



STATEMENT BY MR. VISHVJIT P. SINGH, MEMBER OF INDIAN DELEGATION, ON
AGENDA ITEM 53: ERADICATION OF POVERTY AND OTHER DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES [A] IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SECOND UN DECADE FOR ERADICATION
OF POVERTY [2008-2017] [B] INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AT
THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 63RD SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 22, 2008



Madam Chair,

Permit me to begin by expressing our satisfaction at the proclamation during the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly of the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty for the period 2008-2017.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of the Group of 77. We would like to thank the Secretariat for the useful report on the agenda item under consideration today.

Madam Chair,

Proclamation of the Second UN Decade to eradicate poverty is not an academic exercise, nor can it be compared to other UN Decades. Instead, we hope that this unanimous action will convey the high priority that all of us attach to the central issue of poverty eradication. We are witness to some of the benefits of concerted action during the First UN Decade to eradicate poverty from 1997-2006. In addition, as the report of the Secretary-General notes, the First Decade has led to poverty eradication being firmly anchored at the core of the UN development agenda. We would recommend the momentum generated be sustained through concrete action plans to implement the Second UN Decade to eradicate poverty.

In this regard, the report of the Secretary General has proposed interesting suggestions. We look forward to further consultations on some of these suggestions. We believe that measures to implement the Second Decade must impart a sense of urgency towards poverty eradication, and must fully involve member states. The development follow-up resolution of the 2005 World Summit Outcome can also provide useful inputs. Further, the forthcoming Doha Conference on financing for development is important in this regard, apart from being the first major event of the Second Decade. Overall, it is important that poverty eradication, which is the greatest global challenge facing the world today, should continue to receive the highest attention of the UN and the international community.

Madam Chair,

We are not on track to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, far less achieving the eradication of poverty. We hope the support of our development partners in proclaiming the Second UN Decade to eradicate poverty is backed up by greater enthusiasm to fulfill their commitments on issues like Official Development Assistance, debt relief, market access, technology transfer, etc. The report of the Secretary General has correctly noted that spending on core development programmes has remained constant over the First UN Decade. This cannot continue. Despite the ongoing financial and other crises, our efforts must not falter.

The report has also noted the importance for the international community to contribute to national efforts by creating a global economic environment that promotes economic growth and employment creation in developing countries. We emphasize that this is a critical requirement. Moreover, such an international environment must respect the policy space that each country requires to formulate and implement its own pro-poor and inclusive development strategy,

based on its unique challenges and conditions. Greater flexibilities are required in international regimes to ensure primacy of the development dimension.

We look forward to the Development Cooperation Forum of the UN Economic and Social Council playing a central role in international development cooperation efforts. We also believe that there is an urgent need to reform the international financial architecture, overseen by the United Nations.

Madam Chair,

India considers industrial development to be a fundamental requirement for achieving high economic growth, without which the eradication of poverty and the achievement of the development objectives will not become possible. It is with some justification that developed countries are also referred to as "industrialised countries". Moreover, industrial development also has a significant impact on the socio-economic transformation of societies. Thus, industrial development has been at the core of India's development strategy.

However, as the UNIDO report has outlined, a large number of countries have not been able to put their economies on the path of industrial development. Greater international support is required to assist the efforts of developing countries towards industrialization. We urge greater focus in industrial development cooperation on the crucial objectives of promoting the expansion, diversification and modernization of productive capacities in developing countries.

Yet, a crucial question facing developing countries is how to integrate pro-poor growth strategies with appropriate industrial policies. We believe that industrialization must include support to small and medium enterprises, which lead to large employment generation. We agree with the UNIDO report of the need for a dynamic private sector to lead industrialization. However, the report would have become comprehensive if it had also examined the importance of the public sector, as well as of industrial policy making.

The UNIDO report correctly emphasizes the inequitable globalization and barriers to trade as key obstacles to industrial development. In this context, we are concerned that demands by developed countries, which undermine the principle of "less than full reciprocity", in the Doha trade negotiations on non-agricultural market access, threaten to undermine the limited industrial advances made by developing countries. Instead, we need to work towards a multilateral trade regime that incorporates flexibilities that promote the expansion of the industrial and manufacturing capacities of developing countries.

Madam Chair,

Technology is a key driver for industrial development. Without access to advanced technologies at affordable terms, efforts of developing countries will remain constrained. We would urge developed countries to take concrete steps for transfer of technology to developing countries as a key element of international development cooperation.

We support the role of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation to facilitate industrial development. UNIDO must continue to improve its capacity building, technical cooperation and technology diffusion activities, focusing on productivity growth, trade capacity-building, corporate social responsibility, and sustainable development.

While South-South and triangular cooperation can play a role in industrial development cooperation, we must not forget that North-South cooperation remains the main cooperation modality. In this regard, we would like to highlight that the report of the Secretary-General states that much of the bilateral aid remains asymmetrical and earmarked towards sectors or programmes chosen by the donors themselves. This goes against the core principle of national ownership, and steps need to be urgently taken to reverse it.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

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