

STATEMENT BY MR. SALEEM I. SHERVANI, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM 48: INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION OF AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE OUTCOMES OF THE MAJOR UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS AT THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 30, 2007

Mr. President,

We welcome the opportunity to express our views on the agenda item "Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and follow-up to the Outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields", particularly on the crucial role of the Economic and Social Council in this regard. We thank the Secretary-General for his report on this issue.

Mr. President,

We agree with the Secretary-General that over the last 15 years, the major United Nations conferences and summits have together resulted in the emergence of a comprehensive shared vision of development. Further, as the report notes, the 2005 World Summit embraced a broader concept of internationally agreed development goals, not just limited to the Millennium Development Goals, which can be reached through the implementation of the broader set of commitments undertaken at the major United Nations conferences and summits. We also welcome the recognition in the report of the critical role played by the Economic and Social Council in fostering a comprehensive development agenda of the United Nations through an integrated and coordinated implementation of the commitments.

In this regard, we welcome the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council last year and the incorporation of new elements in its functioning. Of these, the Annual Ministerial Review has already been instituted. We believe that this annual event must have a special focus on evaluating the implementation of the "global partnership for development" and cannot remain limited to assessing national efforts made at achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The Development Cooperation Forum has an important role to play in overseeing trends in international development cooperation. The objective must be to ensure that such cooperation is aimed at assisting developing countries in implementing their national development strategies, rather than imposing additional aid conditionalities.

We are happy that the Economic and Social Council has finalized a two-year programme of work for 2008 and 2009 in respect of the Annual Ministerial Review. We believe that this would provide the necessary lead time to the various entities of the United Nations system to focus their efforts on the important themes chosen by the Economic and Social Council. However, it is also important for the Council to analyse and discuss topical and emerging issues, and not be constrained by the previously agreed programme of work. In this regard, we emphasize the importance of the thematic debate in the high-level segment of the Council's substantive session, and urge the early finalization of the theme for the 2008 session.

We believe that the key element of Economic and Social Council's activities regarding the development agenda relates to its acknowledged role as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development. In this regard, we underline the importance of the new mandate given to the Council last year for undertaking a regular and periodic review and assessment of international economic and development policies and their impact on development.

Mr. President,

International economic, financial and trade policies play a crucial role vis-à-vis the development efforts of developing countries. Unfortunately, current institutional structures do not effectively take on board the concerns and perspectives of developing countries in the formulation and implementation of policies, even though developing countries are most affected by such policies. The large precautionary accretion of reserves by developing countries as a result of conditionality-based lending by the Bretton Woods Institutions; continuing burden of conditionalities, even after modification of Structural Adjustment by the Bretton Woods Institutions; current fragilities, if not crisis, of the financial system; a history of inappropriate advice from the Bretton Woods Institutions such as during the Asian financial crisis; the declining relevance and effectiveness of these institutions in financing for development; the continuing problems relating to external debt and debt sustainability; the negative trends in flow of Official Development Assistance, which continues to remain crucial in assisting development efforts, are some of the telling indicators of the need for an urgent and fundamental reform of the international financial and economic architecture. Such reform must enhance the voice and participation of developing countries in the decision-making and norm-setting process. Given its unique role and legitimacy, the United Nations, through the Economic and Social Council, must oversee this process.

The strengthened mandate of the Economic and Social Council, and the need for the United Nations to play a central role in reviewing the international economic, financial and trade policies, including a periodic review of the policies of the Bretton Woods Institutions, from the development perspective, will remain on paper unless it is backed up by adequate technical resources and expertise. We call for the United Nations system, particularly the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council, to be strengthened and provided with adequate resources and expertise so as to assist in the effective discharge of these activities. We need to also consider innovating mechanisms like an international debt commission, and a committee of experts overseen by the United Nations (to assist in accelerating the development mandate of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights). The latter is particularly critical in relation to its impact on issues that affect mankind

including public health, benefit sharing of use of genetic resources and affordable environment-friendly technologies (crucial for addressing climate change).

In conclusion, Mr. President, we would like to reiterate the importance of keeping the development agenda at the heart of the efforts of the United Nations, and of an integrated and coordinated implementation of commitments made in the major United Nations conferences and summits through the Economic and Social Council.

Thank you.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)