

**STATEMENT**

**ON THE MILLENNIUM PROJECT REPORT**

**AT THE INFORMAL PLENARY SESSION OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**BY H.E. MR. JEAN-MARC HOSCHEIT,  
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS,**

**ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION**

Mr. President,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Accessing Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia\*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, align themselves with this declaration.

The European Union would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for organizing this second round of exchange of views on the important Millennium Project Report.

Today's debate should complement, not repeat, the exchange of views that was held under your lead on January 25<sup>th</sup>. It should allow us to react, to the extent possible, to views and requests expressed by others on that occasion. In that regard, our statement today is meant to be considered jointly with our earlier intervention on the Millennium Project Report.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Project Report does justice to the mandate given by the Secretary General, that is: to propose the best strategies for meeting the Millennium Development Goals. The authors of the Report present us with the results of a well documented analysis and action orientated proposals with the objective to achieve all MDGs by 2015, by reducing income poverty, hunger, disease, exclusion, lack of infrastructure and shelter, while promoting gender equality, education, health, and environmental sustainability. We agree with the analysis that, with regard to the MDGs, broad regions of the world are currently off-track; but the MDGs can be achieved if all countries fulfill existing commitments. The EU also agrees with the strong focus on Africa, as was stated by the European Council in December.

Strongly committed to the MDGs, the European Union would like to emphasise that development is a pillar on its own, and not just a means to achieve security. In that respect, we agree with developing countries that international development cooperation should remain a central component of the work of the United Nations. Development and security are interlinked – and both should be taken forward as essential components of the 2005 Summit.

Sustainable development and human development remain overarching frameworks. The European Union would like to stress the importance of the link between achieving the MDGs, reaffirming and implementing the outcomes of the UN international conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, including those from Monterrey, Johannesburg, Beijing, Copenhagen and Cairo in an integrated and coordinated manner. We encourage the Secretary General to address these issues through concrete recommendations in his upcoming comprehensive report.

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\* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

The EU welcomes the recognition by the Millennium Project report that MDG 7 on environmental sustainability has been neglected so far. The SG's Report should point out practical solutions in that regard. Furthermore, the European Union considers that the Millennium Project Report refers in an insufficient manner to certain development issues of high importance, such as gender mainstreaming, fight against HIV/AIDS, environment, energy and the responsibility of the developed countries in changing their production and consumption patterns. The EU also highlights that the European Council of November stressed the implementation of Cairo as essential for achieving the MDGs.

In the same context, the European Union would also like to see the concepts of the rule of law to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development, good governance, democracy and human rights as well as the necessity to reinforce efforts to fight corruption at all levels highlighted and addressed as fundamental horizontal concerns.

Mr. President,

We support the concept of nationally-owned MDG-based poverty reduction strategies.

The Millennium Project Report makes clear that, in order to achieve the MDGs, a significant increase in resources for Financing for Development is needed at the global level. The EU is committed to live up to its Monterrey Consensus obligations. Some EU member states have reached the 0.7% target; others have set firm timetables. In April, EU Ministers will consider new and adequate ODA targets for 2009/10. We are determined to improve the quality of our assistance through pursuing greater aid effectiveness and harmonization, exploring innovative ways of financing, and reconsidering long-term solutions to the debt burden.

We call upon other important donor countries to live up to the internationally agreed ODA standard of 0.7 % of GNP. In this regard, we would also like to acknowledge efforts that have been made by other developed nations since the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey.

On trade, we share the view that increased and improved trade-related assistance is needed. Developed countries and developing countries in a position to do so should, like the EU, implement the commitment made at the LDC III conference and provide duty- and quota-free access to all LDC exports. We also call for acceleration of work in all areas of the Doha Development Agenda negotiations with a view to meaningful progress across the board and a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round.

Mr. President,

The Millennium Project Report is recommending the identification of "at least a dozen MDG *fast track* countries for a rapid scale-up of ODA in 2005", "on the basis of their good governance and absorptive capacity". The exact selection criteria and procedure need further discussion. The European Union can look into ways to scale-up its aid to countries which demonstrate commitment to creating the right environment, and put poverty reduction strategies into place. We should however make sure that by *fast tracking* we do not overlook the poorest countries, including fragile states, and the poorest people.

The European Union takes note of the report's view on MICs.

The Millennium Project Report is also recommending the launch of “Quick Win actions”. The European Union considers that many of these interesting initiatives deserve attention. We should be careful to ensure national ownership and avoid a one-size-fits all approach. We should ensure sustainability by integrating any “Quick Win actions” to be part of longer policy frameworks, such as MDG-based poverty reduction strategies, and to be assessed taking into account their environmental, economical and social aspects.

The European Union fully shares the Millennium Project Report’s emphasis on the need to strengthen coordination of UN agencies, funds and programs, at the national level and at headquarters, through strengthened Resident Coordinators and the UN Development Group, as well as predictable financing.

Mr. President,

I would like to highlight one other issue that is not central to either the MP report or the HLP report, but which should nevertheless be addressed in the SG’s March report: I would like to stress the importance of an adequate humanitarian response. As the Tsunami crisis demonstrated, the poorest people are often the most vulnerable to humanitarian crises. We need to improve our mechanisms in that regard.

Mr. President,

Development remains high on the agenda of the European Union.

The state of implementation of the MDGs will be discussed next Tuesday by EU Development Ministers. Reports by the European Commission on the MDGs, on recommendations for further actions and on implementation of our Monterrey commitments will be submitted this April to Foreign Ministers and Development Ministers, where concrete decisions will be made towards achieving the MDGs. The EU believes that ECOSOC and the GA should play a key role in the follow up to existing commitments.

With regard to the Financing for development, the 25 European Finance Ministers will discuss issues of debt relief, innovative financing mechanisms and appropriate levels of ODA in their monthly meetings. It is our intention to discuss some of these issues at the ECOSOC Spring meeting with the Bretton Woods Institutions and WTO and in the June High level dialogue on Financing for development in the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

The European Union is looking forward to the joint discussion of the Millennium Project Report and of the High Level Panel Report on Threats, Challenges and Change on 22 February 2005. According to your stated intention, the views of member states should usefully feed into the Secretary General’s comprehensive report due in March.

I thank you.