



PRESS RELEASE



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

UN High Representative says concrete action needed to eradicate poverty in poorest countries

New York: 17 October 2006: On the occasion of the 2006 International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, the UN Under Secretary-General for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Mr. Anwarul K. Chowdhury, called on wealthy nations to increase their assistance to economically vulnerable nations.

Mr. Chowdhury highlighted that poverty had deepened in the majority of the world's 50 LDCs – 34 of which are in Africa - pointing out that 370 million people in this group of countries face a daily battle against food insecurity, disease and rampant unemployment. The UN has projected the number of poor people living in LDCs to rise by 100 million by 2015.

The High Representative underscored concerns about the impact of chronic poverty on women and young children in particular.

“Poverty is increasingly becoming feminized. This negative trend must be arrested if we are to make any headway in reaching any of our development targets,” he warned.

The theme of this year's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is “Working Together Out of Poverty”. Mr. Chowdhury said that while LDCs have taken “big strides in creating an enabling environment for poverty eradication, including undertaking extensive economic and

governance reforms, significant and well-coordinated external support is necessary if any of these countries are to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of reducing extreme poverty”.

“It is incumbent upon development partners to redeem their pledge to provide official development assistance (ODA) to these vulnerable countries to the tune of 0.20 percent of their Gross National Income as envisaged in the 2001 Brussels Programme of Action for LDCs,” he added. ODA now stands at 0.08 percent.

At the third U.N. Conference for Least Developed Countries held in Brussels in May 2001, the United Nations adopted a wide-ranging Programme of Action aimed at providing increased assistance to the world's 50 poorest nations.

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