



STATEMENT BY MR. E. AHAMED, MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS, SECOND SOUTH SUMMIT, DOHA, QATAR ON JUNE 13, 2005

Mr. Chairman,

We welcome this opportunity to review substantive preparations for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in New York in September this year. The Non-Aligned Movement has taken a keen interest over the years in the reform of the United Nations. It is, therefore, timely, appropriate and essential for the Movement to identify common approaches to the principal issues involved.

The desirability of UN Member States, in particular, members of our Movement, securing a comprehensive and balanced outcome from the meeting of the Heads of State and Government in September cannot be over-emphasised. At stake is not only the need for reform that would enable the UN to better address existing and emerging global security concerns, but a new development agenda intended to address the most pressing social and economic needs of the vast majority of the poor and underprivileged. The second South Summit, for which we are here, will help developing countries to advance in a spirit of solidarity, the development agenda in the UN and the UN system. Its outcome would be an important reference point for developing countries.

Mr. Chairman,

The central challenge for the vast majority of our Movement continues to be one of development, the eradication of mass poverty and the development of social infrastructure, especially education and public health. Globalisation has highlighted the widening economic disparities among nations. We can no longer afford to just say that we are being marginalised by globalisation. Instead, we need to take practical measures to multiply its positive features and minimise its negative ones. We need to act collectively in dealing with issues relating to the international trading and financial architecture, in enhancing our voice and participation in the decision-making. If we are able to do so, globalisation can lead to a win-win situation for all of us.

To address the insecurities facing the vast majority of developing countries, the United Nations will have to regain its stellar role in setting the international economic agenda and bringing back development to the centre of the global discourse. We need a level playing field.

Concerted efforts will have to be made by the international community now to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals do not remain a chimera of promises and countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, would be able to achieve them. We hope that firm commitments are made and time-tables set for reaching the 0.7 percent Official Development Assistance target. It is also

important to ensure the successful outcome of the Doha Round of trade talks, which have critical development dimensions. India believes that debt sustainability for low-income and heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) and the needs of least developed countries and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are very important aspects of the global development agenda. We are also convinced that an expanded and comprehensive response is required to fight HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases, including concerted action on reproductive health issues.

We welcome the efforts being made both in the United Nations and elsewhere in urgently addressing the special needs of Africa. On our part, we have launched the Techno-Economic Approach for Africa-India Movement (Team-9) Initiative involving a concessional credit of US \$ 500 million and technology transfer to West Africa. We are also actively cooperating with, and assisting NEPAD on several developmental projects.

Mr. Chairman,

The single-most defining characteristic of the twenty-first century is the inter-connectedness of the numerous threats and challenges we confront, whether in the field of development or security. The Tsunami tragedy once again brought home to all, the value of collective action and international solidarity.

Terrorism, which undermines the very foundations of freedom and democracy, is one such challenge where we need to strengthen our resolve and efforts to form a truly effective global response. Recently, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention for Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. The adoption of the Convention was in no small measure a result of our collective resolve and efforts. It was also a demonstration of our ability to tackle the challenges that face us in the twenty-first century. We need to continue our pursuit of collective action in addressing issues of common concern by reinvigorating our efforts to conclude negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on international terrorism, as recommended by the UN Secretary General in his report, "In Larger Freedom".

Mr. Chairman,

There is today a window of unique opportunity to make real changes in the international system, leading to long-awaited UN reform, including institutional reforms related to the UN General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the UN Security Council. The central policy role of the General Assembly has to be restored; ECOSOC needs to be strengthened; and the Security Council needs to be expanded in both permanent and non-permanent categories to make it more representative and to ensure that there is greater legitimacy to its decisions. UN reform will not be complete without Security Council reform, bringing it in line with today's geo-political realities.

This year is historic because it also provides an opportunity to move forward on the UN's agenda on general and complete disarmament. Our Movement has long advocated the need to simultaneously address the issues of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in a comprehensive fashion.

Speaking in the UN General Assembly last year, the Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, had said, "All of us have to grow out of the comfort of the predictable, discard the constraining habits of thought and move forward with confidence to meet the demands of the present and the future. Each of us has to be prepared to take on new obligations and larger responsibilities relevant to the needs of our times." Indeed, the time has come to take a bold look at the changes that are imperative for streamlining the international system, and the courage to translate them into action.

Mr. Chairman,

The outcome document, which we will adopt today, has been the result of negotiations conducted by the Chair. We fully appreciate the effort to produce this document and to consolidate the Movement's views wherever this is possible. We also recognise that it may not always be possible to reach common agreement on all issues, particularly one as complex as UN reform. Many Member States would have core national concerns, which may not be adequately addressed or otherwise reflected in the outcome document, but would nevertheless have to be pursued. We are nonetheless happy to note that the areas of convergence are considerable and should allow the Movement to adequately reflect and project the views of the developing world in the run-up to the High-level Plenary Meeting in September.

In conclusion, we would like to express our deep appreciation of the prominent role played by Malaysia, under your eminent stewardship, in taking forward the Movement's positions on the critical issues before us.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)