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Statement by

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4

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with pleasure but also with a feeling of great responsibility that I have taken the floor at this meeting dealing - I am deeply convinced - with the key issue of the contemporary world. I know that I am probably out of harmony with the view prevailing in the international community which, I think, is inclined to regard global terrorism as the most pressing global issue.

I do not on any account want to deny the urgency and the potentially even greater threat of global terrorism, but I claim with full responsibility that we shall not be able to deal with it effectively if we neglect the development issue. This is not the first time I am raising this point, but I would also like to use this occasion in order to reiterate my assessment.

Uneven global development, that is, the development of some countries and the falling behind of others, involves a destructive potential which can have the worst possible bearing on international relations, on the global order and its very foundations. I am convinced that underdevelopment, poverty, starvation, the fatal outcome of otherwise curable diseases and the lack of even basic education create the environment in which terrorists are bred and recruited.

Such a view does not imply any distraction of our attention from the immediate threat of global terrorism as it is sometimes claimed; such a view is the only proper way towards the elimination of global terrorism which has become a real danger for everyone.

Smaller groups of fanatics will always be present everywhere. What is essential, however, is whether such an initial group will rally followers. Let me remind you: not a long time ago even some European countries faced terrorism. But groups like Baader-Meinhof in Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy were eliminated precisely because there were no objective conditions for establishing a broader support base. In simpler terms, what was lacking was a sufficient number of people who had lost everything, with no prospects in life, and therefore ready to resort to terrorism.

However, underdevelopment is a different story. Underdevelopment is first of all the underpinning of political dependence and helplessness, then the source of personal hopelessness, and thereby the pool from which potential terrorists are drawn. Of course, these are as a rule unfortunate people abused by others - and the recruiters obviously do not feel the adversities of underdevelopment - but underdevelopment is the foundation of it all. Let me repeat: the *foundation*.

Therefore, what the world needs is development, well-balanced global development. Not development in which some countries will develop at the

expense of others, in which some will progress to ever greater prosperity while others sink into ever greater poverty, not development in which some — virtually speaking — will reach for the stars *as* others are born hungry to die of starvation.

They say that globalization is inevitable. Maybe that is really the case. But no one can convince me that the negative effects of globalization, seen daily and everywhere, are also inevitable. If globalization is really inevitable, it should not be limited to poverty but include development as well. Development must become a global process.

Developed countries are becoming aware of this need, and that is good. Therefore, I welcome every step taken by the developed countries either on their own or in association with some developing countries to relieve the position of the underdeveloped and in order to raise funds for financing development. It is precisely the United Nations, I believe, that may play an extremely important role not only in enhancing awareness of the development problem but in providing concrete ideas for its resolution as well.

In this context, I welcome this meeting, and thank you for the opportunity to share with you my reflections on global development.

Thank you.