

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
GENERAL DEBATE FOR THE 2008 HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT**

**IMPLEMENTING THE INTERNATIONALLY AGREED GOALS AND COMMITMENTS IN
REGARD TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

STATEMENT

BY

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Mr. President

The Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 set the stage for our collective engagement in the area of sustainable development, and the World Summit of 2005 reaffirmed these commitments. Their successful implementation through laws and regulations, measures and actions require national ownership and leadership as well as responsible domestic institutions. Implementation must also be based on an inclusive dialogue that involves civil society, local authorities and the private sector. The media has a responsible role to play in raising awareness and promoting understanding of issues related to sustainable development. While it is critical that social, economic and environmental issues are tackled in a responsible fashion by national decision makers, close international cooperation between States and in the framework of organizations alike, is also indispensable. This need has become apparent in the past few months as a number of economic challenges, in particular the food crisis and the spike in energy costs are posing a serious threat to sustainable development. Since World Summit in 2005, progress has been made on the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development, but it has been slow and it has been uneven. Not all of the advances we had hoped for were achieved, and we must do more to expand and solidify our gains.

Mr. President,

Liechtenstein attaches great importance to contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. Against this background, the Government has agreed to further scale up its Official Development Assistance (ODA) in GNI terms to approximately 0.6% in 2008. While we have no official timetable with regard to meeting the 0.7% target, both Government and the Parliament have expressed the intention to reach the target of 0.7% of the GNI as soon as possible.

The Liechtenstein law on International Humanitarian Cooperation and Development, in force since July 2007, reflects the direction that international development cooperation is taking. The law covers not only areas of social development and poverty reduction. It aims equally at the preservation of the environment and a responsible and sustainable approach to natural resources. It is based on the principle that cooperation must be built on sustainability, partnership and the fostering of responsibility. These factors should help make development sustainable for future generations.

Microfinance is one important tool to contribute to sustainable development that has proved to be particularly successful. The Microcredit Summit Campaign reports of 64 million borrowers in 2006, up from just 9 million in 2000, with women often being the primary recipients. Microfinance therefore deserves a particular place in

the multitude of development activities. Liechtenstein has become involved in this field and has set up a public private partnership named "Microfinance Initiative Liechtenstein" (MIL) since 2005. The partnership is supported by the Government, while the private sector is the main driving forces.

Mr. President,

The third constituent part of sustainable development is the environmental pillar. Liechtenstein is fully engaged at all levels to live up to our international commitments. Liechtenstein is currently a State Party to 28 conventions and protocols in the area of environmental protection - the Kyoto Protocol prominently among them. We are thereby committed to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 8% relative to 1990 over the period 2008-2012. We also support the early establishment of a new commitment period after 2012 with more far-reaching and significant reduction targets and look forward to a successful conclusion of the of an international agreement on colimate change next year in Copenhagen.

At the national level, we have set up a strategy on climate change. The outlines a range of concrete activities and contains descriptions on their implementation. At the regional level, Liechtenstein is actively involved in participating in cross border activities with a strong emphasis on the environmental strand of sustainable development. As Liechtenstein lies wholly in the alpine region, the Alps are of existential and formative importance for the identity of its population. Agenda 21, chapter 13, rightfully emphasizes that mountains are an important source of key natural resources and recreation. Liechtenstein has a particular commitment to the suustainable development of the Alps, including as a party to the Convention on the Protection of the Alps. We also attach particular importance to mountain regions in our International Humanitarian Cooperation and Development policy. In this context, expertise gained within the context of the alpine convention is offered to mountain villages through specific development projects in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Liechtenstein also belongs to the International Conference of Lake Constance. Its aim is to sustain and develop the Lake Constance region in a holistic way for sustainable development purposes. Liechtenstein held the chairmanship of this conference in 2007 and, in its capacity, led the discussions on the readjustment of the Lake Constance Agenda 21, based on the Rio Agenda 21 of 1992. Most recently, the Conference drew up a report on the regional consequences of climate change on society, the economy and the environment. To follow up on these findings, discussions are underway on adaptation strategies among the participants.

I thank you.