



PRESS RELEASE



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

**INCREASE IN OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE
TO LDCs IS MAJOR STEP TOWARDS ALLEVIATING POVERTY**

**UN UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL INFORMS THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ON ACHIEVEMENTS OF LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS**

United Nations, 9 February 2005: “The total official development assistance flow to Least Developed Countries amounted to \$23.5 billion; a 31% increase in nominal terms in 2003 as compared to the previous year. This represents the highest one year increase of official development assistance to the LDCs.”

United Nations Under-Secretary-General for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Anwarul K. Chowdhury, was addressing the General Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on the achievements of the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

He described this development as “encouraging towards alleviating poverty and a concrete step in honouring the commitment made by donor countries.” He was referring to the commitment made by donor countries in 2001 at the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in Brussels “to meet expeditiously the target of 0.20% of GNP as ODA to LDCs.”

Mr. Chowdhury said that he was heartened that of all the groups of countries with special development challenges, the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, grew by more than 5 per cent last year.



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Referring to the *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2005* Report, Mr. Chowdhury said that the African growth of 4.5 per cent was fuelled by higher agricultural output, improved political stability and incoming donor support, as well as stronger commodity markets, and these same factors are expected to produce a similar outcome this year as well.

Recalling the landmark United Nations conference held in Almaty, Mr. Chowdhury said that it was the first ever UN conference to raise the profile of landlocked developing countries to the same level as accorded to LDCs and SIDS. “Consequently, international recognition and support to address the special needs of LLDCs has been revitalized,” he said. The Office of the High Representative will convene a meeting of regional and sub-regional organizations in Almaty in March to define their role towards the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. “The Almaty Programme of Action is a focused, action-oriented programme, making its implementation both measureable and feasible,” he added.

The most important agenda for the three Programmes of Action for 2005 is the review of the Millennium Development Goals. Goal 8 calls upon the international community to address the special needs of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. “I believe that in the review process, maximum attention should be given to LDCs,” Mr. Chowdhury emphasized.

In his review, Mr. Chowdhury stated that in his capacity as Secretary-General of the United Nations International Meeting on Small Island Developing States held in Mauritius last month, he had reiterated his call for a dynamic system of monitoring the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. He said, “Monitoring should not conclude with simple stocktaking, but should be a process by which implementation loopholes, failures or slackness can be identified and corrective measures taken.”

Mr. Chowdhury referred to both the Mauritius Declaration and Mauritius Strategy, and said, “The International Meeting did indeed have a unique difference, in that it has already focused on issues of implementation of the Mauritius Strategy agreed to at the Meeting.”



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“With the outcome documents now in our hands, we have to look forward towards the road to implementation. How we will accomplish this process is in the hands of the stakeholders – the donor community, the multilateral financial institutions, civil society, private sector, regional organizations and the Small Island Developing States themselves,” he added.

He suggested the outlining of a Roadmap for the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy. “Such a Roadmap would serve as an overarching guideline,” he said.

The member states commended the efforts of the Office of the High Representative for its high level of advocacy and outreach strategies and complimented Mr. Chowdhury in his efforts to implement the Roadmap of the three programme with clarity and effectiveness.

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