

# **MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**High-Level Plenary Meeting of the  
65<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
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**Statement by**

**The Honorable Dr. Tonio Borg  
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Mr. President,

Ten years ago we gathered in this same Assembly Hall to launch a process to give new hope for humankind. By adopting the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals our Heads of State or Governments promised our Peoples to meet eight important targets to eradicate the dimensions of extreme poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease and to engage in a partnership for development. Our Leaders acted collectively and with determination. Through our political commitment for action we gave the poor and vulnerable populations hope and aspirations for a better future especially in meeting the challenges which they continue to face as a result of the global economic, food and financial crisis, conflicts and man-made and natural calamities.

With just five years to achieve our promise and our commitments to meet the targets of the MDGs by 2015, this High Level Plenary of the General Assembly provides us with the critical opportunity to review our actions and our contributions so far, to ensure that progress gained in the last ten years is sustained and maintained, and to agree on a coherent and cohesive strategy to achieve the MDGs for the next five years and beyond. The comprehensive and detailed document which we will be adopting is a true testimony of the willingness and readiness “to reaffirm our commitment to work together for a better world by meeting the solemn promises made in the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit outcome.”

The United Nations Secretary-General has defined 2010 as the ‘Year of Development’. It is therefore appropriate that this High Level Plenary has been focusing on what needs to be done to accelerate the momentum to achieve the MDGs by reducing the estimated 1.4 billion people still living in extreme poverty; the 830 million people still undernourished and the over 42 million refugees and persons displaced by conflict or persecution; by reducing the risk of death or disability and economic loss because of natural disasters including climate change; by increasing opportunities for universal education; by continuing to improve gender parity in educational enrolment; by sustaining and accelerating the decline in the number of 8.8 million child mortality; by achieving the 5.5 per cent annual decline needed to prevent maternal mortality and improving maternal health; by further lowering the 2 million AIDS-related mortality; to ensure environmental sustainability by reducing the 30 billion metric tons of global emissions of carbon dioxide, conserve the biodiversity of the nearly 17,000 species of plants and animals which are known to be threatened with extinction, and improve further water source, safe drinking water, and access to basic sanitation; and enhance the development of a global partnership for development.

The MDGs Report for 2010 indicates that progress in achieving these Goals has been made toward meeting the MDGs in some regions of the world. These achievements are real even though uneven. However, by putting the concept of human development as a priority through what UN Secretary-General describes as “nationally owned development strategies, policies and

programmes” complimented by the Overseas Development Aid of “international development partners”, the international community has gone a long way to ensure that the benefits of progress are widely, and when possible, equally shared.

At the same time, considering the financial and economic upheavals which UN Member States had to face during these many months, it would seem that the road ahead is likely to be even more challenging. Therefore, a renewed effort must be made to strengthen our partnership and through unity and cooperation, we would be able to achieve the MDGs which as Secretary-General Ban stated “will put us on a fast track to a world that is more stable, more just, and more secure.”

Malta joins other Member States in acknowledging the need to push more strongly to achieve the MDGs by 2015. The achievement of these Goals would ensure that populations in middle and low-income countries, including the small and fragile States, would enjoy the basic essentials and necessities of a decent life. Whilst the MDGs were established during relatively stable times, where planning, growth and aid were relatively predictable, we are now navigating in unknown and uncertain waters. As we move closer to 2015, it is more than likely that the international community will have to devise and adopt an adjusted framework as well as innovative approaches in the search and mobilization of development mechanisms to respond to these changes.

It would not be appropriate to take for granted continued support for the MDGs even beyond 2015 without responding to the concerns and criticism voiced by several stakeholders. No development is possible without building an environment for security and cooperation and no long-term security can be guaranteed without developing further the ‘global partnership for development’. Malta therefore believes that it is of vital importance that the examination of the MDGs success and failures should be a constant process which should reflect our changing political, economic, social environment with the principal priority to offering support for sustainable progress in poverty reduction.

Malta continues to fully accept its commitments and responsibilities both as a UN Member State and as a signatory of the Millennium Declaration. As a Member State of the European Union and in its national capacity, Malta continues to provide its modest share of assistance in contributing to the development of developing countries. The basis of this policy is that Malta considers that education, health and food security are the foundations of human and sustainable development acting as catalysts for the achievement of all development objectives. For this reason the Government of Malta is ensuring that its development policy focuses primarily but not exclusively on countries in the Horn of Africa and in Sub-Saharan Africa which are facing major obstacles and difficulties in attaining the MDGs. Indeed, over the past two years, Malta has, among other contributions, co-financed several humanitarian projects in Africa, Asia and Central America. These projects based on the notion “fighting poverty through development” address the most basic needs of local populations and communities, including rainwater harvesting project in Uganda; a number of housing, educational and medical centres in Ethiopia; various educational institutions in Kenya; medical and educational facilities in Tanzania; and other projects in India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Guatemala, Peru, and the Philippines.

Through a continued commitment and partnership, Malta will work assiduously and closely with other UN Member States to fulfill the Millennium Promise to bring to reality the Millennium Development Goals’.

Thank you.