

Address by President  
**Zine El Abidine Ben Ali**  
President of the Republic of Tunisia  
at the South-South Summit

Delivered on his behalf by  
**M. Abdelbaki Hermassi**  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Doha, 14-16 June, 2005

**In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate**

Your Majesties,  
Your Highnesses,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my distinct honor to convey to you the greetings of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of the Republic of Tunisia, and to deliver His Excellency's address to this distinguished meeting.

**In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate**

Your Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, Emir  
of the State of Qatar,  
Your Excellency Mr. P.J. Patterson, Prime Minister of  
Jamaica,  
Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my distinct pleasure to express to you my most sincere greetings and consideration, thanking my brother His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani for the great attention he has accorded to the organization of this Summit, and commending the efforts exerted by the Government and people of the State of Qatar to provide the best conditions for its success.

I avail myself of this opportunity to commend the role assumed by the State of Jamaica during its chairmanship of our community this year, and its determination to make heard our countries' voice in various international meetings, and to make known our peoples' concerns and aspirations.

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The South-South Summit is being held ahead of the high-level meeting that will be hosted by the United Nations in September 2005 to assess the implementation of the recommendations and orientations of the Millennium Summit, and to look into the ways and means whereby to reform and re-structure the United Nations Organizations.

Given the critical nature of this period and the direct effects of these changes on our countries in particular, and on the future of international relations in general, we look forward to this meeting to be a propitious opportunity to optimize coordination and consultation among us, and to enable our community to meet the challenges facing it with all determination and capability.

Our countries have reaffirmed their commitment to the Millennium Summit Declaration and have achieved encouraging results in materializing its objectives, relying on their own capacities and potentialities. In view of the difficulties characterizing the world economic situation, we hope our development efforts will be supported and sustained by the international community.

We also hope the UN meeting on development funding will lead to positive results that will contribute to establishing an international partnership and help with the effective implementation of the Monterrey Conference.

In light of the widening development gap between the North and the South witnessed in the world today, and given the challenges confronting our countries, as a result of the imbalanced multilateral commercial system, the intensifying burden of indebtedness, the instable prices of raw materials, and the numerous protective obstacles in a number of developed countries, Tunisia reaffirms its commitment to the principles of solidarity, and its determination to increase commercial exchanges and to consolidate the relations of cooperation among the countries of the South in all fields.

In this context, we express our appreciation of the Havana Program of Action which we consider an appropriate framework for the establishment of a real and effective partnership that enables our countries to meet the requirements of the coming period. We also hope the solidarity dimension in the relations

between the North and the South will lead to strengthening the channels of dialogue and cooperation between them in order to serve our mutual interests.

The international initiatives in the field of development funding all meet around common noble objectives, consisting, in particular, in sustaining economic growth, reducing the poverty rate, and eradicating the root causes of marginalization and exclusion all over the world. In this regard, Tunisia has launched initiatives, premised upon its national experience as well as upon its firm conviction as to the necessity to establish international relations based on the principles of cooperation and solidarity.

In this context, our country has called for establishing the World Fund for Solidarity and Poverty Eradication, which has become a UN mechanism following its adoption by the UN General Assembly on December 20, 2002. We hope the efforts of all members of the international community—including Governments, civil society and the private sector—will be joined so as to promptly provide the necessary financial resources to this Fund, so that it can soon start accomplishing its noble humanitarian mission, in line with the objectives set by the Millennium Summit.

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mastering the modern communication technologies constitutes one of the most important foundations of development, as well as a tool to materialize the aspirations of the peoples of the world for prosperity and progress. Hence Tunisia's endeavors to provide appropriate conditions to the hosting of the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society in November 2005. We hope this great global event will constitute a landmark opportunity to narrow the digital divide and establish a solidarity-based international

community offering all countries the possibility to have access to sources of knowledge and information and to use them in their development plans and programs. We look forward to your countries' intensive and top-level participation in this important event, in order to establish a solidarity-based digital partnership that will benefit all our peoples.

In this context, Tunisia reiterates its call for the adoption of a more comprehensive approach to international relations, based on the close correlation between peace, security and development, and as part of a solidarity-based partnership among all countries and regional and international groupings.

We do appreciate the recent meetings that brought together African and Arab countries with the countries of Asia and Latin America. We consider the results of these meetings an important step toward consecrating the sense of international solidarity and contributing to establishing a more just, more balanced and more stable world.

We hope the UN Summit, to be held in New York next September, will constitute a propitious opportunity for reforming and re-structuring the United Nations Organization, which will enable it to efficiently accomplish its role in preserving security and peace and achieving development and prosperity in the world.

To conclude, I wish you all success in your proceedings, reaffirming Tunisia's firm determination to further contribute to achieving these noble objectives on the basis of equitable cooperation and solidarity-based partnership.

Thank you for your attention.