



PAKISTAN

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Statement by

The Foreign Minister of Pakistan,

H.E. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi,

at the

High-level Plenary Meeting
of the General Assembly on the
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

New York,
21 September 2010

**Statement by H.E. Makhdoom Shah Mahmood Qureshi,
Foreign Minister of Pakistan, at the 2010 High-Level Meeting on the
Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
(New York, 21 September 2010)**

Mr. President,

The Millennium Development Goals symbolize our collective resolve to create a better world that ensures better quality of life for our people. We are, therefore, happy to see MDGs at the forefront of the global development agenda and policy debate.

With only five years to go in achieving what we pledged at the Millennium Summit, this important high level plenary meeting provides us a good and timely opportunity to take stock of where we stand in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to explore ways and means to accelerate progress towards their achievement.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has produced three Millennium Development Goals Reports (MDGR). A fourth report has been published last month.

The latest MDGR for 2010 presents a frank and forthright account of where we stand in realizing the MDGs. The short-to-medium term prospects for achieving the goals are less than promising.

Until a few years ago, we were on track to achieve a number of Millennium Development Goals and targets.

However, negative fall out of security challenges posed by the ongoing fight against terrorism severely impacted on the economy.

The unprecedented floods which hit the country in late July, causing massive loss to crops, dwellings, livestock, services, industrial and communication infrastructure have changed almost everything.

The rehabilitation and reconstruction in affected areas would need billions of dollars. It would have its impact on economic recovery as well as achieving MDG's.

Notwithstanding, economic difficulties, the MDGs remain centerpiece of the democratic government's development efforts. They are an integral part of our Medium Term Development Framework. Our strategy rests on the following seven pillars:

First, good economic management based on a pro-poor growth strategy relying on better fiscal and monetary discipline.

Second, improving governance by consolidating democracy and ensuring participation of people in decision making at all levels, both as a means of delivering better development results and ensuring social and economic justice.

Third, achieving high and broad-based economic growth focusing particularly on the rural economy, while maintaining macroeconomic stability. In our view agriculture holds the key to all efforts aimed at poverty alleviation.

Fourth, investing in and building human capital to ensure effective delivery of basic social services.

Fifth, bringing the poor and vulnerable into the mainstream of development by augmenting targeted interventions and expanding social safety nets.

Sixth, focus on empowerment of women and minorities as well as improving access to the quality healthcare and education.

Seventh, pursuing peace and forging close bilateral and regional economic partnerships with a view to sharing and leveraging our geographical location at the crossroads of three vital regions – South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia.

Mr. President,

The initiatives aimed at achieving these objectives include the following:

- a) Under Benazir Income Support Programme, female headed poor household are eligible for small cash transfers to meet basic needs. More than 3 million house holds are benefiting from this scheme.
- b) A new Employment Commission has been established for creation of new jobs in public and private sectors.
- c) New Education Policy and Reforms Programme is geared to skill development for active and productive participation of youth in the development process.
- d) Women empowerment has been identified as one of the top priority by the government.
- e) Considerable progress has been made in reducing maternal mortality and controlling diseases. However, we still have to go a long way.
- f) High priority is being attached to ensure environmental sustainability. We would require greater support from the international community to meet this challenge.

Mr. President,

We are committed to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and keen to work with the international community to turn the challenges into opportunities. We are conscious of our responsibility and are determined to create a more prosperous, peaceful and harmonious world for our future generations.

I thank You, **Mr. President**
