



Permanent Mission of Germany
to the United Nations

Statement

by

H.E. the Federal Foreign Minister of Germany

Mr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier

at the

High-level Event on the Millenium Development Goals

Roundtable III

“Environmental Sustainability”

New York, 25 September, 2008

(Please check against delivery)

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very grateful to the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly for organizing this event, which offers a unique opportunity to draw the world's attention to the achievements and deficits in reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

Food crisis, exploding energy prices, climate change with all its consequences – be it hurricanes, floods or water shortages – we have to face these challenges together. Climate change is indivisible.

Development is indivisible. Peace and security are indivisible.

This is why Germany was one of the first countries to cosponsor the draft resolution on the threats of climate change and international security introduced at the beginning of this General Assembly by Tonga on behalf of the Small Island Developing States.

In this context, securing environmental sustainability is of crucial importance. Without ensuring environmental sustainability, we not only risk failing to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, but we will also put the survival of future generations at risk.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has warned us that we only have 15 years to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius. We have to bring about a transition from the old, fossil-based economy to a modern, low-carbon society based on renewable energies and high energy efficiency. This means a third industrial revolution.

We have to reach this goal in partnership. That will require contributions from both sides. Developing countries have to live up to their commitments, for each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development. Good governance, respect for human rights, environmental protection, equal rights for women and men – each country must take responsibility for fulfilling these tasks. Donor countries are likewise urged to make every effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

It is in this spirit that Germany has in recent years consistently increased its financial contributions and met its ODA commitments in line with the European Union's step-by-step plan. We shall endeavour to continue doing so in the future. In the next year, Germany plans to increase its budgetary resources for development cooperation by an additional 1.2 billion US dollars.

We will also need innovative financing instruments. A price has to be placed on carbon dioxide emissions and this income should be used to finance preventive and adaptive measures aimed at combating climate change.

This year, Germany became the first country in the world to start funding climate protection projects financed by the auction of carbon dioxide emissions. 120 million euro, proceeding from the sale of CO2 certificate auctions, will be invested in developing countries worldwide.

There are 7 billion people living on earth. We all want to live a decent life. This requires responsible governments, shared responsibilities and resources as well as a sustainable environment. All the facts are on the table and well known. Our scientists have told us how to proceed. So let us stand together in this one world. It offers all the resources we need. Let us preserve our precious nature. Let us make our world a sustainable one.