

We particularly appreciate the outcome of the 9th session of UNCTAD at Midrand where we succeeded, together with all our partners, to pave the way for a thorough reform which can also be regarded as an important point of reference for the reform of the UN economic and social sector. We also deem significant the recent decision to strengthen the coordinating role of ECOSOC. We welcome the UN regional economic commissions initiatives to examine their activities, adjust priorities, restructure programs and reorganize their staff to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness.

We will work with other members to make rapid progress in the reform of the UN in order to rationalize and strengthen its role in development.

41. The United Nations plays a crucial role in the organization of international cooperation in favour of sustainable development, and in fostering consensus around development objectives and policies.

The UN's priority areas are, notably: reduction of poverty, employment, housing, the provision of essential services, and especially those relating to health and education, the advancement of women and protection of children, and humanitarian assistance in general.

The UN also has a fundamental role to play in promoting democracy, human rights and the rule of law, protection of the environment, emergency relief and post-conflict stabilization, and technical assistance to enable the poorest countries to participate in international trade and investment.

42. In order to be more effective in the field of development, the UN must clarify its role and comparative advantages. It must enhance the efficiency of its Secretariat and operational framework, make them more coherent and ensure genuine coordination at all levels. Proposals to that effect should focus on existing structures and build on ideas which have emerged in various discussions on UN reform.

43. Reform could center upon the following main points:

- the three Secretariat departments responsible for development should be merged under the authority of a single Under Secretary-General;
- the Under Secretary-General should notably serve as Executive Secretary of ECOSOC in order to enhance the Council's policy formulation and coordinating role;
- the Secretary-General, assisted by the Under Secretary-General and supported by the Head of the UN Office of Internal Oversight Services, in cooperation with the heads of agencies, should urgently review the roles and