

**STATEMENT BY MR. A. GOPINATHAN, DEPUTY PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE AT THE ADHOC COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE FINAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS NEW AGENDA FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA IN THE 1990S ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2002**

Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary General for his report on the Independent Evaluation of the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) in the 1990s. We also thank the 12-member Panel of Eminent Personalities and the team of independent experts which assisted them, for their evaluation report which provides useful insights. We hope that the evaluation conducted with the help of these reports, will contribute to the development of a meaningful partnership between Africa and the rest of the international community.

Mr. President,

2. Democracy is, as we have said earlier, a moral imperative. It also provides the basis for durable peace and stability. Africa has, in NEPAD, accorded the highest priority to democracy. We believe that our evaluation of UN-NADAF should highlight the priority which needs to be attached to the preservation of, and where required, the restoration of democracy. The OAU Summit in Algiers in 1999 had called for the restoration of democracy in States whose governments had come to power

through unconstitutional means. Such initiatives, including further measures which may be considered by the African Union, need to be encouraged by the international community.

3. The report of the independent evaluation also makes amply clear the importance of each country being allowed to determine its own economic policies and priorities. The evaluation finds that the liberalisation, privatisation and market based economic reform pursued by many African countries in the 1990s did help to improve the macro-economic situation. The adjustment programmes, however, failed to restore economic growth and had adverse effects on social conditions. The education and health sector were particularly hard hit, with governments forced to drastically reduce already meagre budgetary allocations. The report, in addition, states: "Democracy is undermined if elected African governments have policies imposed from outside, leaving their democratic institutions with little choice".

Mr. President,

4. The Secretary General has, in his report, recommended that the New

Partnership for Africa's Development be the successor arrangement to the New Agenda. He has also made certain specific recommendations on the ways in which NEPAD needs to be supported by the international community. Aid to Africa, he has stated, needs to be at least doubled to increase investment in education, health and infrastructure, so as to stimulate productivity and economic growth. This is of primary importance as, given the situation with regard to trade and investment, there can be no substitute for ODA. A renewed and strengthened commitment by the developed nations is also required to eliminate the various constraints on the export of processed, semi-processed and agricultural goods. Debt overhang which impedes foreign direct investment needs to be addressed by faster, deeper and broader debt relief. We strongly endorse these recommendations and call for their acceptance by the international community.

5. A principal conclusion contained in the report of the independent evaluation is that commitments have not been met in the past. ODA to Africa declined from US\$ 28.62 billion in 1990 to US\$ 16.38 billion in 2000, reduction of 43% instead of the expected annual increase of 4%. The Secretary General's report contains various options for monitoring commitments in

future. These need to also be considered by the African group. We would, however, suggest, as a general principle, the avoidance of approaches which are duplicative or intrusive or which run the risk of undermining democratic institutions in Africa.

6. Our evaluation should also take into account the support which other developing countries have, and can continue, to extend to Africa. South-South cooperation, we acknowledge, can be no substitute to North-South cooperation. We are, however, gratified that the independent evaluation has commented on the significant increase in the volume, quality and scope of South-South cooperation over the 1990s and noted that India, among others, has been particularly active in investment and technical cooperation arrangements with various African countries. We would be happy to further promote and develop these linkages.

Mr. President,

7. The development of Africa is an issue which unites us. This will, we hope, contribute to consensus and productive outcome of this Ad hoc Committee of the Whole of the General Assembly.