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Statement by

H.E. Tarja Halonen

President of the Republic of Finland

at the High-level Plenary Meeting
of the General Assembly

United Nations

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Mr President,
Mr Secretary-General,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My congratulations Mr President, and the co-Chair. I would like to thank cordially all those who have contributed to the preparation of this Summit, in particular Mr Jean Ping and the Secretary General KoS Annan.

Security, development and human rights go *hand* in hand, and they are key factors in arriving at a more just world. Today more than ever before, the opportunities for doing good are enormous. We have the capacity, and we have the knowledge and resources. We only lack delivery.

We all are part of the same global community. With effective cooperation, we can reform globalisation and make it an effective tool for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Eliminating poverty and inequality and promoting sustainable development of the economy and the environment are our common goals. We have to improve the status and rights of women, and respect the rights of children.

The international community has started to understand the importance of the social dimension of globalization. Employment has to be made a global goal. Access to decent work and education for all are the key to lifting individuals and nations from poverty to prosperity.

The second conference of the Helsinki Process, held last week, sent a message to this Summit Dialogue between governments, business and non-governmental organizations will help promote fair globalisation. More space for multi-stakeholder dialogue also in the UN is needed.

The goals of the UN Charter are still valid. To fulfil them in the globalized world we need effective multilateralism, institutional reforms, and adequate resources for development. For that we need to improve the quantity, quality and effectiveness of aid, as well as policy coherence. In addition, we must see that HIV/AIDS is a social challenge calling for multi-sectoral response. Ensuring reproductive health and rights are crucial in all aspects of development.

I am happy with the outcome document, which provides basis for further work during the coming months. Still, I would have liked to see our firm commitment to fight terrorism be accompanied with progress made also in disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr President,

Finland is in favour of a comprehensive reform of the UN. The General Assembly must regain its authority. We have to find a solution in this General Assembly session to Security Council reform. The Security Council has to be expanded with both new permanent and non-permanent members. We need to continue the reform of the economic and social sector of the UN.

Finland welcomes the decision to set up a Peace building Commission. Its work should start by the given deadline. Moreover, it is particularly important to strengthen the status of human rights issues within the UN. Our decision to set up a Human Rights Council is excellent but all the modalities need to be resolved as a matter of urgency. For the real progress, we must ensure that enough women will participate in the work of these new bodies.

Mr President,

We have committed ourselves to the challenging goals, in particular to reducing extreme poverty by half, by the year 2015. So far, our efforts have not been sufficient. We all now share the responsibility for making the common goals come true.

Thank you, Mr President.