



PRESS RELEASE



UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

**UN UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES RECOMMENDATION
BY COMMISSION FOR AFRICA OF 100 PER CENT DEBT CANCELLATION
AS A MAJOR STEP TOWARDS ALLEVIATING POVERTY IN AFRICA**

United Nations, 11 March, 2005: The United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Anwarul K. Chowdhury, welcomed the Report of the Commission for Africa as a positive step towards global efforts to eradicate poverty in the Least Developed Countries in Africa.

He said, “I am delighted that the recommendation of ‘100 per cent debt cancellation as soon as possible’ has been prominently reflected in the Report. The international community must take urgent steps towards cancellation of all debt that has burdened the 50 Least Developed Countries, 34 of them in Africa.”

The Report of the Commission for Africa, established by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, was launched at the United Nations today. The Report called for “rich nations to commit to a timetable for giving 0.7 per cent of their annual income in aid.”

Mr. Chowdhury praised the work of the Commission in generating new ideas and action for a prosperous Africa, and said, “Full cancellation of debt for the world’s poorest countries is a moral and practical imperative, especially when we consider their struggle with extreme poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Their debt burden is unsustainable and stunts progress towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals.”

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