



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 UNDERScores PROBLEMS
FACING LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

**“MDGs WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED IF LEAST DEVELOPED
COUNTRIES ARE LEFT BEHIND”**

United Nations, 16 March, 2005: Addressing the Economic and Social Council gathered at the United Nations today to discuss *Eradication of Poverty and Hunger*, 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, said that poverty and hunger was pervasive in the 50 Least Developed Countries, 34 of them in Africa. “These Least Developed Countries are the most vulnerable segment of humanity, and the Millennium Development Goals will not be achieved, if these countries are left behind,” he warned the international community.

He outlined three major factors that contributed to poverty and hunger in the Least Developed Countries: rapidly increasing population, which he termed as the “demographic challenge”; the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and, most important, the suffering caused by an unsustainable debt burden.

Offering tangible solutions, Mr. Chowdhury said, “It is important to emphasize rural development as a critical step towards bringing about economic transition; empower people to work towards poverty reduction and give a voice to the poor by creating “community-based” strategies; invest in women and girls by giving women increased access to land, property and water and provide education to girls; and, increase the role of civil society and non-governmental organizations to help with solutions to eradicate poverty and hunger.”

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