

## **Second South Summit**

**Statement**

**By**

**Her Excellency**

**Begum Khaleda Zia**

**Prime Minister**

**People's Republic of Bangladesh**

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**Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

I join my voice to the many warm tributes paid to His Highness the Amir of Qatar and to Prime Minister Patterson for the timely convening of this important conference.

Our focus today is to identify remedial directions in three areas – a more conducive international economic environment, national responsibility and South-South priorities.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The fundamental challenge facing the South remains that of coping with globalization. The stark fact remains that the poor are becoming poorer. Reverse transfer of resources continue to flow. Mounting debt cripples development efforts. FDI reaches only a select few. Our share in world trade is dwindling as borders close around us. A favorable international environment with better market access, a more transparent financial order, transfer of technology and predictable long-term flows of financial resources is yet to be firmed up.

We can draw some solace from the fact that the UN Millennium Declaration, 2000 is in a real sense, a new Bill of Rights for the world's poor. Its clarion call is to halve the proportion of hard-core poor, by 2015. Attaining the MDGs is not only a moral obligation but also a promise of global partnership.

Progress in achieving the MDGs has been uneven. Greater political will is needed to push their full realization. This calls for much higher levels of funding. Actual commitment to the ODA target has been dismal nor can ODA alone cover the resources needed. A new financial arrangement for the poor is

imperative. Steps such as the proposed international Finance Facility, global taxation for aid, as well as the possibility of regional funding are among measures that should be explored. The Paris Forum on Aid Effectiveness in March this year had useful recommendations that could be followed up.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Trade is the most important pillar of globalization and engine of economic growth. The paramount objective is for complete quota and duty free entry of all LDC products. We commend those countries that have already done so and urge others to follow suit. Removing behind the border barriers, overcoming supply-side capacity constraints, encouraging all-round diversification and strengthening infrastructure are key support elements for LDCs. Cooperation and dialogue between sending and receiving states for temporary movement of labor is also a pressing priority.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Responsibility for development rests primarily at home. Bangladesh has been fortified by a good track record in macro-economic management and human development. Indeed, we have moved up the UN ladder from a low to a medium human development category in 2003.

We have seen progress in six broad planes – sustained economic growth; increase in per capita poverty incomes; growing food security; enhanced disaster management capacity; improvement in human development index and promotion of health outcomes. Our progress compares favorably with countries in our region particularly expenditures on the social sectors as a proportion of GDP.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Of five critical social-sector MDGs, Bangladesh has attained the goal of eliminating gender disparity in school enrolment, the only South Asian Country to do so except Sri Lanka. Bangladesh is close to achieving two other goals namely consumption poverty reduction and under five mortality. With regard to child malnutrition we believe we can achieve the target within 2015. However, the goal of universal net primary enrolment is as yet beyond our reach.

Past achievements are not enough. Our flight to reduce poverty depends on implementing a deeper and wider reform process under our National Strategy. The focus is on growth especially private sector led growth, promoting integrated rural development and consolidating human development gains. Our Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper is complete and conforms to the UN MDG goals with country specific aspirations. Sustainable growth and social transformation call for an improved investment climate. This remains the main driver of the country's economy.

**Mr. Chairman,**

Turning to the South-South dimension, our strength lies in tapping our complementarities. Some advances have been made but much more needs to be done. The scope for doing so has been spelt out in a variety of sources. First are the Declarations and Programs of Action emerging from Marrakech, Doha, Dubai and Havana. Second are ideas that have emanated from recent conferences such as the African-Asian Summit in Jakarta in April 2005, the Shanghai conference on Scaling Up Poverty Reduction in May 2004 and the Report of South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation in January 2004.

The outcome of the Doha meeting should embody key elements emanating from the above, including best practices and experiences, institutional and financing mechanisms for implementation, areas of sectoral cooperation, public-private partnerships and establishment of lines of credit for south-south trade.

Doha must become a milestone for cooperation and partnership amongst ourselves. It must look to action, to pragmatic forward movement and meaningful steps to ensure a better and more prosperous life for our future generations. I am confident we will succeed.

Thank you.