



60th Session of the UN's General Assembly

Statement of
President Haruhiko Kuroda
Asian Development Bank

High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly
UN Headquarters, New York
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Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

1. On behalf of the Asian Development Bank, may I first take a moment to offer our deepest condolences to those people affected by the recent devastating hurricane in the southern United States.
2. We in the Asia and Pacific region know all too well the human suffering endured in the wake of such tragedy, and the formidable effort that lies ahead to rebuild lives, homes and hope for the future. It is my personal hope that the world will respond to this tragedy with the same spirit of kinship and compassion that followed the Asian tsunami, and I wish the American people all the best in this difficult time.
3. I am grateful for this opportunity to present a regional perspective on the Millennium Development Goals in Asia and the Pacific.
4. Today we stand at a moment of great opportunity – and great uncertainty. The actions that follow this pivotal UN Summit will determine whether the world achieves the Millennium Development Goals. With two-thirds of the world's poor residing in Asia and the Pacific, it is abundantly clear that the region holds the key to solving the global poverty challenge.
5. No other developing region of the world has been more successful in creating economic growth and alleviating absolute poverty. But achieving all the MDGs by 2015 still requires massive investments in services and infrastructure to meet basic human needs. The scale of deprivation in Asia and the Pacific is daunting. The region has more people with inadequate nutrition, more living in slum conditions, and more without access to water and sanitation than any other developing region of the world.

6. The time remaining to achieve all the MDGs by 2015 is enough, provided efforts are considerably intensified, and prior commitments made by all are fulfilled. To this, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is fully committed. However, we need the support of all development partners to reach our highest aspirations for Asia and the world.

7. Sustained, rapid and broad-based growth is fundamental to our task. But growth will not be sustained unless it is inclusive and participatory, with clear benefits for the poor. This will require greater prioritization of resources for basic services, and for ensuring that women, indigenous peoples, and the poor are not left out, but are brought into the process from the beginning.

8. Growth will not be sustained if we neglect our environmental obligations. The same extraordinary growth that has lifted millions up from poverty in the Asia-Pacific region, now threatens millions more as environments become degraded, pollution increases and people migrate to already overcrowded towns and cities seeking opportunities. If growth is to continue, sound policies are needed to reverse these problems.

9. Growth will also not be sustained if Asia's huge needs for investment in infrastructure, productivity and technology, and human capital remain unmet. Clearly, we need greater private sector participation. Laws and institutions that protect property rights; encourage openness, improve financial governance and strengthen capital markets will attract private sector participation and provide new resources for growth. Efficient and responsive governments will be needed to steer this major effort. ADB has placed its financial resources and technical and policy advisory services for its developing member countries behind this campaign.

10. Increasingly, the economic integration of the Asia and Pacific region is becoming an imperative for sustained growth and development. Past regional initiatives have made significant progress in enhancing connectivity through infrastructure, and reducing barriers to trade and investment. Today, more than half of Asia's trade is between countries in the region, and more than 30 free trade agreements are being negotiated in the region. More recently, financial and monetary cooperation has intensified, particularly in East and Southeast Asia. Further progress in these areas will increase the region's resilience and growth potential. Expanding regional cooperation can also directly impact on the MDGs by bringing countries

together to deal effectively with environmental degradation, communicable diseases and migration of workers.

11. The task before us is both urgent and immense. ADB is committed to fighting poverty in all its dimensions. Our country operations support MDG achievement and emphasize cooperation with our development partners. Only through collective efforts can we succeed. The Paris Declaration, adopted at the High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness early this year, provides an excellent framework for such partnership. We also value very highly our partnership with the UN agencies in this endeavor. UNDP, UNESCAP and ADB have recently launched a joint report called "A Future Within Reach." The report, which highlights the importance of reshaping institutions and finding sufficient resources for the MDGs, is part of our partnership to assist countries face the many challenges in attaining the Goals.

12. Ladies and gentlemen, the prerequisites I have outlined are fully consistent with the desires and commitments of developing Asia and the Pacific. The momentum that has been generated needs now to be translated into action in the remaining years to 2015. Working together, we can create a future of shared prosperity, stability and peace. We look forward to the Summits outcome in setting a clear road map towards this end.