

STATEMENT BY HER EXCELLENCY MRS. ISATOU NJIE-SAIDY
VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE GAMBIA
AT THE SECOND SOUTH SUMMIT
DOHA, QATAR
12TH-16TH JUNE 2005

Mr. Chairman

Your Royal Highness, Emir of the State of Qatar

Distinguished Heads of State and Government

Honourable Ministers

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I bring to you the fraternal greetings and best wishes of His Excellency Dr. Alhaji Yahya A.J.J. Jammeh, President of The Republic of The Gambia, the Government and the people of The Gambia, on the convening of this most important Second South Summit of the G-77 and China, at this critical juncture for the future of multilateralism and international development and cooperation. Allow me to thank the Government and people of the State of Qatar, for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Doha. Gambians still have a fond, vivid, and pleasant memory, of the visit of His Royal Highness, the Emir of Qatar, to The Gambia in 2002.

Mr. Chairman

The name "Doha" has become synonymous with the pursuit of justice, order in international trade and exchange, in international economic relations, and in the search for equilibrium, in the social and economic development of the

peoples of the world. It is my delegation's hope, that through this Second South Summit, Doha would yet again, contribute to further strengthening of the bonds of co-operation among countries of the South, and to a re-definition of relations between them, and the countries of the North, in ways that would usher in a new era of hope and promise, for all of mankind, in a challenging twenty-first century.

Mr. Chairman,

Five years ago, after the Group of 77 and China successfully advocated for the issues of development, that plague the people of the South to be brought to centre-stage, and be made the subject of a comprehensive and coherent international programme of action, the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration, which committed all nations of the world to a set of ideals, goals, targets, and indicators of socio-economic development and poverty reduction in countries of the South. This year, ten years to 2015, we are being called upon to review progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and targets for a better and just world for all.

By all accounts, the prognosis is still bleak, especially for the G-77 countries including sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty and underdevelopment will remain unabated, if present trends continue. The major reason for this undesirable state of affairs, is that international commitments made in the Millennium Declaration, are not being fulfilled. Better late than never, we commend the G-8 countries, for giving consideration for debt cancellation among other strategies, for 18 G-77 HIPC countries. However, a more comprehensive and workable solution to the debt problem that countries of the G-77 are faced with, is yet to be found.

Mr. Chairman

International trade issues, including subsidies, tariff and non-tariff barriers, and market access for our agricultural and other products, are still not fully addressed. Consequently, globalization is leading to an uneven and lop-sided development, which does not augur well, both for us in the South and for our partners in the North. Overall, the response has not been too encouraging, and we must all do more, to bring about enhanced justice, equity, and equilibrium in the workings of the international system and the global economy.

Mr. Chairman,

These, among others, should be borne in mind, as we negotiate for UN reforms, towards enhanced multilateralism, in a challenging 21st Century setting. We should bear in mind, the proposals from the UN Secretary General, through his report entitled "In Larger Freedoms" and those of the President of the General Assembly, which all seek to move towards a fairer, more representative and stronger multilateral organization, that can respond to the needs of global socio-economic development, and also serve as a better forum for global dialogue and understanding.

We in the South, must continue to protect and defend our common interests, while at the same time, maintaining a healthy and positive dialogue, with our Northern partners, on critical global development challenges, in trade and investment, science and technology transfer, human resource development, poverty, hunger and the burden of diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis, and HIV/AIDS, amongst other concerns.

Answers to some of our development problems, can be tackled, through increased South-South trade and investment, technical assistance, networking, and sharing of good practices among ourselves. We should ask: How do we ensure that there is South-South debt cancellation, and that a greater share of foreign direct investment is generated and utilized within the South? How do we ensure that investments in our respective countries generate more trickling-down effects, that will lead to sustainable growth, and create more employment and higher incomes, for our people? My delegation sincerely hopes that some of the answers to these and related questions will be found in this meeting and beyond.

Mr. Chairman,

The Gambia will continue to subscribe fully, to the objectives and ideals of the G-77 and China, towards justice, fair-play and ethics that, should govern international affairs, and multi-lateralism in the service of humanity.

I thank you.