

**PERMANENT MISSION OF DENMARK
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

Statement by
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at

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"Strengthening the UN to Meet Global Challenges"

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Strengthening the UN to Meet Global Challenges

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Progress on an ambitious agenda

At the Millennium Summit in 2000 an unprecedented number of world leaders came together and committed themselves to an ambitious global agenda for the years ahead. An agenda that was further reinforced at the 2005 World Summit, where we also adopted the far-reaching principle of Responsibility to Protect.

By the very nature of the commitments from the Millennium Declaration and the World Summit, it was globally recognized that there can be no development without security and human rights – and vice versa. We owe it to ourselves and to the world community to take stock of our progress. How, then, have we met this challenge so far?

At the institutional level there can be no question that important progress has been achieved, as witnessed by the establishment of The Central Emergency Response Fund, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council.

Major challenges remain

But institution building alone will not do. We need to show the necessary resolve to make these new institutions effective instruments in the service of the global community. We have achieved little, if we do not endeavour to ensure that they fulfil their stated purposes and realize their true potential. Our challenge now is to address the substantive issues and to do so in earnest.

Crossing the halfway mark towards 2015 substantial progress has been made at the global level towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The results achieved through market oriented economic reform in Asia and Latin America over the last decade prove that eradication of poverty is not an elusive, unattainable goal.

Africa

But again, there is no room for complacency. A substantial increase in efforts is still needed – especially if Sub-Saharan Africa is to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The facts are simple. If progress in Africa is not accelerated, we will not live up to our responsibility. Denmark believes that time has come to arrange a UN Summit focusing on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals and financing for development.

Africa remains at the heart of Danish development assistance. The Danish Government firmly believes that development assistance to Africa should increase. We need to live up to the promise to double aid for Africa by 2010.

Denmark is keeping its part of the bargain. We are committed to providing 0.8 pct. of our national income in development assistance. Two-thirds of our bilateral assistance will go to the African continent.

Trade and governance

But clearly, development assistance alone is not enough.

Trade and good governance is key to development. There is no substitute for national ownership and commitment to good governance or for transparent and liberal trade and investment regimes that allow developing countries to benefit from globalisation.

It is a key goal for the Danish Government to promote good governance, democracy and human rights with no impunity for crimes against humanity and we will do this through an active foreign policy. Denmark will seriously do its best to contribute to a more effective UN - and to assist countries that have a strong commitment to development, but lack the necessary resources.

UN faces new and urgent challenges – climate change

Climate change has undoubtedly become one of the most urgent global challenges of our times. One that – by its very definition – we must deal with on a truly global level.

Climate change will affect the poorest and the weakest the most. And countries will have a very different capacity to act. Therefore, we have to base our joint efforts on the notion of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Denmark is pleased to host the Climate Change Conference, COP15, in December 2009. We have already commenced the preparations for the Conference in Copenhagen. Our common ambition is very high. We must reach consensus on an effective and multilateral post-Kyoto agreement. The Climate Conference in Copenhagen is the last call if the agreement is to enter into force by 2012.

We commend the Secretary General for his leadership on this issue. In our view an inclusive UN-based multilateral approach is crucial if we are to bring all parties together in responding to the global climate challenge.

The High Level Meeting on Climate Change held here in New York last week was an illustration of this commitment. I want to echo two essential points made at the High Level Meeting. Points that were also taken up by the Secretary General in his conclusions:

Firstly, that the Conference of the Parties to take place in Bali next December represents a crucial cut off-date. If we are serious about fighting climate change, COP 13 in Bali must define a clear timetable for negotiations towards a comprehensive post-2012 framework.

Secondly, the UNFCCC remains the only legitimate framework for truly global negotiations on climate change. It is within the UNFCCC that an ambitious agreement must be reached to reduce global emissions and to counter climate change.

Equal opportunities for women

Another major global challenge, to which Denmark attaches great importance, is to obtain equal opportunities for women. Here we also see a crucial role for an effective UN where gender equality is dealt with in a strengthened and systematic way – especially at country level.

In our view, no one should be excluded from contributing to peace, freedom and development. It is, therefore, of paramount importance – as a judicial, moral and ethical responsibility – that women everywhere have the same opportunities as men. In the fight against poverty it is an absolute necessity. Women must have equal rights as well as full access to employment, land and financial resources. Only then can development assistance realize its true potential and poverty be alleviated.

Donors must actively support partner countries in achieving gender equality. In the coming years, Denmark will have a strong focus on women and their role in development and conflict resolution. Setting goals, earmarking funds and monitoring progress to ensure that policies create results. Making a difference in this respect will require leadership from all parties. Without addressing the role of women we will never manage to halve extreme poverty by 2015. And our efforts to support the rights and empowerment of women must be complemented by a targeted effort to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The need for a strong UN

As we stand here today, we face more global challenges than ever. The world faces many unresolved conflicts, not least in Africa. We need to stay focused and enhance the UN's capacity in conflict prevention, in conflict management and in peacebuilding.

A strong UN is required to cope with the global challenges of today and tomorrow. Only a strong and effective UN can show the necessary political leadership with regard to development, humanitarian crisis and conflicts.

In Sudan, we have an obligation to help the people of Darfur achieve peace through the restoration of stability. The killings, violence and atrocities must end. This has taken far too long. There is now finally some progress in the attempts to find a solution to the conflict in Darfur. We have a responsibility to ensure it is implemented. Denmark actively supports the UN-AU Hybrid Force as well as the resumed political process. It raises real hope for improving the deplorable situation on the ground and the prospect for a long-term political solution. As part of this process we must implement ICC arrest warrants and bring perpetrators of crime to justice.

Afghanistan must be one of the top-priorities of the international community and the UN. It is important to maintain broad consensus amongst all international partners on the need to carry through what we have started. To that end we need the UN to play a stronger role in Afghanistan. A coordinated engagement – civilian as well as military – is a precondition for success. UNAMA must use its full potential to coordinate the international efforts, and as a counterpart for the Afghans. And UNAMA should be present in each and every province – also in the south.

In Kosovo only a solution to the final status issue will ensure stability and prosperity in the region. We share the opinion of the Secretary-General that the status quo is not sustainable. We hope for results in the new negotiations. As stated by the EU presidency, the EU will live up to its particular responsibility and participate actively in the collective effort to bring the parties closer together. The goal is to obtain a comprehensive political solution that will lead to a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo.

We believe that the UN continues to be the international focal point for our common efforts in the fight against terrorism. The adoption last year by the General Assembly of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was of crucial importance. It underlined the firm commitment of the international community to stand united against those who wish to threaten international peace and security. Next step should be to finalise the negotiations on the comprehensive global convention against terrorism. This would send another strong political signal of our unity. The adoption of this convention would be a worthy achievement of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly.

Reform and the institutional challenge

Finally, let me say a few words on UN reform and the institutional challenge for the organisation. The starting point is clear. To ensure the necessary reforms of the UN there is no substitute for a strong political will of the individual Member States.

Reforms of UN operational activities are taking shape. However, much work remains if the recommendations from the High Level Panel are to be followed and the UN is truly to 'Deliver as One'. It is of paramount importance to make the UN more focused and effective at country level. Experiences from the pilot countries are encouraging and should inspire further action.

The UN's governance structures also require further reform. The General Assembly should keep its focus on decision-making on important matters and leave detailed management to managers. The Security Council would benefit from a reform making it more representative. Denmark is therefore encouraged by the new momentum in discussions on Security Council Reform.

But first and foremost, strengthening the UN requires an understanding that the UN cannot do everything for everyone at the same time. We need to agree on a common vision and priorities for the organisation. We need to take a step back from the day-to-day agenda and focus on the role a strong UN could play in the future.

This points towards strengthening the UN in relation to three of its unique features:

- Firstly, conflict resolution and prevention as undertaken by the Security Council, the General Assembly and the good offices of the Secretary-General, as well as through peacekeeping efforts of the UN.
- Secondly, strengthening the capacity of the UN system to assist countries in the early phases of recovery following conflicts - or countries with very weak institutions. Here the UN has a key role to play. We should help build stronger bridges from peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance to peace building, reconstruction and development. We should help building states and help secure that weak states do not fall back into conflict or chaos. The Peace Building Commission will be essential in obtaining this.
- Finally, in the area of international norm-setting where the UN has already shaped the international agenda for action. One of the goals here should be to enhance the role the UN plays in regards to ensuring respect for human rights. As members of the United Nations we have taken on the shared responsibility to protect those in the most vulnerable situations – not least children.

What is needed now is to follow through and catalyse action. No small task – even for a strong UN.

Thank you for your attention.