

## BHUTAN

Statement by

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Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have before us an array of issues that are as compelling and daunting as ever before. Many of these threaten to widen further the divides that separate us and deepen more the wounds that pain us. They challenge ever so severely our resolve to live in peace and harmony. But we remain hopeful. Under your leadership and guidance, Mr. President, we are confident that our deliberations will be purposeful and productive. Toward this, I assure you sir, of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I take this opportunity to express our gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Han Seung-soo for his stewardship and contribution to the work of the 56th session. His presidency, at a most challenging time in the history of the United Nations, has enhanced the esteem of the international community for him and the Republic of Korea.

My delegation takes great pleasure in welcoming the Swiss Confederation and the Democratic Republic of East Timor as they take their rightful place in our family of nations. While we welcome East Timor's admission as a newly independent state, it is with a sense of deep satisfaction that we appreciate the decision of the Swiss people. Their decision is an affirmation of their faith in the relevance and indispensability of the United Nations. They, more than any other country, have observed and studied with active participation the workings of this world body. As a country for whom the United Nations will always be critically important, Bhutan is indeed deeply heartened.

Mr. President,

The loss of lives and untold suffering and destruction wrought by the senseless acts of September 11 have united all of humanity against the evil of terrorism in all its manifestations. No clear orientation towards international peace and development is possible without uprooting this disease that has been allowed to afflict many of our societies. The United Nations must continue to play a central and decisive role in directing our collective resolve and efforts to eradicate terrorism. While each of us must in our own countries take all possible measures to rid ourselves of this menace, we know that it is through the multilateral framework that our individual, national, regional and global efforts can be effectively and rightly coordinated. It is imperative that in our battle against terrorism, the norms and principles of this hallowed institution are not undermined. Our war on terrorism must continue to unite us.

Mr. President,

The realization of a new economic order that is inclusive, equitable and sustainable remains the most pressing challenge of the United Nations. The scourge of poverty and disease continue to afflict millions of people around the world. My delegation is compelled to reiterate its concern over the decline in ODA and the parallel emphasis on market efficiency and trade as an engine of growth. We realize that trade underpins equal partnership and should represent the ultimate goal of economic development strategies. But not all countries have the necessary capacity to take advantage of the global trading system. Without timely and adequate assistance to fill the resource gap to meet their basic development priorities, many of the developing countries will continue to suffer marginalization.

Clearly, there is a need to create a fair and equitable trading environment without prejudice to the flow of adequate ODA. In particular, the special needs and vulnerabilities of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS must be comprehensively addressed to enable them to effectively integrate into the global economic system. In Africa, the international community must lend its full support to extricate the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and prevent its further marginalization. In this context, we welcome the endorsement of the New Economic Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) by the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly and hope that the international community will provide the necessary support to this program. This is particularly significant for those countries emerging from conflict and where rehabilitation of social and economic infrastructure is vital if peace is to be sustained.

There is no lack of vision and strategies to overcome the socio-economic maladies that confront the global community. The Millennium Declaration Goals provide clear targets and strategies to reduce poverty, achieve sustainable development and reverse the devastating trend of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. What we need is greater political will.

Mr. President,

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of the United Nations and bilateral donors to the development of my country. We are grateful to our partners not only for the substantial quantum of assistance we have received over the years, but for the willingness and acceptance of our insistence on being the master of our own destiny. Our partnership is characterized by a high intensity of frank and open political dialogue while the cooperative arrangements at all levels are marked by a notable degree of transparency.

Mr. President,

My country continues to be guided by our goal of promoting "Gross National Happiness" as opposed to simply targeting the enhancement of Gross National Product as the end of development. We believe that it is the responsibility of the government to create an enabling environment within which every citizen would have a reasonable opportunity to find happiness. Toward this, all our development strategies must subscribe to strengthening of the four pillars of "Gross National Happiness", which are namely i) ensuring of equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, ii) conservation of our fragile mountain ecology, iii) promotion of basic human values and culture, and iv) the strengthening of good governance.

Mr. President,

It is my belief that these are pillars on which the happiness of our human society can be firmly established. While I am fully aware that Bhutan is certainly not unique in its pursuit of happiness, I express the hope that more among us will join in the search with a greater sense of seriousness.

I thank you, Mr. President.