

Civil Society Development Forum 2007  
Plenary Discussion on Pro-Poor Growth, 29 June 2007  
Statement by Ambassador Francis Lorenzo (Dominican Republic)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report of the Secretary-General on pro-poor growth, to be considered at the ECOSOC High-level Segment next week, makes a very clear statement that the objective of the UN is not only to eradicate poverty, but to achieve the internationally agreed development goals as a whole and to promote sustained economic growth that will support this broad objective. Therefore, for the international community, the desirable form of growth could be termed as « pro-poor » growth or broad-based growth that will contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Pro-poor growth is what is needed to achieve the MDGs. As Kumi Naidoo said yesterday in his keynote address, this is revolutionary.

The Secretary-General's report goes on to enumerate several recommendations that flow from this, so as to pursue sustained economic growth that is indeed pro-poor. Among the measures that should be considered are :

- A broad-based and balanced approach to macroeconomic policies ;
- Steps to build institutional capacities in developing countries ;
- Increased access to low-cost financing by developing countries ;
- Better monitoring to ensure fulfilment of ODA commitments ; and

some actions specifically for ECOSOC, namely –

- Promotion of refinements to the concept of pro-poor growth
- Identification and implementation of measure to promote such growth ;
- Facilitation of sharing of relevant experiences at the national level and within the UN system, which could take place through the Annual Ministerial Review.

These are serious issues. To deal with these effectively requires action and interaction by all – governments, business, non-governmental organizations, academia, and United Nations entities. This is what makes the Civil Society Development Forum so important. And as Sarbuland Khan said at the opening session yesterday, we have to see government, civil society and private sector as co-equal partners.

In my country we have taken the MDGs very seriously. The Dominican Republic was one of a handful of pilot countries to undertake an extensive national MDG Needs Assessment, with support from Jeffrey Sachs and the UN system. Then we prepared our national budget using the results of the Needs Assessment as a base. Since then we have looked to the local level, and have prepared a needs assessment in a first province.

What we have learned is that the MDGs are interlinked. To make progress in one you have to take action for all. And you have to focus on the bottom of the pyramid. Similarly you have to take a multi-stakeholder approach. As the Secretary-General has said, « The UN can only do its job properly with partners -- civil society groups, foundations, academic institutions, the media, labour unions, and the private sector. Each has unique contributions to make. »

Pro-poor growth requires partnerships. For policy direction, authority, and regulations or incentives, government has a lead role. For advocacy, innovation, and monitoring, civil society is important. For investment, commerce, employment, earnings and profits, the private sector is the engine of the economy.

The report of the Secretary-General to be considered at the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review next week focuses on efforts to eradicate poverty, including through the global partnership for development. Under its second main heading the report assesses the situation of Official Development Assistance, external debt, the net transfer of resources and other issues, and gives particular attention to private financial flows, including foreign direct investment, transfers through NGOs, migrants' remittances, and public-private partnerships.

This brings me to a topic very close to my heart, as the Public-Private Alliance Foundation has recently been launched as a further manifestation of the growing recognition of the importance of multistakeholder cooperation. Both the Global Alliance for Information Technology and Development, for which Sarbuland Khan is the Executive Coordinator, and the PPAF originated in ad hoc initiatives of ECOSOC. These ECOSOC initiatives were designed to expand the scope of traditional sets of relations and bring the full range of important actors to the table and into the field.

In our case, the United Nations Public-Private Alliance for Rural Development has Madagascar and the Dominican Republic as pilot countries, and PPAF -- the non-profit foundation that has emerged from this -- likewise takes these two as the first focus countries. The Ambassador of Madagascar and I are both vice-chairs of the PPAF. A successful entrepreneur chairs the Board of Directors, and others involved come from the business community, the NGO community, universities and the United Nations. A joint letter from the Madagascar and Dominican Missions to the President of ECOSOC concerning the launch of the foundation is being circulated for the Annual Ministerial Review as an ECOSOC document. My colleague David Stillman will tell you more about PPAF in a few minutes.

What I would like to do, in closing, is to advise you of a major effort to promote greater public awareness of the MDGs which the organization BidGive International is developing together with us. This is **the MDG Awards Telecast**. It will provide recognition to individuals, organizations, communities, corporations and countries for their contributions to achieving the MDGs. Special categories will acknowledge UN Global Compact participants, signatories to the Principles of Responsible Investment, and the work of NGOs affiliated with the UN.

Preparations are at the early stages for a date in 2008, but already BidGive International has enlisted Academy Award, Emmy and Grammy-winning producers, songwriters and entertainers to help design, produce and support what could become an annual event.

More information about the telecast and how nominations for participation can be made will be issued in September. At this time, however, I would like to give you a first taste, by showing you the model of the MDG Award which is the work of the internationally-recognized, Toronto-based artist William Ho.

(UNCOVER THE AWARD)

**William**, please take a bow. **Renata**, would you please come and join us ?

We very much look forward to working with you and CONGO and its members as we go forward. It will be very important to count upon your participation and advice as concerns some of the prize-winning selections to be made.

We see the MDG Awards Telecast as a contribution to the Countdown to 2015, and another vehicle for promoting the pro-poor growth that is what the MDGs are all about.

Thank you.