

Distinguished Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express the gratitude of my delegation to the President of the 62 session of the UN General Assembly, Mr. Srgjan Kerim, for having convened today's debate, which is most timely and of the greatest importance.

My delegation shares the view that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is an objective that can be achieved despite the unequal situation in various regions of the globe and the presence of both encouraging trends and of lags. This requires joint and coordinated efforts of the entire international community. And, in particular, it requires an increase of official development assistance and of the trade system to holding a successful round of trade negotiations in order to ensure the stability of world financial markets, of decreasing the debt burden of countries and also taking into account the interests of countries who are in special situations. Here my delegation endorses the statement of the Permanent Representative of Mali, who spoke on behalf of the Group of landlocked developing countries.

The Government of Tajikistan is fully aware of its great responsibility in achieving the MDGs, and is making all possible efforts for their timely and comprehensive achievement. To this end the President of the Republic of Tajikistan in 2005 initiated the development of a long-term social and economic program entitled *The National Strategy for Development of the Republic of Tajikistan until 2015* aimed at enabling the systematization of the process of development of the country in the long-term, in accordance with the MDGs. *The National Strategy for Development*, which is the primary strategic document of the country, defines priorities and general areas of state policy and is aimed at achieving sustainable economic growth, and at easing access of the population to basic social services, and to reducing poverty.

The document represents a fundamentally new approach to ensuring development taking into account global experience in the development and implementation of similar strategic documents, lessons and conclusions of the stages of development the country has passed and also the prospects for development. In addition *the National Strategy for Development* serves as the basis for all existing and developing state, provincial and regional conceptions, strategies, programs and plans for the development of the country, the activities of all organs of state management , and including the Medium-term strategy for the reduction of poverty of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan for 2007-2009.

At present approximately half of the state budget of the country is oriented to the social sector, primarily to education and health care. In education the efforts of the Government are in the reforming the system of education and enhancing the quality of education. In particular, the National strategy for the development of education for 2006-2015 has been drafted, and the Medium term plan of action for

the development of the educational system for 2006-2010 to achieve the MDGs in the area of education.

I would also like to note that the potential of the state financing of the social sector of the country is limited by the scale of growth of the economy. We support the idea that ensuring productive growth of the economy promotes the strengthening of the country's potential in financing the social sector and in expanding access to basic social services and achieving the MDGs. Tajikistan has capability and capacity, and the effective use if these can serve as a solid base for further development : great reserves of hydro energy resources and fresh water, a variety of minerals, favorable conditions for the development of tourism, raw materials and agricultural resources for industrial use, and favorable conditions for producing ecologically pure food products.

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At the same time we should note that climate change and rise of prices on food and energy resources are seriously undermining our efforts to achieve not only the MDGs in reducing poverty but also in ensuring high quality education and health care as well as other goals. An example here could be the unforeseen negative weather conditions in winter, which occurred this year in my country. For nearly three months my country experienced an energy crises, and its damage accounted to more than 850 mln. US dollars. That situation had a negative impact on the implementation of *the National Strategy for Development*, and created additional social and economic problems in the country. In addition, such a situation once again reaffirmed the need for the speedy development of the hydro energy area of the country which would determine the implementation of all objectives of *the National Strategy for Development* and effective water energy cooperation in Central Asia.

All of the eight MDGs are indissolubly and closely linked. Here taking advantage of the opportunity I would like to briefly dwell on MDG # 7, namely, halving by 2015 the number of people who do not have regular access to drinking water and basic sanitation.

According to UNICEF and WHO data, daily infections resulting from a lack of drinking water and poor sanitation cause the death of 4 thousand children. It is clear that our efforts in the healthcare area must be accompanied by proper steps and measures to ensure access to drinking water and to basic sanitation. Although in the last 15 years the number of inhabitants of our planet with access to clean drinking water has grown by 1 billion to achieve MDG # 7 by 2015 this number will have to be increased by another 2 billion individuals. According to the data of WHO and UNICEF, a sustainable supply of drinking water will lead to great economic benefits and improvement of the health of the population of the planet. If that goal will be achieved before 2015 that means that 84 billion US dollars annually will be referring to the economies of the developing countries as a result of the drop in mortality and reduced expenses for healthcare, and will result in increase of labor productivity.

In this connection, and since 2008 has also been proclaimed by the UN General Assembly as the International Year of Sanitation my delegation expresses its hope that during the upcoming High level meeting on the implementation of the MDGs, which is planned for September 2008, issues of access to drinking water and sanitation will be given particular attention.

Thank you for attention.