

UNITED NATIONS



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**President of the General Assembly  
His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser**

**Opening Remarks  
Development Dialogue  
of the 66th Session  
of the United Nations General Assembly**

**10 September 2012  
New York**

Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations (TBC)

Your Excellency Mr. Luis Alberto de Alba, Vice-President of ECOSOC

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you all to this Development Dialogue of the 66th Session of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly Development Dialogue was established as a "specific meeting focused on development" to assess progress being made in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the MDGs.

This year's theme is, "Macroeconomic policies for the Future We Want: Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals".

The objective is to examine how macro-economic policy-making impacts the achievement of the MDGs and how it can accelerate progress in transitioning to a more sustainable paradigm of development.

Just this past June, I was in Rio de Janeiro and witnessed the occasion when world leaders adopted the Outcome Document of the Rio+20 Summit. The document titled, "The Future We Want" has the goal of

defining pathways to a safer, more equitable, cleaner, greener and more prosperous world for all.

Achieving these objectives requires the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection.

The Rio+20 Outcome Document, which has been endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/288, provides a solid foundation for advancing social, economic and environmental well-being.

It also calls for a wide range of actions, including establishing a process to develop and fully define global sustainable development goals (SDGs) to be agreed by the General Assembly.

The Outcome Document also recognized the importance of adopting forward-looking macro-economic policies that promote sustainable development and lead to sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth. In addition, these policies should increase productive employment opportunities and promote agricultural and industrial development.

Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The recent global economic downturn has severely disrupted economic growth worldwide and caused significant setbacks in the progress being made towards achieving the MDGs.

The global financial and economic crisis has now turned into a jobs crisis, with millions of men and women – and especially youth – becoming unemployed or under-employed.

An increasing number of families and individuals are struggling to sustain their livelihoods.

Many others are having to cope with reduced income, with high and volatile prices of food and energy.

Current macro-economic governance and policies have proven to be less than adequate in containing the risks emanating from the current fragile global economy.

There is a growing recognition that macro-economic policymaking needs to be re-visited and re-shaped to better achieve macro-economic stability and sustainable development.

However, there is always a cure for every scourge.

I have full confidence in the ability of the international community to overcome this difficult and challenging time by providing the necessary collective response.

Particular focus is being placed on how macro-economic policymaking can be re-shaped to achieve stability, create employment and decent work, and promote productive capacities, including in the green economy.

This revision is crucial for reducing poverty, advancing social equity, achieving the MDGs and thereby advancing sustainable development.

It will therefore be important to give full consideration to an effective integration of macro-economic policymaking into the post-2015 development agenda.

Today's Dialogue will help us to build on the outcomes of the Rio+20 Summit.

It provides an excellent opportunity to deepen our understanding of the inter-linkages between macro-economic policies, sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs.

Your deliberations will feed into the work of both the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the High-level Panel on the Global Development Agenda beyond 2015.

Regarding the Open Working Group on SDGs, please let me remind you that I have designated Her Excellency, Ambassador Maria Luisa Viotti, the Permanent Representative of Brazil, to serve as facilitator on my behalf in the establishment of this process.

I reiterate my call to you all to extend your cooperation and support to her, particularly by exercising flexibility and a spirit of compromise.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This Development Dialogue is a timely conclusion to efforts by my Presidency in the field of "Sustainable Development and Global

Prosperity,” one of the four key pillars I chose for our focus during this 66th Session of the General Assembly.

Over the past year, we have had several opportunities to address the anxieties of peoples worldwide on the critical issues of jobs, food security, and how to secure a better future for our children and their children.

It is in this context that, among other initiatives, I have convened the High-Level Thematic Debate on the State of the World Economy and the High-Level Thematic Debate on Excessive Fluctuation of Commodities Prices.

I would like to seize this opportunity to thank you, and thank the Secretary-General, plus all my partners, for your cooperation and support towards the success of these meetings.

The United Nations exists for these noble objectives – to coordinate worldwide efforts to serve the best interests of people worldwide.

Therefore, I am glad that our Dialogue here today is being held in the same spirit, to find the means to invest in the future we want.

I look forward to your active participation, creative ideas and concrete recommendations to effectively address this challenging theme.

To help steer our deliberations here today, we are fortunate to count on the assistance and expertise of two accomplished experts:

Our Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, will act as moderator of the interactive session.

Ms. Nancy Birdsall, our guest lecturer, is Founder and President of the Centre for Global Development, a prestigious think-tank based in Washington, DC.

To both of them I would like to express my appreciation and thanks for accepting my invitation to participate.

I wish all of us, successful deliberations.

Thank you.

**END**