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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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STATEMENT BY

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Mr. President,

We thank you for having prepared the second draft outcome document. We are aware that this draft is the result of an extensive consultation process where all Member States have been able to provide their inputs and views on the first draft. With the assistance of the facilitators you have done a most commendable job in reflecting the different views and concerns expressed, and to provide us with a good basis for the final outcome document.

While there is room for further necessary improvements to the second draft, we realize the complexities involved, and that no member or group of members can expect to have all their views and comments fully reflected in the final document.

Before commenting on the current draft, it would be useful to remind ourselves of the stakes involved in the decisions we are to reflect in the document: We are facing a range of new and old threats to our common security which can only be effectively met by realizing that many threats are interlinked and by implementing a security consensus based on the UN Charter and respect for international law. We know that we are lagging behind with regard to meeting the development goals our heads of state and government adopted five years ago, but that these goals can still be met if we make the extra effort now. And we are aware that the UN is in urgent need of modernization and reform to be able to serve as the main global organization to achieve peace, security and respect for human rights.

From this perspective, the document is not bold enough. It is clear that the Summit should take clear and decisive action. Strong commitments from Heads of States and Governments are needed. If there are some issues where full agreement cannot be reached by September, we at least need specific action oriented-road maps – with timetables - for the follow-up process.

In addition to being bold, we also need to be concise. The Millennium Declaration is 9 printed pages. The current draft is 35 pages. In improving the text, we should aim for further refinement, avoiding repetition and duplication rather than adding even more text.

Against this background, we would like to make the following comments to the second draft:

Development

We appreciate that the draft is based on the Monterrey consensus in that it reflects responsibilities and required efforts at both the national and international levels. This constitutes an essential balance necessary to reinforce efforts to meet the MDGs, and must be retained.

In keeping with the aim of aligning international development efforts with the poverty reduction plans and policies of developing countries, it should be made clear that the comprehensive national development plans referred to in first bullet of para 21 are to be developed by the countries themselves. At the same time, it should be made clear that we are not starting a new planning exercise, but rather incorporating the MDGs into existing national poverty reduction plans and strategies.

We welcome the reflection in para 22 and 23 of the recent positive developments with regard to ODA commitments and debt relief, and the important Paris Action Plan on Aid

Effectiveness. It is important that these commitments - which also concerns Norway - are being implemented and monitored, and we would like to see this reflected in para 22.

With reference to paras 26-28 on global governance and systemic issues, we believe it would be useful to also refer to the need for closer cooperation between the UN and IFIs.

The reference to integration of sustainable development in development strategies and reaffirmation of commitment to implement Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in para 33 must be retained. The fifth bullet regarding the Biodiversity Convention should be amended to reflect that instruments already exist regarding access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. While we agree with the contents of the sixth bullet, we believe it would be more in line with current plans and actions if it was reformulated to reflect current plans for a regional early warning system for the Indian Ocean by 2006/2007 as a step towards a worldwide system.

(Proposed text: *"Establish, by 2006/2007 a regional tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean, with national nodes and based on national warning and information systems, as a step towards a worldwide early warning system for all natural hazards."*?)

Paras 35 and 36 as well as other paragraphs in the text on gender equality and empowerment of women are important, as progress in these fields is a prerequisite for progress in all areas. We appreciate that the current text has been somewhat improved with regard to seeing women not just as victims of inequality, armed conflict and violence, but as participants in decision-making and conflict resolution.

Peacebuilding Commission

We welcome the more detailed text on the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, which we continue to support. The provisions outlined in general meet our concerns and should be retained in the final outcome document.

We support the request to the Secretary-General to establish a Peacebuilding Support Office within the Secretariat. It needs to be stressed, however, that this office should not only assist and support the PBC, but also be seen as an important contribution to improve coherence and consistency in the UN's peacebuilding efforts both within headquarters, and between headquarters and the field.

Human rights and the rule of law

Para 99 is very important and although we would have liked to see a stronger text, we are pleased to see the improvements that have been made.

Norway strongly supports a strengthening of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. We find a doubling of its regular budget resources within a certain time limit essential. If we want to elevate and up-grade human rights throughout the UN system to a standing Human Rights Council, we have to make it less dependent on extra-budgetary resources.

We consider the work of the treaty monitoring bodies vital. The number of State Parties of the treaties is constantly rising as well as the burden and requirement to the treaty bodies. We find it particularly important to enhance the effectiveness of treaty bodies and welcome that

reference to "additional resources" has been included in the text, well aware of the limited resources available to these core functions.

Human rights are not yet adequately mainstreamed into the work of the United Nations. And yet they underpin almost every aspect of its activities. We welcome the reference to support for further mainstreaming in a separate paragraph, but would like to see this language strengthened. A text proposal has been handed in to the secretariat.

(Proposed text: *"We resolve to further mainstreaming of human rights in decision-making, programming and planning, throughout, and at all levels, of the United Nations system, including in funds, programs and agencies, and support a closer co-operation between the OHCHR and all relevant United Nations bodies, including the Security Council".*)

Responsibility to protect

We believe that the concept of the responsibility to protect is essential. As currently drafted the text in paragraph 113 should at least not be weakened.

Strengthening of the United Nations

We welcome the text on reforming the main bodies of the UN. With regard to ECOSOC, we agree with the clearer role envisaged for it, including monitoring and reporting on progress toward reaching the MDGs.

Norway fully supports the establishment of the Human Rights Council and expects this to be one of the major outcomes of the summit. We would have favoured elevating the Council to a main free-standing Charter body of the UN, and welcome the possibility in paragraph 130 of reviewing this question within 5 years. The elements of the mandate referred to in the draft document are crucial. In today's era of implementation it is more evident than ever that the work of special procedures and NGOs are indispensable to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms. We find the retainment of the special procedures and the active participation of NGOs of utmost importance. We also find mentioning of the Council's promotion of mainstreaming of human rights within the UN system to be crucial. We would also like to highlight the importance of the Council's ability to evaluate the fulfilment by all States of their human rights obligations, as well as to address imminent or current human rights crises. There is however still much to discuss with regard to modalities, functions, procedures and working methods. While we understand the deadline that is set, it is the quality of our outcome that counts – a true strengthening of all aspects of the UN's work on human rights. We must ensure the retainment of the positive elements of the existing CHR, while also making sure that the creation of a Council should lead to a more effective and efficient machinery in the promotion and protection of human rights. The relationship with the 3rd Committee should be further examined in order to find a functional and efficient division of work.

Reform of the UN's management is crucial. We therefore welcome the improved text on UN management reform. It needs to be stressed that a precondition for a modernized management system in the UN is that member countries abstain from micro-managing the organization.

We also welcome the section on system-wide coherence, which we regard as a key aspect of ensuring the continued relevance of the UN's operational activities. In this context, we fully support the proposal for member states to contribute to a revised Central Emergency Revolving Fund with a view to facilitate more rapid humanitarian responses.

Mr. President,

In providing these comments we have made every effort to focus on those elements that we believe are essential to maintain the necessary balance and accuracy of the document - while allowing for all concerns to be reflected.

In view of the importance of the decisions to be made in September, we hope and trust that a similar approach from all member countries will enable us to achieve a successful Summit outcome. We will continue to work constructively with you, Mr. President, to this effect.

Thank you.