



BRAZIL

Statement by H.E. Márcia Helena Carvalho Lopes
Minister for Social Development and the Fight Against Hunger

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Goals

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Mr. President,

It is an honor to represent President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva at this meeting of highest global interest.

After seven and a half years of President Lula's government, Brazil has consolidated a model for fairer and more equitable economic growth, with social participation and inclusion. We are thus repaying our immense debt to the Brazilian people and achieving excellent results in seeking to meet the MDGs.

Mr. President,

In spite of the sectorial advances in some countries, it seems clear that, if the current trends are maintained, we will not achieve all the MDGs by 2015. It is up to this meeting, therefore, to identify the necessary and urgent strategies to accelerate the international community's efforts to meet the Goals.

Brazil considers, however, that meeting the MDGs will not be possible without the allocation of significant additional financial resources in a stable and predictable manner, particularly to the poorest countries among us.

Few developed countries have fulfilled the agreements to promote development, in particular, their commitment to allocate 0.7% of GDP to official development assistance. Brazil believes that all countries must fulfill their international obligations in this regard.

It is our understanding that international cooperation must be accompanied by substantive reform of the international economic system, including in the area of governance. We also consider it necessary to overcome the obstacles presented by agricultural subsidies and tariffs, by restrictive payments and by unsustainable debt.

Mr. President,

Brazil's progress is the result of a set of structured, nationwide social policies that count with the active participation of civil society.

We set a more ambitious goal for ourselves than the one established in 2000: to eradicate hunger and to reduce extreme poverty by three-quarters by 2015. This goal was reached in 2007 and surpassed in 2008, when the level of extreme poverty reached 4.8%, less than one fifth of the 1990 level of 25.6%. In 2008, we also reduced our country's historical inequality, with Brazil's GINI index reaching its lowest-ever level of 0.544.

The Lula government put a wide-ranging social protection system in place, reaching 70 million people every month. The "Family Stipend" program today benefits 12.6 million families, guaranteeing income upon the meeting of conditionalities in the areas of education, maternal health, and avoidance of child labor.

We are implementing the Unified Social Assistance System and the National System of Food and Nutritional Security. The minimum wage has been increased significantly, improving the income of workers, retirees and pensioners. The internal market was expanded through employment and income generating policies, even during the recent international financial crisis. Another priority has been the promotion of policies aimed at ensuring decent work for all and racial equality.

With regards to education, 95% of Brazilian children are in school, and the conditionalities attached to the "Family Stipend" have ensured that they remain there for a longer period of time.

In terms of gender equality and the empowerment of women, educational indicators are positive. In the labor force, the wage gap between men and women has tended to shrink in the last five years. However, high levels of violence against women continue to pose a challenge. In light of this, Brazil is fully committed to the "United for the End of Violence Against Women" campaign.

Mr. President,

Brazil has constantly improved the largest unified universal and free public health system, the "SUS". We will have the opportunity to share our experiences with other countries in two international conferences that Brazil will host: the first, this coming December, on universal social security systems, and the second, in October of 2011, on the social determinants of health.

An important result in the area of health has been the 58% decrease in the mortality level of children under the age of five, meeting the goal before the deadline. The major challenge for the Brazilian government has been to address maternal mortality, which, in spite of the reduction since 1990, is still high in Brazil, requiring, therefore, more targeted policies.

Over the past few years, the incidence of tuberculosis, of deaths resulting from this disease, as well as of malaria in the Amazon region, have all fallen.

The Brazilian government, with the participation of civil society, implements free and universal programs of information dissemination regarding HIV/AIDS. It distributes preventive materials and ensures access to anti-retroviral drugs to around 220 thousand people. The incidence of HIV/AIDS in children has fallen drastically, as a result of actions adopted at the national level to reduce vertical transmission of the virus.

Mr. President,

Regarding MDG 7, Brazil has reduced deforestation levels in the Amazon and established a system to monitor the deforestation in the "cerrado"(Brazilian savanna). 45% of our internal energy supply comes from renewable sources. Our levels of CO₂ emissions originating from fossil fuels are at half the global average.

Brazil has achieved its goal of halving the proportion of the population without access to safe drinking water in urban areas. 66% of this population today has adequate living conditions, as opposed to 51% in 1992.

Mr. President,

Brazil is increasingly contributing to the global partnership for development, sharing successful experiences and deepening cooperation, through a South-South perspective. Between 2003 and 2009, the Brazilian government concluded over 400 cooperation agreements with other developing countries. We granted US\$ 1.25 billion of debt relief to these countries.

Since the launch of the "Global Action Against Hunger and Poverty" and the creation of the Pilot Group, Brazil has actively participated in innovative financing mechanisms, including through significant financial contributions.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

No country should be allowed to fall short of the MDGs because of lack of financial resources. Any country's inability to achieve its national goals is also responsibility of us all. There are many challenges still ahead of us, but Brazil remains committed to promoting the achievement of all the MDGs and to ensure a fairer world for all women and all men. We can all do better!

Thank you very much.