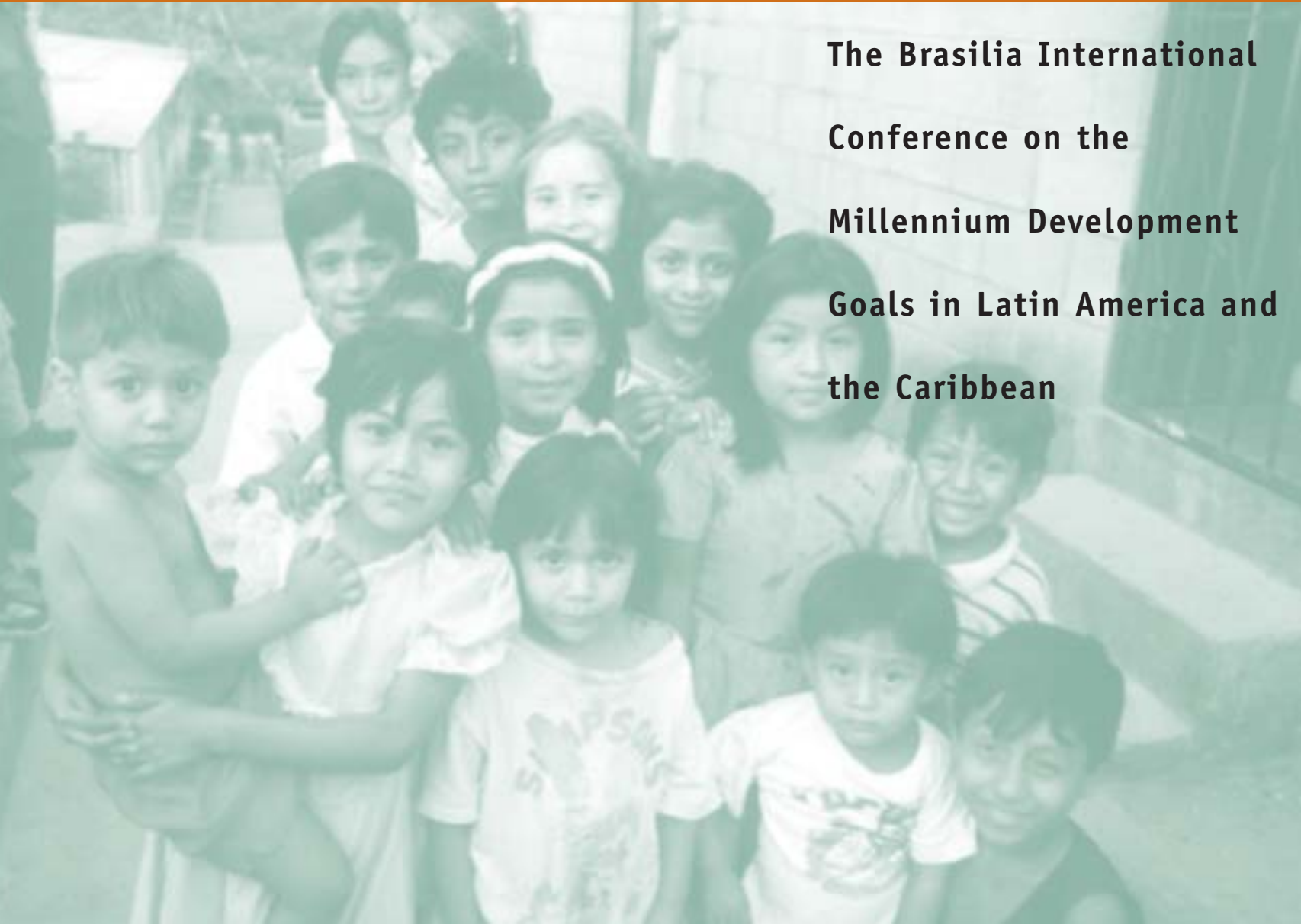


POLITICAL CONSENSUS BUILDING:

The Brasilia International
Conference on the
Millennium Development
Goals in Latin America and
the Caribbean



This publication includes statements, or extracts of the statements, made by Heads of State of four Latin American and Caribbean countries (Bolivia, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and Guyana), ministers, parliamentarians, senior officials and representatives from civil society and the private sector, as well as of high-level representatives of the international community (European Union, Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States), the United Nations and of the international institutions which co-organized the conference (the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program, and the World Bank). In addition, this publication includes a report summarizing the views expressed by participants in the Brasilia conference.

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**POLITICAL CONSENSUS BUILDING:
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on the Millennium Development Goals
in Latin America and the Caribbean**



C O N T E N T S

Introduction

Brasília Declaration

Statements of the Heads of State

- Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Brazil
- Hipólito Mejía, Dominican Republic
- Bharrat Jagdeo, Guyana
- Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert, Bolivia

Extracts from Statements by Representatives of International Institutions

Summary Report

Annexes

- Acknowledgements
- Agenda





Introduction

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United Nations Development Program and the World Bank reiterated their support for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to establish the basis for a renewed political consensus focused on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

On November 16 and 17, 2003 in the City of Brasilia, the four multilateral agencies joined the government of Brazil in sponsoring an international conference bringing together high-level representatives of governments, parliaments and civil society organizations in the region, and the international community.

The aim of the conference was to strengthen the commitments made by the countries of the region and the international community at the United Nations Millennium Summit in September 2000, which were recently reaffirmed in the Monterrey Consensus. An additional purpose of the conference was to make progress in defining the role that the various parties will play in their joint efforts to achieve the MDGs. Presidents Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (Brazil), Hipólito Mejía (Dominican Republic), Bharrat Jagdeo (Guyana) and Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert (Bolivia) attended the conference.

The Millennium Development Goals have as their objective halving extreme poverty and hunger; achieving universal primary education and gender equality; reducing the under-five mortality rate and maternal health; halting the spreading of HIV/AIDS and malaria; guaranteeing environmental sustainability; and developing a global partnership for development with goals for outside assistance, relief of the debt burden, trade and transfer of technology. The MDGs establish the year 2015 as the deadline for achieving these objectives.

The four international agencies believe that the countries of the region can best achieve the MDGs by taking decisive action to include persons marginalized from the development process. The region began the new century with achievements, including adherence to democratic systems, responsible macroeconomic policies and important reforms to promote economic growth and social progress.

However, the region continues to face significant challenges, among them, reversing the recent rise in poverty that took place in a large number of countries; reducing infant malnutrition; reducing

gender differences in the labor market and in opportunities for political participation opportunities; and improving access to basic water and sanitation services in low-income countries and the poorest regions of middle-income countries.

Achieving the MDGs implies a strong commitment from the countries and the international community to promote the conditions that lead to sustained economic growth, improving the access of the poor to basic social services and eliminating the region's high inequality and exclusion. It also requires national strategies that incorporate the equality, gender, ethnic and cultural factors of the MDGs and are closely tied to national budgetary processes, including formulation and implementation. In addition, the region and the international community should promote monitoring systems geared to measure and evaluate outcomes that provide increased transparency, accountability and incentives for good performance. Finally, achieving the MDGs also requires a more effective coordination of the efforts of the countries and the support provided by the international community.

The MDGs offer a general framework for joining our institutional efforts around common development goals, which should be suitable to the specific realities of each country. A renewed consensus focused on the MDGs should rest on an agreement of all players (governments, parliaments, civil society and the international community) with shared responsibilities in the implementation of actions aimed at achieving the MDGs and monitoring the progress made in reaching their targets.

The meeting in Brasilia is part of the collaboration among the four international agencies to implement specific joint support activities for the implementation and achievement of the MDGs. This collaboration also includes regional activities for evaluating progress made in achieving the goals and joint support for the preparation of individual country progress reports.

This publication presents the main conclusions of that meeting, which are expressed in the Brasilia Declaration, a proposal for implementing the MDGs in the region. It also includes the statements made by each of the four heads of state who attended the event, extracts of presentations by high-level representatives of the international institutions that organized the event, and a summary report highlighting the main issues raised during the conference.





Brasilia Declaration:

Proposal for Implementing the
Millennium Development Goals

November 17, 2003

Brasilia Declaración

*Proposal for Implementing the
Millennium Development Goals*

Governments

The role that governments should play in fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals was discussed. The priority actions that were identified include:

- Promoting a socioeconomic platform inspired by the principles of the Summits of the Americas, and the Doha, Johannesburg and Monterrey agendas, in order to eradicate poverty and promote social equity in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.
- Promoting and stimulating national debates on the Millennium Development Goals among parliaments, civil society organizations and the private sector, with a view that all the relevant social actors will adopt the goals as their own.
- Adapting the Millennium Development Goals to the specific local conditions of each country, including dimensions such as equity, ethnicity, gender and those arising from local diversity.
- Creating appropriate government mechanisms for horizontal coordination, for instance an inter-ministerial commission, to carry forward comprehensive and multi-sectoral initiatives and activities to meet the Millennium Development Goals
- Focusing public sector performance on the impact of its actions by means of effective programs, results-based management practices, program monitoring and evaluation, with a view to improve and enhance policy effectiveness and use financial resources in effective, timely and responsible ways.
- Ensuring greater transparency in budget execution and incorporating the Millennium Development goals into domestic planning and budgeting.
- Institutionalizing social and environmental policies and programs in ways that promote viable business conditions, strengthen public governance and promote democracy and respect for human rights to ensure that development goals are achieved and sustained.
- Creating ties between the national and international communities to help mobilize the resources needed for national programs, especially those designed to mitigate hunger and poverty.
- Creating integrated information systems that enable follow-up on the results of public policy and governmental programs, as well as monitoring progress on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.
- Proposing initiatives to the international community geared to supporting governments, where relevant, through concessional resources and technical assistance that help meet the targets derived from the Millennium Development Goals within the time frames set.



Legislators

The role and basic policy instruments at the disposal of legislative bodies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals were discussed. The priority actions agreed include:

- Overcoming the scant dissemination of the Millennium Development Goals among the legislative bodies of the region by means of an information strategy aimed at their officials, members and specialized committees on the policies, programs, targets and indicators involved.
- Supporting development plans through the promotion of laws, strategies, public policies, financing and budget allocations needed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, gearing their design to the new logic and ethics that underpin them, especially raising the priority afforded to issues of poverty, equity, education, health, gender, ethnicity and environmental sustainability.
- Designing mechanisms to improve the effectiveness of parliamentary committees, especially those dealing with budgets and finance, on matters to do with poverty reduction, equity and social inclusion. Special attention should be given to strategies related to permanent training and information for legislators.
- Turning the Millennium Development Goals into a reference framework for strategies of regional integration, free trade agreements and international financial negotiations.
- Helping in the oversight of progress and results in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty, equity and social inclusion, and strengthening the linkages with government at the national, regional and local levels, as well as with civil society and the private sector.



Civil Society

The role that different social actors can play in driving implementation of the Millennium Development Goals was discussed, and how this role could be enhanced. The priority actions identified include:

- Participating in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, acknowledging the role of civil society organizations and the private sector in developing new methodologies and building up experience that will help enhance policy-making at the national and local levels.
- Providing improved opportunities and mechanisms for institutional development among civil society organizations, respecting their autonomy and identity as well as those of the social movements of which they form part.
- Strengthening the ties between civil society organizations and government bodies, as well as those of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations, within the ambit of strengthening of democratic institutions and systems and policies to fight poverty and promote social inclusion.
- Promoting wider dissemination of the Millennium Development Goals in local languages and dialects to ensure that knowledge of them is widely distributed throughout society and by so doing to enable opinions to be formed and to give everyone a part to play in achieving them.
- Helping the people of each country to adopt the Millennium Development Goals as their own, contributing to the creation of reference standards, institutional capacities, strategies, targets and indicators appropriate to local conditions.
- Promoting a culture of peace that values sustainable development as key elements in building a climate of solidarity for implementing the Millennium Development Goals, acknowledging ethnic, cultural and gender perspectives and giving voice to the vulnerable and excluded.
- Promoting a globalization with solidarity that respects the human rights of all citizens, men and women, in every country, and takes into account the environment as a variable that guarantees a better quality of life for present and future generations.
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure transparency in the efficient use of public resources so as to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals, and promoting participatory structures in those countries that do not have poverty reduction strategies, involving state entities and social agents in monitoring, following-up and evaluating the Millennium Development Goals.
- Helping to oversee fulfillment of the commitments made by the international community with regard to the Millennium Development Goals, especially in striving for a clear definition of targets and indicators, as well as norms to monitor fulfillment.



The International Community

Additional and more effective contributions on the part of the international community in helping the Millennium Development Goals to be achieved were discussed. Agreed priority actions include:

- Directing the community's efforts in such ways as to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals within a system of shared responsibilities.
- Taking on board the commitments made at the Monterrey Conference with regard to the needs for international development finance, so that international cooperation reaches the levels set and its effectiveness increases in line with a set of performance targets related to the eighth Millennium Development Goal.
- Making the utmost effort to renew the dialogue and reach a satisfactory conclusion of the Doha Development Round, thereby increasing the opportunities for trade, reducing trade barriers, and progressively eliminating the agricultural subsidies employed by developed countries that distort international market prices.
- Making the utmost effort to support national poverty eradication programs, stressing the congruence between the work of donors and national priorities and harmonizing bilateral programs and their relationship to multilateral ones, both at headquarters as well as at the country level, in line with the agreements contained in the Rome Declaration.
- Supporting technological progress and taking steps to reduce the digital divide between countries and regions, stimulating the generation and expansion of opportunities in the knowledge economy, and promoting the transfer of state-of-the-art technologies that developing countries need to implement the Millennium Development Goals.
- Supporting the adoption of international environmental indicators and standards and backing their effective implementation.
- Providing an effective contribution to meeting the eighth Millennium Development Goal. This implies a set of commitments on the part of developed economies to support initiatives that lead to more development aid, the building of a non-discriminatory trade system, the relief and sustainable financing of foreign debt, as well as the periodic follow-up and evaluation of the commitments made by developed countries (along the lines anticipated in the recommendations of the Development Aid Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD).

We are practically at the half-way point between 1990 and 2015. It is the moment not only to evaluate the advances made so far, but more importantly to intensify individual and collective efforts to fulfill the commitments in order to attain a future with peace, justice and welfare for the great majority of people, and better conditions for all.



STATEMENTS OF THE HEADS OF STATE



Statement by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva,
President of Brazil

“ ... the only effective response to misery is a society that does not generate exclusion ... there will be no peace in the twenty-first century unless macroeconomic equilibrium is reconciled with social justice.”

would like to begin by congratulating the IDB, the World Bank, ECLAC and the UNDP for organizing this conference.

It is pleasing to welcome, here in Brasilia, authorities from Latin American and Caribbean countries who are directly committed to the cause of social justice and the common good. This meeting provides an opportunity to unequivocally reaffirm our political determination and the consensus that exists among our peoples to move forward together in the cause of bequeathing a better world to our children and grandchildren.

Such is the essence of the commitments signed by 189 world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Conference.

The goals to be met by 2015 represent a roadmap for building the only true and lasting peace – one based on universal access to the fruits of progress.

The goals include: eradication of hunger and misery; universalization of basic education; equality between men and women; maternal health care and reduction of child mortality; the fight against AIDS and malaria; environmental balance; and cooperation for development.

More than a set of indicators, the goals represent a list of imperatives if human civilization is to enter the new millennium under a banner of harmony and prosperity. This common endeavor is incompatible with hegemonies that subordinate the global interest to unilateral privileges.

In reality, only closer international cooperation can make the Millennium Goals viable, based on financial and trade regulations that facilitate massive allocation of resources for the development of poor countries.

In this regard, the eighth goal, which proclaims the formation of global partnerships, can perhaps be viewed as the master of all the others. Allocating speculative resources to productive activities requires a coordinated effort, of a scope and intensity perhaps equivalent to that seen in the reconstruction of Europe during the postwar

period. Only in this way will the disquiet of the present give way to the security of a future based on progress and distribution of wealth. We urgently need to make up for lost time.

In the 1990s the social purpose of development lost ground to speculation – the antithesis of stable and multilateral rules. Not even the most ardent defender of that orthodoxy could claim that it has produced a fairer and safer world. Quite the contrary. In developing countries, the inflow of productive investments failed to progress as expected, labor skill training was inadequate, the incorporation of technology frustrating.

External dependence has stultified decision making and produced weakened nations with no control over their own currency or investments. The promised redistribution of wealth has resulted in additional inequality.

It is hardly surprising that progress on the Millennium Conference indicators is fraught with difficulty. The wealthy have armor-plated their fortune; while the poor have grown poorer and more vulnerable. We have entered the new century with the wealthiest 10 percent of households receiving nearly 70 times the disposable income of the poorest 10 percent.

Most poor countries are underperforming in relation to half of the listed goals. Only 23 percent of the world's population is on course to attain three quarters of the goals set for 2015.

The report on the implementation of the Millennium Goals, presented in September by United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, could not put it more eloquently. Over 23 percent of people living in low- and middle-income countries survive on less than a dollar a day; 28 percent of children under five do not get enough food to eat, even though current agricultural production exceeds daily world needs by 17 percent. In Latin America and the Caribbean, there are 55 million undernourished people, and 58 percent of children are poor.

The number of people living on less than a dollar a day has grown to 57 million, compared to 48 million in 1990. International assistance has dwindled and now amounts to no more than 0.26 percent of wealthy countries' GDP – half the amount allocated in the 1960s.

We were promised that resources would be forthcoming to universalize basic education; but in fact such transfers shrank by 26 percent in the 1990s.

Over the last few decades Brazil has achieved successes on at least six goals, including reductions in child mortality rates, a significant increase in primary school enrollments, and an effective AIDS control policy.

Nonetheless, it has to be said that isolated steps forward in a suffocating development scenario have little impact on the dynamic of reducing inequality.

I have said before that the only effective response to misery is a society that does not generate exclusion.

My friends ...

Poverty is not a static target. It is not a matter of checking off a list of shortcomings; the mechanism that reproduces inequalities needs to be eradicated. Good intentions are not enough. The imbalance of wealth calls for a development diplomacy.

In order to make themselves heard, poor countries will have to articulate their points of view through ever broader groupings, redefining political dialogue and changing the global agenda. This means bringing the paradoxes of globalization to the negotiating table. Being aware of adversity and living with it while seeking change does not imply resignation. It is the attitude of those who wish to conquer misery and poverty.

Faced with the narrowing of external alternatives and Brazil's nonnegotiable commitment toward stability, we have chosen a path – the same path that charted our political course, consolidated our view of the world and laid

the foundations for a historic opportunity, namely transparent negotiation, sovereign negotiation, negotiation for justice. This means that the resumption of development in our countries is not a one-sided equation.

The sustainable growth project of the twenty-first century requires foundations stretching beyond national borders.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Brazil has been working tirelessly to consolidate alliances and partnerships to enable poor nations to regain control of their destiny and, hence, of their development. We are strengthening our strategic convergence with Latin America and Mercosur. We are intensifying diplomatic and trading relations with the European Union. We are inaugurating a new era of businesses and partnerships with Africa. We have defined a transparent list of interests with the United States in the FTAA negotiations. We have made a major step forward in trading links with China and Russia. We are signing economic and technological partnerships with India. The domestic counterpart of this effort involves putting the State once again at the service of those priorities.

The aims of social security and tax reform include expanding the scope of autonomy in formulating public development policies.

The Zero Hunger Program already embraces 1,227 municipalities, benefiting 1,070,057 families.

The unification of social policies through the Bolsa Família program should cover 3.6 million families by the end of December. These are examples of our determination to reduce Brazil's social deficit in line with the Millennium Goals.

We are improving the quality of public expenditure in the social domain, and the aim is to encompass all of the country's 11 million vulnerable families by the end of my presidential term. But even this is insufficient.

We have infrastructural deficits in crucial areas: 83 million Brazilians live in regions without sanitation; 42 percent of homes do not have safe drinking water; there is no refuse collection in over 70 percent of homes in the north and northeast.

We will invest R\$3 billion in 2004 from the additional surplus this year, and another R\$3 billion will come from the Caixa Econômica and the Length of Service Guarantee Fund (FGTS). The total amount is 20 times more than what was invested in 2002. But providing universal basic sanitation will cost R\$42 billion.

The State alone does not have capacity to turn back the budgetary and social snowball. We are confident that the private sector can bridge the gap and join the government in building the infrastructure needed to inaugurate a new development cycle. We call this bridge Public-Private Partnership. Brazil does not want to, cannot, and will not abdicate its development.

One certainty resonates ever louder in people's agendas: there will be no peace in the twenty-first century unless macroeconomic equilibrium is reconciled with social justice. That is the great battle to be engaged in by all peoples – artists, intellectuals, youth, the elderly, leaders, workers, entrepreneurs, majorities and minorities... the battle that all human beings must join – because human dignity itself depends upon it.

Thank you.



Statement by Hipólito Mejía,
President of the Dominican Republic

“We, the Heads of State and Government present here, reiterate our commitment to join forces to address poverty, exclusion, and social inequality...”

It is an honor for me to be here at this meeting to follow up on the commitments and objectives established in September 2000 by 189 Heads of State and Government, as the Millennium Development Goals.

I promised my friend Enrique Iglesias that I would be here, and here I am, at this event aimed at pulling together the efforts of governments and international organizations as they work toward the goal of achieving significant progress by the year 2015 in eight fundamental areas of social, economic, political and institutional life in our countries. Indeed, the Ibero-American Summit that wrapped up yesterday in Bolivia had as its central theme, “Social Inclusion, Engine for Development.” At that event, Heads of State and Government reiterated their commitment to join forces to address poverty, exclusion, and social inequality, among others.

When I became president of my country I was convinced that the great challenge facing the Dominican Republic was to design public policies that would link economic growth with individual welfare. I call that approach “economic policies with a human face.” Economic growth is a necessary condition for improving human welfare, but that alone is not enough. What we need is active public policies that will help improve income distribution, health, education, nutrition, housing, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and family incomes, all of which are fundamental factors for overcoming the poverty that afflicts broad segments of our peoples.

These Millennium Goals and the political will to achieve them in practice find expression in our country in a set of coordinated public policies, the cornerstone of which is the Poverty Reduction Strategy. The strategy has been

designed for execution over the next 12 years, to coincide with the United Nations goals as set forth in the historic Millennium Declaration.

The plan calls for maintaining high levels of investment while at the same time improving the quality of public spending with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of services in education, health, nutrition, housing, social security, sanitation, drinking water, and employment generation.

In accordance with the priorities that our administration has established, this strategy places education at the forefront.

A World Bank study in the Dominican Republic found that a person with primary education is 8 percent less likely to be poor than one who has no such education. When it comes to secondary education, that likelihood is reduced by 11 percent, and in the case of a university education, the probability of being poor declines by 18 percent. This is an irrefutable indicator that investment in education pays great dividends in terms of combating poverty. It is with that conviction that we are focusing major efforts on education, from the preprimary level to technical and vocational education.

One component of this strategy to which we have devoted special attention is the Plan for the Reduction of Hunger and Malnutrition, intended to raise levels of food security in all households by encouraging food production and increasing family purchasing power and consumption, especially among the lowest income groups. Under this program, 1.7 million children are given a school breakfast every day, and some 100,000 families receive a daily meal in government-subsidized cafeterias.

An extraordinarily successful program within the strategy has been the Producers' Markets sponsored by the government, where residents of poor urban slums can buy produce directly from farmers at very advantageous prices, and with minimum government investment in transportation and logistics. This program is helping in turn to improve incomes in the countryside, which is where poverty is most severe.

The Social Security Act is another extraordinary step forward that we are taking in our country towards fulfilling the Millennium Goals.

After many years of waiting, especially by the working class, our country now has a Social Security Act that, while requiring some fine-tuning, lays the foundation for ensuring a retirement pension system that will guarantee a minimum income to the aging population, and a universally accessible health system for everyone.

We are also making great efforts to consolidate the assets of poor people as a way of helping them to access financing sources and private funds to expand their opportunities. To this end we have delivered 150,000 property titles to as many families in urban and rural areas and we plan to double this number by the end of the period.

A very important objective of this strategy that I do not want to overlook has to do with promoting gender equity and women's independence. It is a fact that women are more likely to be unemployed, to earn lower wages for the same work, and to suffer other disadvantages that deserve greater attention in development programs. Within our administration we have created the Secretary of State for Women, and have issued a number of laws and regulations

to punish abuse of women, to foster gender equity, and to encourage women's participation in all those activities where they have lagged behind. In the case of political involvement, we have promulgated a law that requires political parties to ensure that at least 33 percent of their candidates for election are women.

I also want to point out, in the presence of distinguished representatives of international organizations at this meeting, that the Millennium Goals risk being compromised by an unfavorable macroeconomic environment, at both the national and international levels. Trade liberalization in goods and services, movement of money, and, to a lesser extent but still very important to many of our countries, international cooperation, are vital issues that require a fair and balanced solution if we are to achieve the millennium social goals.

Unfortunately, at times of crisis the usual response is to cut back spending, just when it is most important for countering the social impact of economic adjustments.

In the case of poor countries, we cannot allow economic difficulties to interfere with social investment plans, because it is investment of this kind that is decisive for the human development of our peoples, and also for the peace and harmony that is essential to economic progress and good governance.

For this reason, we believe that it is more important than ever that international institutions should be understanding and flexible enough to respond promptly to the needs and challenges facing countries in the context of a global economy, in an international setting that is steadily and swiftly evolving.

You can count on the support and encouragement of the Dominican Republic, and in particular of my government, as the international community works to make a world that is more just, with less poverty, more security, and greater welfare for all.

Thank you very much.



Statement by Bharrat Jagdeo,
President of the Republic of Guyana

“We need, within our countries, to build consensus around these goals and to have them integrated into our poverty reduction strategy papers or national development strategies.”

President of Brazil, President Lula; President of the Dominican Republic, President Mejia; Mr. Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank; Representatives of various organizations and countries, Ladies and Gentlemen:

First of all, please allow me to thank all the organizations and the Government of Brazil for the hosting of this very important meeting. You could not have chosen a better place. The last time I came to Brazil on an official visit, I said to President Lula that Brazil has a unique role to play in this region and, for too long it has been underplaying that potential. With his vision for the integration of South America and for picking on frontally many of the global issues for which third world countries have never, or recently, have not had a major spokesperson for, then Brazil can accomplish that.

I said to President Lula when I spoke at the United Nations that, I intend, or Guyana intends, to support Brazil's candidature for permanency in the Security Council, as well as one country from Asia, and one from Africa. Why do we want this? Because it is all linked: the Millennium Development Goals and world peace. I think it is time that all voices, the voices of developing countries are heard in those bodies that determine often how a particular conflict would go. We all know about the huge expenditure on war, and also the divergence of development funds on reconstruction. Any time, in a world of scarce resources, you have expenditure that is wasted. Then this constrains us, in a speedy fashion, in accomplishing the Millennium Development Goals.

Yesterday, and just now, listening to the presentations from President Lula and President Mejia, I heard some excellent views and we were presented with a barrage of statistics to show the situation in the region, and I do not intend to repeat any of this, but just to say that it accurately painted the picture that our region faces. I just want to be the devil's advocate, may be, and ask whether the progress that we are making today towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals is reversible. If the

answer is yes, then what can we do? What is the model that we must pursue in this region that would allow us to make sure that we do not reverse the progress that we have achieved.

I just want to give you a brief situation of what exists, because Latin America and the Caribbean is not a homogenous region. We have very large countries, we have micro-states, and we have sometimes the same issues that affect us in different ways internationally, say in free trade. But in the Caribbean today, we face a huge migration of skilled people. Because of crime, we have migration of the middle class and what this does it that it mitigates against the formation of a critical mass of human resources that is absolutely necessary to carry forward all these programs, all the social sector programs.

So our countries are being depleted of human resources because of active recruitment by the North. For example, the United States of America recruits teachers, nurses and policemen in our society, people we spent huge sums of money to train. It is a free world, so you can not stop people from traveling because they have better opportunities there. But this does not allow us to build a stock of human capital to implement some of these goals. That is the first point.

The second point is that it is not only the HIPC countries of the region that have an unsustainable debt burden, but the middle-income countries of the region are facing a huge debt burden and it is just taking too much of our internally generated resources, which should be going to accomplishing some of these Millennium Development Goals. Even when there are international initiatives to address these issues, they are just too long in implementation. Take, for example, the enhanced HIPC initiative was announced several years ago. Until now, very few countries are beneficiaries. The goal post keeps shifting every time. Just when you think you are there, it shifts a few steps further.

Trade, again. Take, for example, the case of Dominica, a small country in the Caribbean. More than fifty percent of its revenue comes from the production of bananas, one crop. More than half of its employment comes from the production of that crop including a substantial part of its gross domestic product. Now, it runs the risk of losing the banana industry. What do you think will happen in that country? Are they going to accomplish the Millennium Development Goals? You are going to have more people in the streets. You are going to have great social dislocation, and we are going to have a reversal.

There are other vulnerabilities that affect micro-states. In the Caribbean, for example, one hurricane could destroy fifty percent of a country's gross domestic product. That is the cost of the catastrophe, and then they would have to start rebuilding from scratch. Let take another example, net inflows. In Guyana's case we have been implementing a structural adjustment program for about twelve years.

In the last nine years, data from the World Bank and the IMF suggest that Guyana have had negative net inflow. The purpose of being in a structural adjustment program is to get support, a positive flow from these agencies, but we have been repaying more than we have been receiving from these agencies. How does that help for us to achieve the Millennium Development Goals?

Let us look at the larger countries of our region. We all know about Argentina. How a country, and this can be not just Argentina, implement policies based on the Washington consensus? They liberalize the markets, they privatize, and they follow all the prescriptions. They tame inflation. You have the economy going, and then there is a crisis in one part of the world. That crisis is imported into your economy, to the capital markets. Because of the high integration of the capital markets, the country is punished based on some actions of a few investors. So, like in Argentina's case, it wipes out the benefit to million of people, and half of the population immediately falls into the ranks of the poor. That is going to reverse the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals,

unless we find a model that will prevent that from happening. But, unfortunately, the search for such a model has always been placed in ideological terms, that we are socialists, that, we are trying to move away from the market economy, that we are not free traders and that we do not want to liberalize our economies.

But never has the world really sat down and looked at the problems facing us. I think that, in this region—this was mentioned yesterday and today—we need to start the search for a model that is appropriate for this region, a model that is still based on the market but a model that would accommodate the large and small countries in the region, that would prevent such crises from happening because they are unsustainable and they would reverse much of the social sector gains that we have had if we do not find that model.

It is not just an economic model that I am speaking about. I am speaking about a trade model too, not just in the economic area, what economic policies we practice. Today we have the task before us, even as we speak here, to fashion in Miami a free trade area of the Americas agreement that would allow all the countries of the region to move forward, that would address the needs of the large countries as well as the needs of the small countries, so that when that paper is inked and the agreement is inked, that we do not find many of the countries that sign onto it are further marginalized and that they cannot accomplish their development goals. We should work to safeguard a reversal of the social sector gains that we have achieved.

For these to happen, we as a region has to be more committed. Towards this end, I am pleased that Brazil is leading us. We need, within our countries, to build consensus around these goals and to have then integrated into our poverty reduction strategy papers or national development strategies. For this to work, for us to achieve these goals, we need commitment from two other sets of players. First, the developed countries: we need policy support from them. They have to be coherent in

policy. You cannot want us to sign on to an agreement that says that we are going to achieve these goals by 2015 and then practice a policy, say in agriculture that would cost thousands of our people to go out of work. It is incoherent. We need that support and commitment from the industrialized countries because, unless we get that, we are not going to really achieve goals. The second group that we need the support from is the multilateral financial agencies because for too long, I think, their approaches have been doctrinaire. They have followed particular models regardless of the specific circumstances of the country and, in this case, I am speaking about my country. If I had the time, I would prove my case but I do not think we are here for that.

I am in favor of us working toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. I just came from a CARICOM Heads of Government meeting and the Prime Minister of Jamaica, who is currently chairing CARICOM, asked me to give his regards to you Mr. President, and to also wish a successful outcome of this conference. The Caribbean region is strongly in favor of building the political consensus in this region for the achievement of these goals.

I urge that we all remain focused and that we, in the region, start working together. To some extent, it is our fault that we have not worked on our own model when we see what has happened around the world. We have the intellectual capacity within the region, we have the resources within the region, and I think that we have the commitment. With all those in place, I think we can come up with something that is not, on our part, a confrontation with the rest of the world, that enhances what is done in the rest of the world, but that would lead to lasting, lasting benefits to our people.

Thank you very much



Statement by Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert,
President of Bolivia

*“The MDGs are fundamental and
have become a commitment on
which our future depends...”*

Mr. José Dirceu, Minister for Civilian Affairs to President Lula; Mr. Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank; Mrs. Elena Martínez, Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean; Mrs. Alicia Barcena, Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC; Mr. Vinod Thomas, Country Director for Brazil and Vice President of the World Bank; ladies and gentlemen:

The global objectives, known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), present a different sort of task for nations such as mine. Apart from being rather small, these nations have a series of difficulties to resolve in the short and medium term that stem from the historical, political, social and economic circumstances with which they have had to contend. The MDGs are fundamental and have become a commitment on which our future depends. We must achieve them, if we aim to build more just and developed societies with brighter prospects for the human beings who are their primary constituents. Over time, the world has been evolving from a vision summed up in a single word—progress, conceived as a sort of universal panacea that almost invariably had a strictly economic connotation—to current views that have incorporated such concepts as sustainability and equity with the emphasis on human beings.

The evolution from pure economism to the humanistic viewpoint (and please allow me to use this term and possibly even retrieve its Renaissance roots) can be explained: In broad terms, macroeconomic recipes have to be applicable to the daily lives of each and every one of our citizens. However, this leap, this different vision may have finally led us to accept that, in spite of everything, even recognizing human beings as protagonists, the economy continues to be an essential, indispensable, and inescapable component. We can come full circle and end up replying that economic

approach and micro- and macroeconomic policy analysis and focus predominate.

However, an additional ingredient that is inseparable from the economy is “politics.” A large number of the problems we have been unable to overcome with a social vision that focuses on investing in people are linked to the political reality we have had to confront in our countries. The tasks that have mainly concerned us and triggered government actions in recent years have not only involved sustained economic growth and the shift toward the need for specific and considerable social investment. They have also had to do with building a truly democratic political environment and developing sustainable and credible institutions that are responsive to a vision of equity and justice. Democracy building is part of an effort based on the principle that democracy per se is unquestionably the best (albeit not ideal) scenario in which we can and must grow as societies.

However, at a time like this, when attaining the MDGs is a fundamental challenge, it would be an error to put forward the premise that the democracy issue has been completely resolved. I say this as a President who has just served one month in office, who became President of the Republic of Bolivia as the result of an extremely serious national political, economic, and social crisis, and who, in addition, has succeeded in preserving the democratic system and democratic institutions in Bolivia but is also facing growing demands from social movements to deepen, revise, and reshape the democratic system without altering its essential fabric. In other words, how do we go about achieving the MDGs? Through a reasonable economic growth that also guarantees the sound distribution of resources. This is another fundamental shift away from the economic vision and involves introducing social investment in a turbulent political context.

I would like you all to add this “ingredient” to your thinking. What is happening in Latin American democracies in general, and in South American democracies in particular? In the 1980s and early 1990s, Central America and the Caribbean went through extremely tough times and experienced a crisis that prompted the global community to wonder whether the region was going to be able to consolidate its democratic systems. This question has since moved elsewhere and is no longer being asked of Central America and the Caribbean but rather of South America in general and the Andean countries in particular. Several presidents in the region have had to leave office as a result of political, economic, and social crises, thereby interrupting the democratic continuity of the mandate they were granted by the electorate. Our societies as a whole have seriously questioned the authorities in terms of the legitimacy of a democracy that they have identified with a specific economic vision without differentiating between the economic model and the political model.

Consequently, in the complex and puzzling environment in which we move, we need to begin to think about building our democracies and ensuring their stability and future credibility. We have to maintain a balance that is beginning to waver: The balance between legality and legitimacy. I have not the slightest doubt that defending democracy is a priority and I am convinced that it is a system we must defend because this system is, in essence, the best historical answer mankind has been able to provide to the challenge of establishing societies with the capacity to decide, feel represented, and function in balance. However, I have no doubt that our traditional democratic mechanisms are undergoing very severe imbalances.

What does this concern translate into? Firstly, into the fact that political parties, in their capacity as mediators between society and central government, have suffered a major upheaval inasmuch as they constitute political machinery

that has gradually begun to lose contact with society. They no longer have sufficient mobilizing capacity or representative power and have become almost exclusively efficient electoral machines capable of perpetuating themselves in power, but this has been done on the basis of a closed approach, cut off from society, with high levels of corruption and ever-increasing short-sightedness in understanding the demands society places on the exercise of power, power that is self-perpetuating and relies on sinecurism, handing out party and political favors, and less-than-transparent administration.

What has happened in the meantime? As an alternative response, the classical parliamentary representative processes are losing ground to corporate systems that turn into or attempt to become central government interlocutors. Mediation and representation are losing their parliamentary political dimension and moving over to a direct and very hard-to-manage relationship between the central government and corporate groups of various types of varying capacity to represent society. Perhaps this viewpoint is too tightly bound up with the Bolivian experience, but it may be useful in understanding some trends that are beginning to emerge in varying degrees in the countries of South America. These trends may exemplify processes that could heighten their contradictions if not appropriately administrated and render the handling and administration of central government highly difficult.

This intermediation process is replacing the political link and has complicated or ruptured the administration of relations between central government and society. The relationship between central government and society is rupturing because the mechanism is one of collision, confrontation, and pressure rather than contact. The various responses the central government must provide have neither the appropriate cushioning nor the appropriate

intermediary support that should come from the political parties and, consequently, sometimes (and this is what happened in Bolivia) having an overwhelming party majority that controls Parliament neither represents, nor guarantees, nor succeeds in curbing pressure from the social movements because the political parties represented in Parliament have neither the mobilizing capacity nor the ability to act as interlocutors capable of restraining pressure on central government.

In this context, our political system develops a weakness that requires specific responses. In Bolivia, this is achieved by discussion and analysis in a Constituent Assembly that proposes a number of indispensable responses to our democratic processes. In addition, they must ensure that the concept of the representative democracy direct vote is not altered by pressure and agitation that are to be expected at a time when there is a pronounced tendency to believe that corporate representation is legitimate and could replace, be an alternative to, or supplement the representative democratic system as we know it in all South American democratic nations.

But the truth is that our societies are facing tense times that are raising serious questions regarding the future of our democratic system. We have to be able to respond to these issues because if we fail to consolidate democratic systems that ensure continuity, stability and, consequently, the long-term implementation of the inherent socio-economic commitments, in this particular case, we will not be in a position to achieve the eight key MDGs by 2015. In this context, I would ask you to turn your thoughts not only to drivers of growth, the balanced distribution of the resources generated by such growth, and mutual cooperation among central government (represented by the executive and legislative branches), civil society, and the mechanisms many of you represent (ranging from bilateral and multilateral cooperation to nongovernmental

organizations), but also to the idea that this entire package has to be crafted within a framework of political reality. We have to analyze how our democratic mechanisms are functioning, to what extent we are succeeding in genuinely representing our society, and to what extent this society feels truly represented by us.

At this point, I would like to mention some basic notions with which you are familiar but which have not been tackled in sufficient depth. We cannot establish a legitimate relationship between government and society if we do not part company with the logic of corruption and institutional frailty. The fundamental challenge of renewing our political mechanisms and “oxygenating” our democratic system inevitably involves genuinely fighting corruption. This battle is very difficult if fought on the logic espoused by most political parties, in that the reproduction of power and the way in which the exercising of this power has been debased, we come up against a way of thinking that goes back many years and includes the idea that gaining power involves a series of requirements that are inevitably related to corruption.

As far as Bolivia is concerned, we have an opportunity that is a risk and an opening to the future at the same time. The fact that I am governing without political parties (an almost suicidal option from the point of view of any democracy) nevertheless grants me scope in terms of how to restructure the executive branch and link it to the legislative, assuming that the political parties that constitute the legislative branch are mature enough to comprehend that a legislative package is needed to ensure that the executive can reinvent itself at such a difficult time. However, this is a transition period in Bolivia that could enable the political parties to restructure many of the elements that have been, to a certain extent, the road to

their own ruin or almost as good as such. I hope that in Latin America, and above all in South America, this reality paves the way to opening up room for transparency.

The other virtually inseparable supplementary element is the strengthening of our institutions. It is essential that institutions replace people and become the guaranteed vehicle for long-term stability, instead of playing second fiddle to the political and party administration of the day, which is highly characteristic of our democracies these days, while obviously keeping respective differences and variations in mind in this context. The fight against corruption, long-term institutional processes in all three branches (executive, legislative, and judicial), and an effort to reduce bureaucracy and cut red tape for all our citizens are a signal we all need to send, if we are to regain legitimacy over and above legality.

I believe that this approach of not disregarding the “tremors” that are rocking our democracies may present us with a slightly more comprehensive view of how to achieve the MDGs. It involves political consensus and restructuring the roles that each and every one of us has played as protagonists, so that we can (and this is very important) all become able to assume responsibility for the Millennium Goals on an equal footing. One of the shortcomings we currently face is probably that our societies have not “bought into” this idea (in the best sense of the phrase) as part of their tasks and challenges. We are still processing the idea of the Millennium Goals within an elitist, central government, and multilateral organization structure and we have to convey this commitment to our societies as a whole. We have to ensure that these societies insist on compliance with the MDGs to the extent that they are committed to them. This is a leap that we have yet to take.

The other aspect is a global community that has proposed achieving the MDGs but persists in adhering to mainline principles that have not changed. To mention the developed countries, with their own vision of how to manage the economy (in particular with regard to subsidies and the idea of asking all other countries to open up their markets completely without applying this logic to their own) is to repeat the question that you all know by heart, but one that, if not modified, will make it impossible to introduce a change in economic direction that truly opens up room for developing countries. We are still caught up in this issue (which came up all too clearly in Cancun not all that long ago), and it continues to be a debate that must never close. It may seem sterile, but it is essential if we are to ensure the commitment of all parties involved.

If the developed countries are committed to something other than opening markets and eliminating barriers, restrictions, and multimillion-figure subsidies, this will simply be a clash of voices, falling on the “deaf ears” of those who shoulder the prime responsibility. The aim is to embark on a process that involves neither paternalist or traditional donor relationships, nor the 0.7 percent of GDP, but is based on a more balanced international economy than the one we have today. The major problem is that, from the current point of view, ethical ideas continue to be subordinated to practical ideas and to the tendency that we all have to look inward and at our immediate needs without comprehending that solidarity is essential, and even more so much more on the part of the powerful toward us, than vice versa.

These points are essential. I have not gone into them in detail because I believe they have been part of a much wider debate raised by the President of Brazil himself

today, but they are part of our concern, commitment and solidarity with this idea. The aim is to achieve goals by complying with obligations and putting in the effort required of us. I believe that the community of wealthy nations continues to be locked into a self-centered view of their own development and their own growth. Stretching out the hand, and providing support and aid (although this is always welcome) is not enough because it becomes an easy alibi that leaves the essence of the problem unresolved. This problem cannot be solved using conventional aid concepts, but rather by striving for balance and market opening. This can be achieved in practice, while respecting material differences and the inevitable economic offsets.

Our commitment is that the equation I mentioned at the outset (of transforming this nineteenth century ideal vision of progress into a humanistic vision of sustainable development that takes human beings as the main component) becomes a reality without forgetting that to achieve this, we require economic stability, sustained growth over time, and the appropriate distribution of the wealth generated by this growth. Many countries (one of which I represent) have yet to achieve some of these basic premises. Despite this, we must attempt to meet the goals set before us at the global level and we will do our utmost to achieve this aim. I hope that the protagonists in this important effort (central government, civil society, and multilateral, bilateral, and nongovernmental organizations) are able to make a genuine effort that is ultimately an effort by each and every one of our citizens. May the Millennium Development Goals become the heritage of all our nations and translate into simultaneous demand and action from the bottom to the top, and not merely an

elitist ideal that has still to permeate our societies as a whole, always within the framework of democracies that are currently faced with challenges and must provide a stable response to guarantee a future that ensures the success of this endeavor. Outside, they were kind enough to ask me to sign and add a brief comment. This comment, which I undersigned along with other public figures in this area, is as follows: "Only through passion will we win this battle."



Convention Center



Panel of Presidents

JE DIZER AOS POVOS DA AMÉRICA LATINA E DO CARIBE?
É DECIR A LOS PUEBLOS DE AMÉRICA LATINA Y CARIBE?
Y TO THE PEOPLES OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN?

of the
at the
where the poor
live
y vida
de ser feliz

“Sem medo
de ser feliz”
“Primeros la gente”

UM OUTRO MUNDO
É POSSÍVEL. Jorge Durão (ABONG)

Solo con
Poder juntos
Ganar esta batalla
Estudem
leiam

Solidaridad
con todos y entre todos!

H. Rojas

Solidaridade

Vivan los niños
del Milenio!!

um mundo
sustentável e
sem pobreza

Organizada
la comunidad
Solo se podrá
conseguir el objetivo
del Milenio

Compromiso, Amor +
Trabajo, vamos a
ser bien sucedidos!

Pancho Vio
Chile

Um mundo
mejor donde
seamos iguales

DIGA A
DIGALO
SAY IT



EXTRACTS FROM STATEMENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

At the opening session sponsored by Brazil's Minister of State of External Relations, Mr. Celso Amorim, held at Itamaraty Palace and in the presence of the President of the Republic of Guyana, His Excellency Bharrat Jagdeo, the highest representatives of the multilateral organizations that organized the event in conjunction with the Brazilian government took part as speakers.

The President of the Inter-American Development Bank, **Enrique V. Iglesias**, underscored the innovative nature of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their importance as a frame of reference for international development assistance. He stressed the need for the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs to translate into concrete terms in order for the MDGs to be attained, so that “a dream similar [to President Kubitscheck's dream of seeing the creation of Brasilia] but of even more ambitious dimensions” will become a reality “through the drastic elimination of extreme poverty, the eradication of hunger, and the reduction of inequality.” Mr. Iglesias reminded the audience that this requires not only the political determination of the governments and parliaments of the region and the participation of civil society but also the involvement of the international community. Industrialized countries “must understand that one of the essential supporting elements of the fight against poverty is greater fairness in international trade.

This meeting is a reminder to governments, civil society, and the international community that attainment of the MDGs requires a collective effort.”

In fact, the available data on poverty levels indicate that if existing trends were to continue, Latin America and the Caribbean would be very unlikely to attain the goal of reducing poverty by 2015. Actually, “more than one third of the inhabitants of the region are poor (that is, earn less than US\$2 per day in terms of purchasing power parity) and most live in the largest countries”; hence “poverty is the problem of every society in Latin America and the Caribbean, not only the less developed countries.”

Regarding the role of the IDB, Mr. Iglesias reiterated the Bank's strong historic commitment to the social sectors: “We will continue to provide this kind of support and we want to work with the United Nations and make a commitment with the countries as well as with the international community to attain the MDGs.”

Similarly, **José Antonio Ocampo**, the United Nations' Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, described the Millennium Declaration as “a new global social pact that, in the development field, is expressed through the decision to make the fight against extreme poverty a priority for humanity. Taken together, the

Millennium Development Goals must also be read as an expression of the economic and social rights of all of the world's inhabitants.” He stressed that the decision to eradicate extreme poverty “is grounded on a renewed partnership between the most and the least advanced countries, expressed both in the Millennium Declaration and in the Monterrey Consensus.” Indeed, “an initial evaluation of the fulfillment of these commitments” indicates that progress is still limited and demonstrates that there is a “need for a renewed commitment to that agenda, which must be expressed both in the priority given to the least developed countries and in the designing of clear criteria for cooperation with middle-income countries.”

Looking toward the future, he noted that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean must not fall “into the trap of equating the fight against poverty with accelerated economic growth.” Experience in the region categorically shows that no social policy can offset the adverse effects of an economic growth model that tends to increase inequality.” Economic policy is the main tool in the fight against poverty and inequality, and the MDGs must be decisively incorporated into the very design of this policy. Economic policy cannot and should not be understood as mere “guidelines for social policy.” Nor should the governments view the Millennium Development Goals and



Vinod Tomas

related targets as the only objectives. In light of the progress in the region, in some cases the targets appear modest for our nations, which, for the most part, are middle-income countries. Consequently, the countries of the region should set “more ambitious social objectives ... especially ... reducing inequality in income distribution and wealth.” Multilateral banks’ commitment to the MDGs and the resulting strategic partnership with the United Nations have undoubtedly created a historic opportunity for the international community.

Speaking on behalf of the World Bank, **Vinod Thomas**, the Country Director for Brazil, also stressed the importance of the meeting: “This dialogue is a decisive contribution to furthering a new political consensus aimed at seeing the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.” He emphasized the interest of every Latin American and Caribbean country in the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs, principally because of the proposal for a definition of poverty that is comprehensive

and based on international consensus and that takes all the human facets of poverty into account. “The Millennium Declaration not only defines poverty in terms of income level but also includes other criteria such as access to education, health, water and sanitation, housing, and culture. This marks a significant difference.” He also noted how important it is that the countries in the region address the challenges of implementing and meeting the Millennium Goals, so as to further reduce persistent poverty and “improve the well-being of all, especially the poor.”

He underscored the need for the region to reduce the inequity resulting from an “income distribution” that is among “the most highly concentrated in the world.” Such an achievement would have a stronger positive impact on poverty, the drastic reduction of which requires much more than strong, sustained growth.

Making special reference to Brazil, he called on the governments in the region to heed the importance of providing citizens with quality public services, principally in education. He also mentioned the environment as an instrument in the fight against poverty and stressed the need to use natural resources in a sustainable manner, since they are a source of income for poor rural families. Environmental degradation is another one of the challenges that countries must address to reduce poverty.

Last, he emphasized the opportunities afforded by the creation of development associations in which the participation of multilateral organizations and/or more developed countries participate, and he referred to initiatives such as Bolsa Família and Bolsa Escola in Brazil and Progres/Oportunidades in Mexico.

Representing the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC), **Alicia Barcena** called on stakeholders to join forces and efficiently implement policies and activities that will allow the MDGs to be met. “What we dream alone is merely a dream, but what we dream together is a reality.” She said that the Millennium Development Goals and their targets “embody the ethical and political framework of a partnership between developed and developing countries, which put equity and sustainability at the center of world attention.” She also emphasized the need to “build a matrix of stakeholders” that includes representatives of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, since “it is they who can lay the foundation for the creation of a citizenry that focuses on rights and responsibilities.”

Regarding the situation in the region, she recognized the special efforts governments made in increasing social spending during a “decade of light and shadow.” Nevertheless, poverty persists and has increased in absolute terms; moreover, “we have very high inequality levels.” These trends “also translate into unemployment, a



Alicia Barcena



Eveline Herfkens

decline in the quality of employment, and increased informal employment.”

She also noted the negative consequences of this deterioration for democratic institutions, which are “the root of the fragility of our democracies. Claim as we may that our democracies are stable, until we solve these problems we will have enormous fragility.”

She concluded by emphasizing the two challenges that the region must address in the future to attain the human development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration: “become active partners in the globalized world, and, in fact, overcome this gap in equity exclusion, and deterioration, with a modern vision that includes all actors of the society.”

During lunch, the United Nations' Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, **Eveline Herfkens**, gave a background presentation and discussed the opportunities and progress represented by the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the

challenges that the developing countries in the region face to implement and attain the MDGs.

The MDGs, which are part of the Millennium Declaration, are a unique frame of reference. First, they are the result of a global consensus centered around a platform defined by the United Nations with the governments and with the participation of NGOs, and are also endorsed by international financial institutions. Second, because they put human development at the center of the global agenda, governments, politicians, and, especially, legislators have made the MDGs a tool for dialogue with citizens on concrete issues of immediate concern that, as a result, may improve communication with their constituencies.

The agenda of the MDGs also places much emphasis on measuring and monitoring progress towards the targets. The domestic political debate can thus remain focused on more underserved areas and sectors, investment priorities can be set and the efficiency and effectiveness of social spending improved.

Ms. Herfkens said that the know-how, resources, technology, and tools needed to make the MDGs a reality exist at the global level, adding that we do not have the right to miss this opportunity. In light of the specific situation of Latin America and the Caribbean, the countries in the region should adapt the MDGs and set more ambitious goals tailored to their local context. Education is the sector in which the region has shown the greatest progress but further improvement must be made. Since education is a basic asset for improving the living conditions of the poor, providing higher quality is essential, especially in a globalized world.

She reiterated the call by the Secretary-General of the United Nations during the Thirteenth Ibero-American Summit for the governments of the region not to limit themselves to meeting the minimum goals set out in the MDGs, which apply to the least developed countries. The greatest problem in the region is the magnitude of its social debt and can be resolved only by creating jobs and reducing inequity. This is also essential to further strengthen democracies, because in Latin America, “democracy did not deliver much human development.” Policies must “better target the poor,” and meet the demands expressed by the poor in a process of participatory dialogue. Regarding the Millennium Campaign, she reminded the attendees that although the region is responsible for the attainment of the first seven MDGs, the eighth MDG is the responsibility of developed countries. Trade is a key topic on the agenda: “We have to get the Doha Development Agenda back on track, and I hope that the world can continue to count on Latin American leadership in this regard.”

She concluded by reiterating the importance of the MDGs as a management-control tool—that is, as an instrument people can use to demand accountability from their governments and responsibility from the wealthy countries in the attainment of the MDGs.

SUMMARY REPORT

The conference addressed the issues facing the four major actors in the region on the MDG agenda—governments, parliaments, civil society and international donors—in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goal agenda. The following is a brief summary highlighting the main points raised by conference participants on the challenges and opportunities facing key actors.



I. Latin American and Caribbean Governments and the MDGs Agenda

Several issues highlighted for the role of governments in the region in relation to the MDGs are: (i) the degree to which the MDGs are feasible; (ii) the modalities for adjusting them to individual national realities and capacities for implementation; (iii) the challenge in making a transition from an exclusive focus on macroeconomic policies to income distribution and inclusion objectives; (iv) ownership by national governments of the MDGs in order to internalize them in domestic policy making; and (v) the need to keep a strong economic policy content while pushing forward on the broader set of social issues embodied in the MDGs.

The need for economic growth and employment generation remains central to the development agenda of the region even as relatively more emphasis is given to the social, environmental, poverty reduction and governance aspects contained in the MDGs.

A separate issue which transcends others is the need for “state policy” to prevail over sector policies. The inter-sector nature of the MDGs (embracing social, economic, environmental and gender issues affecting poverty reduction) means that many ministries and government agencies are importantly involved in advancing the MDGs. In this context, a clear definition of comprehensive national strategy or “state policy” at the national level is required to make the strategic direction clear.

The creation, in each country, of inter-ministerial coordinating agencies chaired by senior officials who are designated the national leaders of the MDG effort would help to overcome political and bureaucratic differences to achieve the MDGs. Since economic growth and employment generation are keys to poverty reduction, it is important that economic ministers are members of any coordination group.

Complementary to these proposals for a national policy and a national coordination mechanism is the need for actions for implementation. These include: (i) a national budget for achieving the MDGs; (ii) a financial programming system; (iii) a continuous monitoring and evaluation process supported by an adequate national statistical system; and (iv) centralized mechanisms for control and accountability. These institutional developments would help create a results-based management system focused on the MDGs and strengthen the degree of continuity between one government and the next.

Beyond these aspects under the responsibility of national governments in the region, there is a strong sense of the importance of the stability and growth of the world economy, access to export and financial markets, availability of private and public finance for debt reduction as well as poverty reduction, targets related to Goal 8, whose fulfillment is the mutual responsibility of developed countries.

There needs to be a balance between national commitments by Latin American and Caribbean governments and international commitments by the international community, especially by the industrial countries to enhance the global context in which the MDGs are being achieved.

II. Latin American and Caribbean Parliaments and the MDGs Agenda

Parliamentarians from the region raised concerns about the need to increase the involvement of parliaments in the process of establishing the MDGs as national policy and in their implementation.

Parliamentary consideration and passage of legislation endorsing the MDGs as national goals would be a way of resolving the issue of “state policy” and legitimizing national ownership of the MDGs. In some Latin American and Caribbean countries, where every four years the Congress passes a development plan law, parliamentarians as individuals and parliaments as bodies have strong roles in specific aspects of implementation such as budgeting, policy approval, integration and coordination, evaluation and oversight.

Parliaments should also have a role in linking social policies to macroeconomic policies for growth and employment generation, viewed as a crucial linkage for achieving the MDGs. Through these involvements, the relationship between parliaments and the executive branch within governments can be strengthened.

These considerations raise the question of the political economy of the reforms necessary to achieve the MDGs. There needs to be a better grasp of the winners and losers from the reforms and from the actions necessary to achieve the MDGs. One could question the degree to which such a participatory and decentralized processes would be in the interests of politicians if their power would be limited by such measures. Many of the necessary reforms require institutional development which could bring changes in the distribution of power.

The MDGs provide an opportunity for politicians and parliaments to try to reconcile short-run policies and actions with medium to long-run goals. The MDGs provide an opening for parliaments to play a proactive role in political consensus building within nations around an integrated development agenda with economic, social, environmental and equity dimensions.

There was a sense of urgency among parliamentarians to play a more active role in making their countries aware of the MDGs and in playing a leadership role in legitimizing them and creating a consensus around them. Several ideas were floated regarding ways in which parliamentarians from different countries in the region could benefit from exchanges of experiences in working toward the MDG agenda.

III. Latin American and Caribbean Civil Society and the MDGs Agenda

Civil society organizations can make a significant contribution in engaging society in the MDGs. The MDGs

were put forward in the Millennium Declaration under the rubric of “We the People” and yet the call seemed more directed to governments and to the international community.

But the requirements for national ownership and public participation entail important engagement of civil society. This is consistent with the notion of bringing people into the center of development through the focus of the MDGs on human development.

Civil society groups have played, and continue to play, a crucial role in representing the underrepresented in society. For example, civil society organizations have played a strong role in raising environmental issues both nationally and internationally, which today is implicitly representing the interests of future generations in decisions regarding natural resources, pollution, biodiversity, and ecology.

Also, civil society can play a role in creating a common discourse regarding the MDGs by making information available to everyone, including indigenous peoples, building awareness that all communities have a stake in the national trajectory toward the MDGs and enabling participation of diverse groups in consultative processes.

Civil society organizations also play a role in keeping governments transparent and accountable through a capacity to analyze and criticize government information on policies and performance. Critical and innovative thinking can generate new approaches to national challenges and attach value to undervalued resources in

national debates. Civil society organizations are often the audience through which the rest of society learns about and understands the major issues.

The policy dialogue implied in attaining the MDGs agenda crucially depends on the convening power and analytical capacity of civil society organizations. And civil society organizations are often the agencies through which programs directly address major challenges through budgetary support from governments or external donors. Often, donor agencies view bringing national governments and civil society organizations into working relationships with each other as a major objective of their programs.

IV. The International Community and the MDGs Agenda

Most industrial country development agencies and international development institutions give top priority to the MDGs. The MDGs have created a “development compact” among developed and developing countries after the UN Financing for Development Conference in Monterrey, Mexico, in March of 2002.

As a result, there is a new recognition by OECD governments that poverty reduction depends not only on official development assistance (ODA) but also crucially on access to markets, the removal of agricultural subsidies, debt reduction initiatives and other actions beyond aid. This places new demands on OECD governments for achieving “policy coherence” among a diverse set of policies. This is bringing several OECD government ministries into the development policy arena as active participants in policies for development.

In addition, all donor agencies are now obliged to give absolute priority to the national policy of developing countries in orienting their own policies and programs. This is a major, new and widely adopted policy approach. Also, most donor countries are now committed to the process of harmonization of donor procedures which was adopted by most OECD governments in the Rome Declaration in 2002. Donors are now under pressure from developing countries to demonstrate that their programs are effective in achieving results by providing quantitative indicators on their activities.

These major shifts in donor approaches as part of the global focus on the MDGs is complemented by a reinvigorated effort to generate a quantum leap in the amount of official development assistance. The United Kingdom has proposed a doubling of ODA volume in the next few years to provide a lengthy trajectory of increased aid from 2005 to 2015. Individual national donors, including the United States, and the member states of the European Union collectively have committed themselves to significant increases in ODA.

These pledges and new approaches do provide the basis for some optimism looking ahead. OECD governments are taking Goal 8 seriously and many, including all the Nordic governments, are pledging to report annually on their performance. There is a general sense that the indicators for Goal 8 need to be refined and that progress needs to be measured and monitored at the international level.

The focus on the issues and actions facing the government leaders, parliamentarians, heads of civil society organizations and senior officials from the international community in implementing actions to

achieve the MDGs is a useful backdrop for the implementation process of action plans generated by Summits of the Americas taking place since 1994, specially the Quebec Summit in 2001.

A helpful framework for the preparations for the fourth Summit of the Americas scheduled for Argentina in 2005 would be to cross-walk between the Millennium Declaration that includes the MDGs and the action plan from the Quebec Summit and the 2004 Monterrey Special Summit, with the objective of defining a comprehensive regional social agenda with consensus in the region.



ANNEXES
Acknowledgements
Agenda

Acknowledgements

The organization and execution of the Conference was made possible thanks to:

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil,

Jose Dirceu, Minister of State of the “Casa Civil,” and

Celso Amorim, Minister of State of External Relations

As well as to the many persons and institutions that were involved in its execution, particularly SEPLAN.

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Bharrat Jagdeo, President of the Republic of Guyana, and

Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert, President of the Republic of Bolivia;

And to:

Enrique V. Iglesias, President Inter-American Development Bank

José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations

Elena Martínez, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Program

Eveline Herfkens, United Nations Secretary General Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign

Vinod Thomas, Vice-President and Country Director for Brazil, The World Bank

Alicia Barcena, Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer in charge, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean-ECLAC

Organizing Team

The conference was organized by a team comprised of:

1) In Washington:

Carlos M. Jarque, Manager of the Sustainable Development Department, Inter-American Development Bank

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Tito Armando Velasco, Sustainable Development Department, Inter-American Development Bank

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Inés Bustillo, Director, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean Washington Office

2) In Brasilia, Brazil:

Waldemar F. Wirsig, Representative, Inter-American Development Bank

Panelists

Santiago Pérez del Castillo, Minister of Labor and Social Security, Uruguay

Javier Cuevas, Minister of Treasury, Bolivia

Evelyn Jacir de Lovo, President's Commissioner for Social Development, El Salvador

Rocío Tabora, Vice-Minister of the Presidency, Honduras

Jaime Gazmuri, Senator, Chile

Jesús Piñacue, Senator, Colombia

Epsy Campbell Barr, MP, House of Representatives, Costa Rica

Winston Dookeran, Member of the Parliament, Trinidad and Tobago

Beatriz Paredes, Former Representative and Parlatino Member, Mexico

Magaly Pineda, Executive Director, Centro de Investigaciones para la Acción Femenina, Dominican Republic

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Klemens Van de Sand, Commissioner for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany

Alberto Navarro González, Ambassador, European Commission Delegation to Brazil, European Union

Andres Wollter, Ambassador a.i. of Sweden to Brazil

Kevin Armstrong, Director of the United States of America Assistance Program to Brazil

Moderators

Tarso Genro, Special Secretary of the Council for Economic and Social Development, Brazil

Cristovam Buarque, Senator and Minister of State of Education, Brazil

Francisco Vio Grossi, President, Center of Canelo de Nos, Chile

Elena Martínez, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Program

Rapporteurs

The team that compiled the summaries, which were instrumental in the preparation of the list of conclusions as well as of the “Brasilia Declaration,” included:

Tito Armando Velasco, Inter-American Development Bank;

Ricardo Bielschowsky, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

Zeze Weiss, The World Bank; and

Enrique Ganuza, United Nations Development Program.

Colin I. Bradford Jr. Research Professor of Economics and International Relations at American University in Washington D.C. and consultant to the Inter-American Development Bank, also provided a significant contribution to this publication.

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Rodrigo Medeiros, Country Office, Inter-American Development Bank

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Cultural Event

Last and definitely not least, our very special thanks to Projeto CARIUNAS—Comunidade Escola- Por uma sociedade mais sensível e mais humana, to Sociedade Artistica Mirim de Belo Horizonte, as well as to Universidad Federal de Minas Gerais, Academia Tote Forme, Fundacao CDL Pro-crianca and, indeed, to the young Brazilian people who graced with their presence, music and songs, the opening session of the conference, at the Itamaraty Palace.

Agenda

Sunday, November 16, 2003

Itamaraty Palace, Auditorium Ambassador
Wladimir Murtinho

04:30 p.m. - 05:30 p.m.

Check in

05:30 p.m. - 07:00 p.m.

Opening Session

- Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil: Celso Amorim, Minister of State of External Relations
- Republic of Guyana: His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo
- Inter-American Development Bank: Enrique V. Iglesias, President
- United Nations: José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs
- The World Bank: Vinod Thomas, Vice-President and Country Director for Brazil
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Alicia Barcena, Deputy Executive Secretary and Officer in charge
- United Nations Development Program: Elena Martínez, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Millennium Development Goals Campaign, Office of the Secretary General: Eveline Herfkens, Executive Coordinator.

07:00 p.m. - 08:30 p.m.

Cultural Event and Cocktails

Monday, November 17, 2003

(Hotel Blue Tree Park, Convention Center)

09:00 p.m. - 09:45 p.m.

Presidents' Panel

- His Excellency President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, Federative Republic of Brazil
- His Excellency President Hipólito Mejía, Dominican Republic
- His Excellency President Bharrat Jagdeo, Republic of Guyana

09:45 p.m. - 11:15 p.m.

First Plenary Session

The Latin American and Caribbean Governments, and the Millennium Development Goals Agenda

Moderator:

Tarso Genro, Special Secretary of the Council for Economic and Social Development, Brazil

Panelists:

- Santiago Pérez del Castillo, Minister of Labor and Social Security, Uruguay
- Javier Cuevas, Minister of Treasury, Bolivia
- Evelyn Jacir de Lovo, President's Commissioner for Social Development, El Salvador
- Rocío Tabora, Vice Minister of the Presidency, Honduras

Rapporteur:

Tito Armando Velasco, Inter-American Development Bank

11:15 p.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Second Plenary Session

The Latin American and Caribbean Parliaments, and the Millennium Development Goals Agenda

Moderator:

Cristovam Buarque, Senator and Minister of State of Education, Brazil

Panelists:

- Jaime Gazmuri, Senator, Chile
- Jesús Piñacue, Senator, Colombia
- Epsy Campbell Barr, MP, House of Representatives, Costa Rica
- Winston Dookeran, Member of the Parliament, Trinidad and Tobago
- Beatriz Paredes, Former Representative and Parlatino's member, Mexico

Rapporteur:

Ricardo Bielschowsky, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

12:45 p.m. - 02:30 p.m.

Lunch with Keynote Speaker: the Millennium Campaign

Introduction:

Enrique V. Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank

Keynote Speaker:

Eveline Herfkens, United Nations Secretary General Executive Coordinator for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign

02:30 p.m. - 04:00 p.m.

Third Plenary Session

The Latin America and Caribbean Civil Society, and the Millennium Development Goals Agenda

Moderator:

Francisco Vio Grossi, President, Center of Canelo de Nos, Chile

Panelists:

- Magaly Pineda, Executive Director, Centro de Investigaciones para la Acción Femenina, Dominican Republic
- Jocelyn Dow, Women's Environment and Development Organization, Guyana
- Jorge Eduardo Saavedra Durão, General Director, Brazilian Association for Nongovernmental Organizations, Brazil
- Manuel Chiriboga, Principal Investigator, Ecuador

Rapporteur:

Zeze Weiss, The World Bank

04:00 p.m. - 05:45 p.m.

Fourth Plenary Session

The Donors' Community and the Millennium Development Goals Agenda

Moderator:

Elena Martínez, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Program

Panelists:

- Carolyn Miller, Director for Europe, Middle East and the Americas Division, Department for International Development, United Kingdom
- Klemens Van de Sand, Commissioner for the Millennium Development Goals Campaign, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany
- Alberto Navarro González, Ambassador, European Commission Delegation to Brazil, European Union
- Andres Wolter, Ambassador a.i. of Sweden to Brazil
- Kevin Armstrong, Director of the United States of America Assistance Program to Brazil

Rapporteur:

Enrique Ganuza, Chief Economist, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Program

05:45 p.m. - 06:15 p.m.

Reading of the Conclusions of the Four Sessions

Moderator

Carlos M. Jarque, Manager, Sustainable Development Department, Inter-American Development Bank

Rapporteurs:

- Enrique Ganuza, United Nations Development Program
- Tito Armando Velasco, Inter-American Development Bank
- Ricardo Bielschowsky, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- Zeze Weiss, The World Bank

06:15 p.m. - 06:45 p.m.

Closing Ceremony

- His Excellency President Carlos D. Mesa Gisbert, Republic of Bolivia
- Jose Dirceu, Minister of State of the Casa Civil, Brazil