

EGYPT



مصر

The Permanent Mission of Egypt
to the United Nations
New York

بعثة مصر الدائمة
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نيويورك

Statement by

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Minster of Foreign Affairs

of the Arab Republic of Egypt

On the occasion of

The High-level Meeting on the Mid -Term Comprehensive
Global Review of the Implementation of the Programme of
Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade
2001-2010

Check Against Delivery

September 18th, 2006

Mme President,

It gives me pleasure to address you, not only on behalf of Egypt, but also on behalf of the African Group in New York which Egypt has the honor to preside over this month, while recognizing the deep ties uniting her with the African continent.

Today's meeting on the occasion of the Mid-Term Comprehensive Review of the Programme of Action for LDC'S provides an adequate opportunity to highlight the progress achieved in implementing the decisions included in the Program, and to examine the challenges facing the implementation of these decisions. Undoubtedly, this review process should provide a new boost to the efficient and coherent international work aimed at assisting this group of countries in achieving sustainable development and in the eradication of poverty for its peoples. Egypt believes that the international community should render all possible assistance to these countries to counter their increased marginalization in the global economy, and help them benefit from contemporary scientific, economic, and human capabilities, in addition to capitalizing on the results of globalization, while avoiding its negative implications on their economies.

Mme President,

The eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable development for all, constitutes a joint responsibility for both north and south countries on an equal basis. This requires that we all strive during the remaining period to achieve the effective implementation of the Programme of Action by 2010, through serious work and a genuine partnership to support LCD's. This partnership should be based on international solidarity and the principles enshrined in the UN Charter, in addition to the goals and commitments agreed on during the 2005 World Summit, prominent among these are national ownership of development plans and strategies, and granting assistance in support of these development priorities as put forth by each country.

The reports and documents issued by the UN, and the Kotonu Strategy in June of this year, have all confirmed the tremendous challenges that face least developed countries. These challenges **lie in** the lack of resources to finance infrastructure projects and primary service sectors, namely Education and Health, in addition to the need for environment-suitable technology transfer, while ensuring the sustainability of the development process in LCD's through swiftly integrating them in the international economy, and terminating all custom and non custom barriers that prevent access of their exports to the markets of developed countries, in addition to assisting non-WTO members of LCD's to join the WTO.

Mme President,

Undoubtedly, the time will soon come where the continuous non-implementation of UN resolutions on the ground will become obsolete and unacceptable, for these resolutions must not become a mere moral obligation that may be implemented or mostly ignored and bypassed. We do not exaggerate in saying that the peoples of the world will closely follow the steps agreed upon during this meeting, and will follow the serious and pragmatic focus of international interest in least developing countries, according to the timetable set out in the Brussels Programme of Action, in order to allow for progress in these countries and alleviate the suffering of its peoples.

Mme President,

I would like in this vein to focus on some issues of special importance from Egypt's perspective.

Mme President,

Egypt concurs with what was included in the Secretary General's report on the need to develop the quality of governance, and in particular at the international level, for this requires enhancing the level of transparency, democratizing decision making, and the full participation of all countries in international institutions, namely the United Nations, with the aim of fully implementing the agreed on priorities set out in working agenda at the government level. In that context, Egypt believes that this meeting presents an adequate opportunity to introduce viable and pragmatic recommendations to assist in improving the lives

of the peoples of these brotherly and friendly countries that are linked to us by ties of solidarity and brotherhood.

Egypt today renews its commitment to supporting least developed countries in accomplishing their development goals, as Egypt has offered over the past years numerous technical assistances to these countries in the form of programs and training courses, whether bilaterally or through triangular cooperation, with the aim of supporting capacity building in LCD's in different fields, including education, health, agriculture, information and communication technology, and other fields consistent with the outcome of the Millennium Summit. Egypt will remain committed to providing all it can to our brothers in these countries, out of our solid conviction in the principles of solidarity between the countries of the south, and out of our belief in the importance of international cooperation in achieving development and attaining security and stability at the ' different national, regional, and international levels, and in particular in our African continent that comprises the largest number of least developed countries.

Egypt is very keen on using its membership in the Peace Building Commission of the United Nations, in order for the Commission to focus special attention on peace and security in least developing countries, and to assist these countries in creating the adequate environment to proceed forward with the burdens of long term peace building, and in a manner that avoids the repeated outbreak of armed conflict, while pushing forward the wheels of development in all fields.

Egypt has also utilized its membership in the sub regional arrangements in Africa, in particular in the COMESA -which comprises 13 of the least developed countries - in order to enhance the volume of commerce between member countries of the COMESA, in addition to the free trade zone between COMESA members which has succeeded in providing the opportunity for the exports of least developed countries of the COMESA to gain access to the markets of developing countries in the COMESA, like Egypt, in conjunction with providing job opportunities for youth, and allowing for the success of numerous small and medium sized enterprises, which assist in the advancement of economic and living conditions of the populations of LDC'S.

Thank You Mme President