



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON

AT THE

**CLOSING OF THE INFORMAL INTERACTIVE
HEARINGS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY, NGOS
AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR**

UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS

NEW YORK, 22 JUNE 2006

Mr. Coordinator of the Group of LDCs,
Mr. Under-Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. We have come to the end of what has been a very enriching day. Let me thank the speakers, the participants and all those in attendance who have contributed to what, in my assessment, have been very successful hearings. We have heard a wide range of views and recommendations from across the geographical and sectoral spectrum. Not only am I confident that that these recommendations will be given due consideration at the High-level Meeting in September, but I am also optimistic that we shall find some of the ideas presented here today of immediate value in our respective areas of work in support of development efforts in the LDCs.
2. I would also like to commend the active participation of Member States in today's hearings. The interest they have shown is a clear demonstration of the importance they attach to the contribution of civil society, NGOs and the private sector in the development process.
3. Today's hearings are, of course, not the end of the dialogue between Member States on the one hand and civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector on the other. For it to be meaningful and productive, the interaction must continue at various levels and in various forms throughout the implementation period of the Brussels Programme.

4. As an immediate follow-up to today's hearings and in the spirit of openness that has characterised the preparatory process, I will give the Task Force and those who spoke on behalf of the different interest groups here today the opportunity to make their comments on my summary of the hearings before I finalise it for submission to the High-level Meeting in September.
5. It is clear from today's discussions that the task that lies ahead of us is a huge one. If we fail to reach the goals and targets of the Brussels Programme of Action in the next five years, we shall have failed the hundreds of millions of people stuck in absolute poverty in the world's poorest countries.
6. We cannot afford to let a large section of humanity slide deeper into poverty as other parts of the world get wealthier. To do so would not only be immoral, but it would also undermine global efforts to achieve international peace and security. I therefore hope that today's hearings will be an important step towards galvanising efforts at all levels to tackle the challenge of poverty in the LDCs.