

**STATEMENT
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at

**Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue:
From the Millennium Development Goals to the United Nations Development
Agenda beyond 2015**

*26-28 August 2013
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Honorable Deputy Prime Minister,
Honorable Ministers,
Distinguished Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by thanking the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the ESCAP for organizing and hosting the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue.

For the last 20 years, the international development debate has been dominated by two trends seemingly to be heading in a similar direction. However, under closer scrutiny they differ with respect to their focus and underlying philosophies. These are on the one hand the agenda of reducing poverty in developing countries in its various dimensions (lack of income, education, water, political participation etc.) that found their expression in the Millennium Development Goals. On the other hand, there is the idea of sustainability that became popular at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and that the Rio+20 Summit in 2012 generated a parallel concept - Sustainable Development Goals. Both agendas have a lot in common, but in contrast to the MDGs, in SDGs poverty is merely one of the global issues to be addressed, which makes it secondary as just one item among many others and results as a preference over socially, economically and ecologically sustainable ones. It is important today to combine these two targets without any losses for both MDGs and SDGs and for the benefit of mankind beyond 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The MDG campaign was first initiated in Armenia in October 2002 and the UN mobilized its resources, together with the government counterparts and the civil society, in adapting the global goals to the country context. The MDG targets and indicators were nationalized to correspond to the country-specific priorities of poverty reduction and human development reflected in the main development policies and strategies of Armenia. The process was lead and driven by the government with the active involvement of national experts which has greatly contributed to enhancing national ownership over the MDGs. The Republic of Armenia Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP) was adopted in 2003 and became the first policy document where the achievement of MDGs was formally reflected.

The first nationalized MDG Status Report published in 2005 established the MDG framework for Armenia, incorporating the MDGs into country's main policies. In 2008, a comprehensive strategic program on the country's long-term development - Sustainable Development Program (SDP) - was adopted and the achievement of the MDGs is at the core of this strategic document.

Due to the financial-economic crisis and its serious impact on the Armenian economy, the country had to adjust the initial estimates towards achievement of nationalized MDGs.

An encouraging factor is that, based on successful piloting of MDG Framework at regional level, it was decided to scale-up the initiative at the national level and include localized MDGs, their targets and indicators in Regional Development Programs (RDPs). This issue is particularly pressing now as the regional socio-economic development projects are being worked out in mid-term perspective. RDPs have already been developed in certain regions of Armenia and are based on PRSP/SDP goals and priorities and MDG national framework, as well as take into account development specifics of the regions.

Mr. Chairman,

Armenia has been selected by the United Nations as one of the 50 states to facilitate post-2015 consultations. As part of the global initiative, the UN in Armenia has embarked into a series of national consultations to secure participatory and consultative process while formulating a shared national vision on **"The Future We Want"**.

The objective of the country consultations is to stimulate discussion amongst national stakeholders and to garner inputs and ideas for the **"The Future We Want"**. The consultation process is all inclusive and includes government representatives, the private sector, women, the civil society,

marginalized groups, and others previously left out of discussions on development priorities.

Mr. Chairman,

When the Millennium Development Goals were initiated there were two feelings – excitement if we succeed, and anxiety – what if we do not. Instead of being able to deliver fully on those goals, our world today is still not the perfect place that we dream of.

Despite tremendous efforts and obvious achievements made by the community of Nations during the past 67 years, regrettably, today we are still witnessing wars, conflicts, tensions, conflicts, racism, xenophobia, extremism and intolerance polarized societies practically in all parts of the world. This means some things are still wrong and we need to change either how we think or how we act, or maybe both. Thus, either we address these wrongs openly and expeditiously or we are going to witness further exacerbation of today's problems. In case we are able to address these issues, we will be able to smoothly guarantee the UN Development Agenda beyond 2015.

Thank you

