goals**

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Welcome and thank you for coming. That so many leaders at the highest levels are here today sends a strong, unified and unequivocal message to the world that poverty, hunger, and inequality are not acceptable and we are determined to right this wrong.

In 2000, we committed to a set of priorities with clear targets and a deadline of 2015 to achieve all of the Millennium Development Goals. With just five years left, much progress has been made. Many, many more children are in school today than before; health care is reaching some of the poorest and the most vulnerable; while the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases has shown marked improvement.

However, the evidence is also clear that much more needs to be done. Some goals, particularly gender equality and maternal mortality will not be met without intensified interventions; just under one billion people still suffer from hunger and malnutrition; environmental sustainability remains a huge challenge; and the global partnership still needs to be fully realised.

I take particular pride in stating that over the past months, in the run-up to this summit, we have forged a strong international consensus on the full and timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Negotiated over many months and many hours, the intensity of the discussions indicate how much importance is attached to the MDGs by all countries. We may disagree and have differences of opinion on how best to achieve these goals, but we are in agreement as to the importance of not allowing the poor to be left behind.

Dialogue and consultation, working with all partners, in a spirit of openness, transparency and inclusiveness, and respecting the small as well as the big countries are the pillars of the General Assembly. Upholding these principles was central to my Presidency during which this agreement was reached, as well as consensus on system wide coherence, the creation of UN Women and the revitalisation of the General Assembly. These achievements show that the United Nations remains strong and central to promoting higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development as first defined in the UN Charter.

However, let us be frank and acknowledge that whatever we say or agree in the coming days are only words unless in the poorest countries and the poorest communities, the poor start to see improvements in their lives. This depends on more than just goodwill and commitments. It requires good policies, tireless implementation and of course financial resources. To improve the lives of hundreds of millions of people through better health care, better access to education, improved access to clean water and sanitation, empowering women and girls, through programmes to conserve and protect the environment, hundreds of billions of dollars are needed.

But ladies and gentlemen, since the start of overseas development assistance, as well as the rise in private donations, billions of dollars have gone towards development and developing countries. Even with the impact of the financial and economic crisis, the aid industry figures to be around \$120 billion a year. So why then are the challenges still so staggering?

Clearly the problem of the misuse of resources remains and we should not ignore it. Nor can we forget that the quantity of illicit financial flows out of developing countries is many times more than levels of official development assistance flowing in. Equally, the quality and effectiveness of aid and how aid is disbursed are far from optimal. It has been proven that without governance and good policy making you cannot achieve results that benefit public welfare. But improvements in governance and policy making also depend on national ownership and responsibility that is supported not undermined by international efforts.

While the MDGs are an ambitious framework, still they form only part of the conditions needed for change. Development assistance can only accomplish so much. Foreign and domestic financial investment, equitable and pro-poor growth, and intensive job creation are the underpinnings for the transformation of developing countries to self-sufficient economies fully integrated into and benefiting from the global economic system. This is why a strong and equitable global partnership is crucial to success.

**Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let us remember that in 2015, even with all the goals that are met, there will still be poverty, there will still be hunger, and there will still be hundreds of millions of people living in unliveable conditions. But let us take the energy, the good will and resolve that we find here in this room today and ensure that the fight against poverty does not falter but continues through to the end of reaching our goal of a better world. Thank you.