Misión Permanente de Costa Rica ante las Naciones Unidas

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GENERAL DEBATE
SECOND COMMITTEE
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HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR STATEMENT

- To achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the NEXT 10 years, international commitments should not be limited to achieving ODA targets. They should include also market access, institutional reforms, and good governance at all levels, in tandem with national policies oriented towards the development of all citizens. Otherwise, MDGs will be nothing more than a declaration of a good will. An increase in ODA in and of itself, without market access to the products of developing countries and without eliminating trade-distorting subsidies, will lead to a higher **dependency** on outside assistance, in the case of those receiving that assistance, and impoverishment and inequities for those who do not receive it. Trade is and will continue to be, the main source of financing for many developing countries.

- As we emphasized during the discussions on the Sachs Report, for our delegation, development is broader and much more ambitious than the MDGs. Sustainable development necessarily extends beyond the fight against poverty. It is the opportunity to fully enjoy human, political, social, and environmental rights. It is the ability to decide the type of life we want to have, and having the necessary knowledge and tools to make it a reality. For our delegation, achievement of the MDGs is the first step in a road map to for human development. In that process, it is important to bear in mind that countries are at different levels of development, and therefore, have different needs.

- National strategies to achieve the MDGs, among other goals, must be dealt with as an integrated whole, rather than in isolation. For example, sustainable use of natural resources is key to achieving the other MDGs, not just those related to environmental sustainability, i.e. goal number 7. Costa Rica is aware that protection, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources are necessary to achieve a high level of development. In the interest of time, we will expand on issues such as forests, climate change, natural disasters and sustainable consumption and production under the Sustainable Development subitem.

- We are pleased with the call made in the World Summit 2005 Outcome document regarding the need to address the differentiated needs of middle income developing countries. In those countries, 280 million people live off less then US$1 a day and 870 million people live on less than US$2 a day. The Global Monitoring Report 2005 published by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, clearly states that assistance plays an important role for middle income countries: "by catalyzing reforms; supporting efforts to tackle concentrations of poverty and helping to counter negative shocks."[1]

[1] World Bankl. *Global Monitoring Report 2005*. [Washington DC: World Bank, 2005]. p.11

- We are also pleased with the call to analyze study significant debt relief and restructuring for middle income countries with unsustainable debt burdens. As mentioned by the Development Committee of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in its latest Communiqué, we look forward to seeing the progress report to be submitted by the Bank, on the impact of fiscal space on growth and achievement of the MDGs.

- Investments required by a country like Costa Rica, like other developing countries, must compete with other priorities in the allocation of resources in key areas such as education, health, transport, etc. It would be counterproductive for countries like Costa Rica, which make significant efforts towards disarmament, respect for human rights, fair labor laws protection of the environment and increases in social investments, to be punished by excluding them from the beneficiary lists for cooperation programs and by limiting access of their products to markets in developed countries. Middle income countries need predictable and consistent support to avoid alarming situations, which would demand more resources than those necessary to prevent them.

- In the trade arena, our country has high expectations for the results that the Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in Hong Kong to be held in December 2005. We expect a clear political message from the General Assembly, encouraging all parties to incorporate the development dimension as an integral part of negotiations. Success depends on whether this happens. According to the World Bank, elimination of significant barriers to trade in goods, would allow 140 million people escape extreme poverty, which is equivalent to a reduction of 8%. [2]

- We will expand on this issue under the International Trade and Development subitem. However, our delegation would like to express that we do not need to fall into technical negotiations in our forum, as those negotiations are being held by our representatives to the WTO. We are confident in the abilities of our negotiators in Geneva.

- Our work this period has a big challenge. As expressed by some delegations, there has been certain dissatisfaction with the Summit's outcome. In terms of the Development cluster, which is what the Second Committee is concerned with, apart from "reiterating", "reaffirming" or "recognizing", new ideas or true action-oriented paragraphs are few or reflect less than the minimum consensus of the International Community. The challenge now consists of building on what already exists, without stepping back from agreements reached at previous economic and social of UN Conferences and Summits. We should remember that those most affected by our action or inaction are always the poorest and most vulnerable. I would like to conclude by reiterating the unconditional commitment of my delegation towards the success of this period.

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[2] World Bank. *Global Monitoring Report 2004*. [Washington DC: World Bank, 2004]. p.32