

## **General Assembly Debate on the Draft Outcome Document for the September Millennium Review Summit**

*Statement by Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom Mission of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the UN, 21 June 2005*

I would first like to associate myself with the Statement of Luxembourg, the President of the European Union.

Mr President, we, the member states of the United Nations have the opportunity to make history in 2005. The opportunity to:

accelerate action for achieving the MDGs and other goals - with a step change on more and better aid, debt relief and trade, coupled with more ambitious poverty reduction strategies by developing countries, and supported by a reformed UN development architecture;

start work on a more inclusive international framework on climate change;

focus international attention on Africa, the continent most far behind progress towards the MDGs;

mobilise political will to help countries emerging from conflict and bring real coherence to international efforts on peacebuilding;

make concrete steps on non-proliferation and disarmament;

declare, for the first time, that terrorism can never be justified on any grounds;

give human rights issues the prominence they truly deserve in the UN;

agree a concept of the responsibility to protect, for national governments and the international community, to prevent crises like that in Rwanda ten years ago; improve radically the way we operate in humanitarian crises;

and last, but not least, to modernise the UN - the Secretariat and its inter-governmental bodies - to be more flexible, more accountable, more effective and more efficient, and in these ways to reaffirm to the world that the UN is relevant.

Mr President, you have given us an excellent basis for our work. Your draft outcome document covers all these issues and more. We commend you for drawing together so well the many diverse issues and opinions raised by so many member states.

But I fear you are a victim of your own success and good work! I want to argue for even greater ambition. This is no ordinary year. Civil society around the world is campaigning for 2005 to be the year we make poverty history. The Secretary-General himself has called 2005 a "critical" year and urged us to come to agreement on the changes we need in this Organisation. So far, over 170 Heads of State and Government, including most recently, the President of the United States, have pledged their participation in the Summit. Our leaders are coming to New York to

sign up to an outcome that meets this level of expectation - and it is up to us in the next few weeks to deliver that.

Mr President, let me now specify some of the key areas where we want to make progress.

On development, your draft outcome covers the essential elements: developing countries to produce more ambitious national poverty reduction strategies; improve governance and tackle corruption, protect human rights and create the conditions for growth and private sector development. Donors should provide the necessary resources, quickly and predictably - through increases in ODA, frontloaded through the International Finance Facility and its pilot, the International Finance Facility for Immunisation; complemented by other initiatives proposed by President Lula's Hunger and Poverty Group. This must be delivered with greater effectiveness, as agreed in the Paris Declaration which we hope the Summit will welcome, and supplemented by deeper and broader debt relief and fairer trade. We should agree that at least 50% of new development aid should go to Africa, and more to low income countries. We should welcome breakthroughs by the EU on ODA and the G8 on debt, and we hope that the coming FFD meetings, the G8 Summit and other events build on this.

I am pleased to see in the G77 statement this morning strong common ground on the great majority of these issues.

But the steps we have taken so far this year fall short of the step change needed to get on track for the MDGs within 10 years. We must seize this opportunity. More donors still have to raise their game; more developing countries still have to take the necessary domestic steps. The Summit outcome should clearly state the need for development efforts to be focused on achieving the MDGs and related goals. Our Leaders should agree urgent action across the board. On trade, we must signal strongly the need for a successful outcome from Doha. On health, we must underline the need to strengthen health systems, including new resources for HIV and AIDS treatment, prevention and care.

Mr President, if we are to fulfil these responsibilities, our institutions must also adapt. The UN has a unique role to play in helping achieve the MDGs, but it needs to be fully fit for purpose. We strongly support the vision set out in the Secretary General's report of further reforms to the UN development architecture that would unify and align UN operational work into a small number of tightly managed entities, and urge that this proposal be reflected in the outcome. That requires arrangements so that the UN family delivers a coherent, joined-up intervention in each country where it is active.

Mr President, we welcome the prominent recognition given to gender equality and women's empowerment in the draft outcome. But in September our leaders must deliver on these aspirations, by undertaking to prevent and punish all forms of violence against women; to achieving gender balance at all levels of decision-making; to guaranteeing women's land and inheritance rights; and to ensuring universal access to reproductive health.

We want our leaders to sign up to a profound commitment on environmental sustainability, in particular climate change. We should build on the good basis that

you have given us, Mr President, and stress the need to take urgent action to tackle climate change, given its negative impact the achievement of the MDGs. The Summit outcome should also recognise the links between environment, development and poverty reduction, and the need to integrate sound environmental management into national development and poverty reduction strategies. We also want to see enhanced coherence in the field of international environmental governance. I underline the importance we attach to the EU proposal for the establishment of a UN agency for the environment, based on UNEP, with a revised and strengthened mandate.

Mr President, meeting the special needs of Africa is a particular UK priority and one of the centrepieces of our G8 Presidency and we welcome the focus on Africa in the Summit outcome. The need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to Africa's problems is one of the keys to unlocking Africa's potential. The Summit outcome should recognise other areas where Africa needs to make progress, with international support, if it is to achieve the MDGs, such as infrastructure, education, health service delivery, food security, governance and reducing conflict.

Mr President, the Peacebuilding Commission is one of the touchstone issues for the success of the Summit and an issue where there is already, I believe, a large measure of agreement amongst Member States. There are challenging debates ahead on the specific modalities of the Commission, but I am confident we will find agreement by September; including on the mandate, composition and institutional arrangements for the Commission. I encourage everyone to do so - we cannot afford to wait - there are countries that need the attention of the Commission now. The more we can agree now, the more likely it is that the Commission will start its work by the end of 2005.

Non-proliferation and disarmament is another area where we cannot afford to let the opportunity for progress slide away from us. Like many other member states, the UK was disappointed with the outcome of the NPT Review Conference in May. We cannot afford to be complacent. The risks from the uncontrolled spread of WMD, in particular the risk that they fall into terrorist hands, is real and urgent. This September, we must agree concrete steps to strengthen our international security in this area - we should adopt the IAEA Model Additional Protocol as the standard for verification; we should begin negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty; we should commit to strong steps against the spread of Small Arms, and to begin work on an Arms Trade Treaty. We must commit to real and early implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540. We must agree to work closely together to reach a substantial outcome.

Mr President, we cannot ignore the threat posed by terrorism today. Member States of the UN have been the victims of terrorist attacks, in every part of the world. We should all unite behind the Secretary General's call for a comprehensive UN strategy, and for agreement on the Comprehensive Convention. There are no two sides to this debate. We must all endorse the simple statement made by the Secretary General in Madrid: Terrorism is unacceptable under any circumstances, and in any culture. The September Summit should say this loud and clear, and in as strong terms as possible. We should agree that no cause or grievance justifies the intentional targeting and killing of civilians and non-combatants; and declare, as did the Secretary-General, that in this context attacks on civilians constitute terrorism. We

should follow this up immediately by agreeing the Comprehensive Convention. We believe that this can be achieved by uniting around the current "Co-ordinator's text".

The Secretary General's report In Larger Freedom clearly sought to establish the protection and promotion of human rights, along with development and security as one of the core purposes of the United Nations. Mr President, this level of ambition is not yet reflected in the Summit outcome. By September, we should have clearly agreed to establish the Human Rights Council as a main free standing Charter body, linked to the GA, that has the ability to address human rights violations on the ground and with strong working inter-relationships with the rest of the UN system. We should also have clearly set out the means by which human rights can be more effectively mainstreamed into the work of the UN across the board, particularly through enhancing the links between a reinforced OHCHR and other parts of the UN system, including the Security Council.

Mr President, we believe that international agreement on the principle of the responsibility to Protect is long overdue. The international community cannot stand-by as genocide, war crimes or large-scale violations of human rights are committed, with the State in question unwilling or unable to take action. This is not about the West trying to find excuses to intervene in the affairs of sovereign states. This is about the responsibility of national governments primarily, but also when necessary the international community being more prepared to decide and act to protect vulnerable people from extreme violence, massive human rights abuses, starvation and death. Most of the time this action will be diplomatic, humanitarian or legal - only in the most extreme cases would military action be required. We need an internationally agreed framework to provide a platform for such action so that we can, case by case, fulfil our responsibilities to the weak, the oppressed, and in extremis those facing the threat of genocide.

Mr President, the proposed objectives on humanitarian reform are extremely welcome. They pave the way for a more strategic and results-oriented response by the international community to humanitarian crises, with a view to improving the assistance and protection we provide to the world's most vulnerable people. We strongly support proposals to reform the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and to strengthen the role of humanitarian coordinators. In addition we would like to see agreement to the development of performance benchmarks to clarify goals and measure progress. This would be a concrete way to develop the objective in the document to promote monitoring and accountability.

Mr President, the way the Organisation is managed is key to its ability to deliver the gains we hope to realise at the Summit. The Secretary General must be given the authority and flexibility to manage the Organisation as a Chief Executive Officer. He cannot be expected to ensure that the UN operates effectively if he is checked and micro-managed at every turn by Member States. The UK would be ready now to give the SG the authority to allocate financial and human resources at his discretion within budget ceilings and authorised posts ceilings set by Member States. But in parallel, we would expect to see more robust measures such as: accountability, for example through a strengthened and more independent OIOS supported by an Independent Oversight Board; transparency, for example with respect to the recruitment and selection of senior officials, as the Ambassador of Pakistan also mentioned earlier today. But also in evaluating what has been achieved with the resources allocated;

efficiency in programme management, for example through the introduction of time-limited mandates and discontinuation of duplicative or irrelevant activity; professionalism, for example through the recruitment and promotion of staff on a merit basis, accompanied by a functioning performance appraisal system and a modern system of career development.

On reform of the UN's inter-governmental bodies, the UK fully supports revitalisation of the General Assembly and reform of ECOSOC. On Security Council reform, our position is well known.

Mr President, we need to work towards a Summit outcome that will establish the UN as a modern and effective organisation, ready for challenges of this century, not of the last. In closing, I want to thank you again for your work throughout this year to bring us to this point. Thanks to you and your facilitators' efforts we have the basis for an outcome that is fit for our leaders and fit to meet the expectations of the world. I pledge the UK's full support to your work over the coming weeks: the final stage of our preparations.