



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. Dr. Jan Peter Balkenende

**Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

also on behalf of Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden

**FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT
High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly**

United Nations General Assembly

NEW YORK, 14 September 2005

Ladies and gentlemen,

Every day, almost 30,000 children die of poverty. Poverty is a global curse. It causes untold suffering. Poverty, in all its forms, must be reduced and eventually eradicated.

Today the day has come to take stock. How far have we come in mobilising resources? Have we delivered on our promises? Are we ready to deliver on new commitments?

Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have for many years been major donors. We have allocated more than the UN target of 0.7 (nought point seven) per cent of our gross national income to official development assistance, proving thus that it IS possible to reach this target and contribute to the well-being of the populations in the developing world.

But this is not enough. Unless we all pick up speed, most MDGs will not be met by 2015.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, chances of meeting the goals are at best slim. The shortfalls are serious, in particular when it comes to child mortality, maternal mortality, the fight against HIV/AIDS and access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

No less than an extra fifty to sixty billion dollars must be raised every year in order to achieve the MDGs.

On the policy side, we have learned a good deal about increasing the effectiveness of aid. We focus on poor countries with good policy. We have learned what it takes for poverty reduction to be sustainable. We know that the MDG's will not be met unless human rights are respected, women and men are given equal opportunities and democracy is integrated into policymaking. We know it is also crucial to improve the business and investment climate.

We have furthermore promoted country ownership and better coordination among ourselves. This has led to much greater effectiveness. In that regard, the Paris Declaration is an important step forward.

As we expect the developing countries to do their part, we must do ours. This applies to everyone. We need to see more equal burden sharing. We call on more donor countries to join us in delivering on the agreed UN target of 0.7 per cent.

Much of the increase in ODA in recent years is the result of commitments by a few donor countries. The commitment made by the EU in May 2005 to raise its ODA to 0.56% in 2010 and 0.7% in 2015 (half of which will go to the poorest, in Africa) is historical.

But despite this, and despite the G8's important debt relief initiative, there is an urgent need to do more.

If we are serious about our commitment to reduce poverty, we must ensure coherence in our own policymaking.

We need to provide better market access, including access to financial services. Developing countries need to be able to increase earnings from exports. Trade distorting subsidies like the ones for cotton and sugar need to be addressed. If we want developing countries to be able to "catch their own fish", we need to ensure a successful meeting in Hong Kong.

We also need to be better prepared for humanitarian crises. Humanitarian funding can and should be improved through the setting up of a humanitarian Fund which is rapidly actionable and adequately funded.

In July, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, "Let history not say about our age that we were those who were rich in means, but poor in will."

We cannot agree more. We know the needs, we know the tools, we know now how far we've got in the last five years. We urge everyone to make real increases in their ODA levels and act now as agents for development in the fight against poverty. We, Denmark, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden will continue to do our share. Will you?

Thank you.