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**STATEMENT**  
**by H. E. Mr. Sergey LAVROV**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation**  
**at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the 65<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly**  
**on the Millennium Development Goals**

*(New York, 21 September, 2010)*

Distinguished Mr. President,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Russia is committed to the international development cooperation and is ready to intensify constructive interaction with a wide range of partners including private sector and civil society to ensure the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We believe that sustainable social and economic development of all countries in the world is a crucial element of a modern collective security system.

The United Nations is a unique mechanism for harmonization of interests of various countries and the main international forum for adopting coordinated decisions on development issues.

Regional organizations and informal international groupings are called upon to pursue their efforts in this area following the standards of economic and humanitarian cooperation set forth in the framework of the UN General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Over the last five years, the international community has achieved certain positive results in the field of development. Nevertheless, the recently published reports on the MDGs have shown uneven progress in the implementation of individual goals as well as regional discrepancies. Unfortunately, significant lagging behind the schedule has been observed on goals and targets related to universal primary education, reduction in child and maternal mortality, and in green-house gas emissions. The challenges are most severe in Africa.

By all means, primary responsibility for the achievement of the MDGs rests with national governments. Yet, it is obvious that radical improvement in social and economic situation in the most vulnerable developing countries is possible only with powerful coordinated support by the entire international community.

Russia has been continuously increasing its contribution to the international development cooperation. Russia's aid to developing countries totaled US \$220 million in 2008 and about US \$800 million in 2009.

Quite naturally, we attach particular importance to assisting the CIS region. During the global crisis Russia issued preferential loans and grants to the CIS countries in need for the amount exceeding US \$4.6 billion. Our country initiated the creation of the EURASEC Anti-crisis Fund in the amount of USD 10 billion, 7.5 billion of which is the contribution of the Russian Federation. We call on all Member States to support the draft resolution on cooperation between the UN and EURASEC to be presented for consideration by the 65<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly.

We intend to continue to pursue these efforts in support of the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, as well as developing countries in other regions, first of all in Africa.

In the globalized and interdependent world, failure to address the needs of low-income countries increases the risks for the entire global economy, undermines stability and security in most of the regions of the world and increases the danger of the spread of terrorism, infectious diseases, and uncontrolled migration.

To counter these threats more effectively, Russia together with other countries is ready to more efficiently engage the scientific capacities and advanced technologies, in particular information and communication technologies, as a powerful tool to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries and - as a result - to promote global development.

Recently, we have witnessed once again what a tremendous damage to development can be inflicted by natural and man-made disasters. Earthquakes, floods, wildfires, industrial and infrastructural breakdowns not only take thousands of human lives, but consume enormous financing to repair the damage, thus diverting resources from development goals. It is obvious that increased preparedness for such catastrophes is costly, but it is many times less expensive than the cost of recovery and rehabilitation.

In the light of the above-stated, we believe it is important to ensure a wider use of modern technologies to respond to natural and man-made disasters and to develop mechanisms for the application of such technologies in the interest of the entire international community. In fact, this may become a new promising form of development cooperation. In

this connection, I would like to recall the initiative launched by President Dmitry Medvedev to establish an environmental risks insurance fund. We look forward to working with all partners with a view to elaborate this initiative.

In our interdependent world development agenda is closely interlinked with the security issues. At times, in order to pursue the objectives of the UN Charter the international community is forced to resort to such tool as the economic sanctions. However there has long been a consensus established on the need to respect the so-called “humanitarian limits” of the sanctions, and to avoid their negative impact on civil population. We note that in the recent years the UN Security Council has been striving to be strictly guided by precisely this understanding.

At the same time we cannot help but express our serious concern with the persisting practice of unilateral coercive measures, which are imposed in a voluntaristic manner by certain states against any given developing country beyond what is stipulated in the UN Charter or authorized by the UN Security Council. We are convinced that such practice contradicts the efforts to achieve the MDGs and must be brought to an end.

It is in the interest of all countries - without exception - to eradicate poverty and overcome underdevelopment. Poor person cannot be free. The ability to ensure decent social and economic living standards is one of the key attributes of a democratic state. These issues were thoroughly discussed at the Global Policy Forum on democracy standards held recently in Yaroslavl. In his address to the Forum, President Dmitry Medvedev spoke in favor of developing universal understanding of such standards to help establish a positive unifying agenda of modern international relations.

We hope that this Summit will promote more active and coherent efforts of governments, international financial and trade institutions, business community and NGOs to ensure that the MDGs are met on time.