

CZECH REPUBLIC

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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Statement by

H.E. Mr. Jiff PAROUBEK

Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

at the High-level Plenary Meeting
of the General Assembly

New York, 15 September 2005

Check Against Delivery

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As my country fully endorses the statement presented here yesterday by the distinguished Prime Minister of the United Kingdom on behalf of the EU, I would like to share with you just few (additional) observations and comments.

Mr. President,

Five years ago, world leaders here in New York agreed on a set of targets, which, if they are met, could make the world better and more fair. The following year — after the terrorist attacks on New York and other US targets — our agenda grew even larger. Combating terrorism, which was mentioned only marginally in the Millennium Declaration, has become one of the top priorities. At the same time, it became obvious that various goals and priorities of the UN are more interconnected than ever. There can be no question as to whether this Summit should deal with development or with security — it must tackle both.

Mr. President,

The wide gap between the rich and poor countries cannot be closed in a short time. But the differences must be diminished and the Millennium Development Goals must be achieved. When we assess progress in meeting them so far, it does not help us much to refer to statistics and tables. What matters is the fact that, even in this century, there are children dying from starvation in many parts of the world. To deal with this shameful situation is the moral imperative to which everybody without exception must be committed — both the rich and the poor.

The Czech Republic vows to accept its share of responsibility. The Czech governments has overcome the burden of the communist economic legacy and succeeded in launching the national economy on a growth trend. The accession to the EU further accelerated growth in the country's key macroeconomic indicators. It is no mere coincidence that the Czech Republic is the largest donor among the 10 new EU Member States. Czech development assistance has more than doubled, and it will continue to grow.

The Czech Republic sees the UN as a key part of the system of multilateral cooperation. Therefore, we are deeply interested in improving its performance and strengthening its role. We are involved in UN peacekeeping missions; we will contribute to the UN Democracy Fund; we are active in the field of human rights; we are joining others in combating terrorism — just few hours ago I attached my signature to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. And we hope that our commitment will help us to win the seat in the Security Council for 2008 — 2009.

Mr. President,

The UN is often accused of being slow and inefficient, and it is blamed for many failings. Nothing can change the fact, however, that it is us, the individual member countries, who make the organisation what it is. With all its positives and negatives. It is first and foremost up to the UN's members to demonstrate their political will to reform this Organisation and to make it more efficient in this challenging era of globalisation.

This Summit seems to be ready, after weeks of hard preparatory work, to adopt far-reaching decisions concerning the development cooperation, financing of development, security, fight against terrorism, use of force, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, human rights or promoting of democracy, not mentioning the institutional adjustments. I believe that we are on the right track and that this will be an important milestone in the reform process. The decisions of the Summit must be realized without delay.

I thank you for your attention.