



**Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development  
to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus  
Doha, 29 November-2 December 2008**

## **Joint Statement of the United Nations Development Group**

### **Key messages**

- Extraordinary times require extraordinary actions. Comprehensive, bold, innovative and decisive action is needed to respond to the current challenges facing our world.
- Progress towards the MDGs is being eroded by the financial, food, fuel, and climate change crises. The poorest and most vulnerable are being affected most. We cannot put the internationally-agreed development goals and Millennium Development Goals on hold. We must find solutions that meet immediate needs and long-term goals.
- We must invest more in sustainable human development and the MDGs through areas including education, nutrition, health, decent work, human capacity, rights and opportunities, social protection, food assistance, agriculture, infrastructure, and green solutions.
- Continued investment and honouring of past commitments are essential to promote economic recovery, promote social stability, and to build security.
- Bringing together the UN development system, the UN Development Group is a reliable partner with a unique depth of capacity and breadth of voice. It stands ready to strengthen its efforts to assist countries in responding to the current global crises, while supporting sustainable solutions to development challenges.

### **1. The world is in a state of volatility, uncertainty and crisis**

**Extraordinary times require extraordinary actions.** The fight against poverty and hunger is as imperative as ever and the cost of inaction is very high. We have not yet seen the full impact of the global financial crisis, but the downward forecasts of world economic growth for 2009 indicate that it already threatens to cast millions more people into poverty. Food and fuel prices are expected to remain volatile. The frequency and impact of extreme weather events as a result of climate change will increase. Risk and uncertainty will remain with us. Human security is in jeopardy globally. We need to take decisive and comprehensive measures to address these issues. Beyond a rescue of the financial sector, we need a comprehensive human rescue package that puts the world solidly on track to sustain international commitment to the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and related development targets at the regional, national and sub-national levels.

**The vulnerable and voiceless people across the world are least responsible for the current crises, but are the most affected by them.** The global financial crisis is leading to slower economic growth, job losses, lower export revenues, more limited and expensive credit, and lower remittances to developing countries. Budgets in developed and developing countries are under pressure, affecting official development assistance, social services and protection systems. The global financial crisis comes on top of the continuing food, climate change and fuel crises and is primarily affecting the poor and vulnerable households with the potential to generate additional and aggravate existing social conflicts responsible for further population displacement.



**The MDGs are at risk.** The current crises come at a time when progress towards some of the MDGs is uneven, social inequalities are rising, progress in maternal health is stagnating and HIV remains a major epidemic, decent work deficits persist, gender inequality is unacceptably high, environmental sustainability is at risk and the threat of climate change is expected to increase. The combination of the food, fuel, energy, and financial crises is severely curtailing the prospects for achieving the development goals, even for targets where success seemed a real possibility only a few years ago.

## **2. What we need to do**

**Find solutions that meet immediate needs and long-term development goals.** As efforts are made to rescue the financial system and restore market confidence, in the short term, it is critical that we take action on all fronts—including continuous support for efforts to achieve the MDGs—to avoid a deepening poverty crisis and ensure sustainable development. In responding to the financial crisis and volatility in commodities prices, states need to ensure that domestic policy adjustments, particularly those in fiscal spending, are not taken at the expense of the poor and the marginalized. Our solutions must meet immediate needs while supporting long-term development strategies. We must seize the opportunity presented by the Doha Review Conference and reaffirm our commitment to address the current financial turmoil and the credit contractions in ways that safeguard aid flows and investments in poverty reduction, infrastructure, education, health, and food security, and ensure economic growth and prosperity across the globe. Democratic participation in decision-making on short term solutions and establishing long-term development goals and strategies must be promoted.

**Invest in development and the MDGs.** It is vital that government policies address the linkage between the development of human capital in developing countries and financing for development in a more systematic and coherent way. It is crucial that developed countries meet their commitments to increase official development assistance. Aid volume must be matched with better aid quality, its effectiveness and catalytic impact to harness and complement new and growing sources of development finance. Strengthened public investment programmes with targeted social investments, fiscal and monetary instruments are also essential prerequisites for expanding the financial base for development. To ensure sustainability and to achieve the MDGs, faster and deeper progress in domestic resource mobilization, international trade, external debt, international monetary, finance and trading systems, among others, is required.

**Scale up support for poverty reduction, infrastructure, human capacity and opportunities, and sustainable development.** Tackling poverty and creating a world where women and men can live to their full potential is the moral imperative of our lifetime. To power the engine of economic and social growth and prosperity we have to scale up investments in infrastructure and human development, in particular through universal access to education, health and nutrition, including maternal, reproductive and child health, and efforts to stop AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. While doing so we must ensure that all policies are sensitive and responsive to gender, promote human rights and equity and prevent conflicts and social unrests. It is equally important to promote full and productive employment and decent work for all in order to safeguard and improve people's livelihoods, realize effective social cohesion and achieve the MDGs. The financial crisis should be used as a unique opportunity to accelerate progress towards a green economy built on job creation and support in sectors such as clean technologies, ecosystem infrastructure, rural energy, sustainable cities, and sustainable agriculture.



***Provide food assistance and promote investment in agriculture.*** We must meet the immediate food and nutritional needs of the most vulnerable populations, and help countries to achieve longer-term and sustainable food security. These are necessary steps for economic growth and development. Consistent with the Comprehensive Framework for Action elaborated by the UN Secretary General's High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis, we are putting in place plans to meet growing hunger, malnutrition and poverty by providing humanitarian food assistance and safety net support, and by promoting agricultural and rural development in many of the most affected nations, with a particular focus on supporting smallholder farmers. But more is needed.

***Invest in social protection complemented by sustainable capacity development.*** Social protection systems are critical during this era of crises, because they mitigate the impact on vulnerable households, they are a social stabiliser, they smooth the fluctuations in income and consumption, and they contribute to long-term growth and development. Social protection means investing in health, nutrition, education, employment generation, managing risk, addressing market failures, and reducing inequality and poverty levels and protecting human principles and standards. Investment in the social sectors is investment in human capital. Healthy human capital is the foundation of economic productivity and can accelerate recovery towards economic stability. Equitable distribution of social services is a critical contributor to social cohesion. Social cohesion is the best protection against social unrest, nationally and internationally. The time has come to design and establish a socio-economic floor of opportunity and protection for people, combining a minimum package of social rights and guarantees in the above areas. Monitoring mechanisms should be established that map existing or emerging vulnerabilities to strengthen targeting, prioritization and coordination to ensure non-discrimination and that marginalized groups are not denied access to social protection.

### **3. How we can support**

***We need a new multilateralism.*** Only a global, equitable, inclusive and stronger multilateral system of international cooperation can generate the kind of investment, collaboration, synergies and innovation needed to simultaneously tackle global poverty, hunger, environmental sustainability, human development and climate change. This new multilateralism should work in the interest of developing and developed countries alike, maintaining a focus on social justice to ensure globalization is fair, equitable and to the benefit of every member of the global community. To that end, we must pursue a holistic approach to development assistance based on the fundamental principles of national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results, and mutual accountability. The UN Economic and Social Council's Development Cooperation Forum can play a crucial role in the effort to improve the quality and impact of aid.

***The UN Development Group stands ready to assist.*** With difficult policy choices being made at global, regional, national, and local levels, the UNDG has an indispensable role in promoting human development and capacity development for achieving the internationally-agreed development goals, including the MDGs. The UNDG is a key partner in this process, through its work with Member States and other actors including parliamentarians, employers' and workers' organisations, civil society groups, the private sector, local authorities, women and youth organizations. The UNDG will continue to promote a coherent policy agenda, provide policy advice, develop capacity, forge partnerships and implement actions that respond to the needs of the most vulnerable people and countries so that all developing countries can weather the current global crises and find long-term and sustainable solutions for their development.



## The United Nations Development Group

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) unites the UN funds, programmes, agencies, offices, and departments with a role in development. Our common objective is to deliver effective support to countries seeking to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Established by the Secretary-General in 1997, the group designs system-wide guidance to coordinate, harmonize and align UN development activities. By helping UN organizations work together, the UNDG generates synergies, efficiencies and economies of scale to increase the impact of programmes. The Administrator of the UN Development Programme chairs the group.

The UN development system is a strong and reliable partner with a unique depth of capacity and breadth of voice. Our presence is global, with 136 country teams and programmes in 180 countries. Guided by national priorities set within international norms and standards, we conduct activities worth over \$16 billion each year to help countries make social and economic progress. In countries in crisis or emerging from conflict, UNDG members provide support in tandem with UN political, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and humanitarian actors. Learn more about us at [www.undg.org](http://www.undg.org)

## UN Development Group Members

FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
OHCHR	UN Human Rights (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights)
OSAA	Office of the Special Advisor on Africa
SRSGCAC	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN DPI	United Nations Department of Public Information
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UN-OHRLLS	Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
	Regional Economic Commissions (ECA, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, ESCWA – rotating annually)
	World Bank (observer)
UNFIP	United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (observer)
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (observer)
OSSG	Office of the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General (observer)
	Office of the Deputy Secretary General (observer)