

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE GENERAL DEBATE
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OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great privilege and honour to address the High Level Segment of this year ECOSOC substantive session in the capacity of my country as a member of this principal United Nations body.

The Republic of Moldova is strongly committed to the promotion of social, economic and sustainable development and intends to contribute to the work of the ECOSOC, in order for the Council to be an effective and capable coordination instrument for implementation of the development agenda as set out in the Millennium Declaration.

We welcome the strengthening of the ECOSOC, holding Annual Ministerial Reviews and biennial Development Cooperation Forums and consider that these new mandates are essential to enhancing implementation of the internationally-agreed objectives, including the MDGs.

We also support the innovative feature of this year's national voluntary presentations which include developed countries and expand sharing and learning the experiences and exploring additional ways to boost impact at the country level. As an input to this process, the Republic of Moldova has expressed its readiness to make a national presentation during the next Ministerial meetings.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Finding the optimal balance among economic growth, social development and protection of the environment remains the main challenge of the sustainable development. As widely recognized, while there has been some progress on the economic and social pillars, greater efforts are still required on the environmental side. This is especially important in connection to the long-term sustainability issues of climate change.

Food production and prices respectively have been affected by climate change and the current food crisis has become one of the common concerns. While the increase of prices affected the life of the people all around the world it is obvious that the poor suffer the most. To address this situation and meet global and household food security needs, the short, medium and long term actions are required to be undertaken by national governments, with the support of the international community. If the international response is not prompt, the security situation in many countries and their sustainable development could be gravely jeopardized. Therefore, there is an urgent need to help developing countries and countries in transition to expand agriculture and food production and increase investment in agriculture, agribusiness and rural development.

As regards the Republic of Moldova, the last year drought combined with market distortions decreased the farmers' incomes. The continuous increase of energy and food prices risk decreasing economic growth.

In such circumstances the advance of agriculture development is crucial. The main tasks in this regard are to improve governance, promote economic stability and growth, support the development of the rural economy, enhancing access of people to social services and minimizing environmental risks. Concrete measures, including developing agricultural infrastructure and services, improving irrigation, seed technology, as well as access to inputs, fertilizers, markets and storage, would significantly contribute to strengthening agriculture in the country.

Many of these problems are being addressed in the framework of the implementation of the Agricultural Sustainable Development Strategy, recently developed in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and within the UNDP Project "Relief and Technical Assistance Response to the Drought in Moldova". Under this programme financed with the support of several UN (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF) agencies and implemented in cooperation with the Government, local public authorities and non-governmental partners a lot of socially vulnerable people from Moldova was assisted to overcome the consequences of the drought of 2007.

As proved by these positive examples, international cooperation, partnership, technical and financial assistance are major factors in ensuring implementation of the development goals.

In this context, we fully support the recommendations contained in the Secretary General's Report for the Annual Ministerial Review with regard to the need for the renewed international commitment to the effective implementation in all countries of the global consensus on sustainable development based on cooperation and social solidarity at the local, national and international level.

As recommended in the above mentioned report, the increased assistance for strengthening administrative and monitoring capacities of the public sector are to be endorsed in the developing, as well as countries in transition, particularly to integrating the three components of sustainable development, on the basis of national actions and international cooperation, with expanded financial and technical assistance for those countries.

Regional cooperation, including networks of experts for identifying and promoting integrated and cost-effective approaches to sustainable development based on shared experiences may also be established. In this regard, on October 9-10, 2008, the Republic of Moldova will host the regional conference „Strengthening National and Regional Partnerships" dedicated to the prevention and mitigation of the natural hazards impact.

Mr. President,

At this halfway point, a renewed commitment for the achievement in all countries of the Millennium Development Goals is also necessary. Moreover, all commitments should now be translated into practical plans with systematic follow-through by all parties.

The Republic of Moldova became involved in the process of implementation of the internationally-agreed development goals, including MDGs on the basis of the main national priorities for equitable and sustained economic growth, alongside with the mainstreaming of these goals into the national development policies and strategies, especially those related to the poverty reduction.

At the national level, the development goals are included in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Paper (EGPRSP), which represents the strategic document aimed to reduce poverty by creating conditions for economic development and by offering assistance to persons most affected by poverty, thus ensuring the sustainable development according to the MDG Agenda.

A fundamental document adopted by the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova in this regard is the National Development Programme, which represents the main internal medium-term strategic paper, defining the development objectives of the Republic of Moldova by 2011 and identifying the priority measures and actions to achieve these goals. The Strategy and the relevant implementation Action Plan serve as unique tools for the integration of the current strategic framework, alignment between the budgeting process (MTEF) and the policy framework, and assimilation of external technical and financial assistance.

Similarly to other countries, Moldova crossed the midway in its endeavors to achieve the national millennium goals.

The MDG related to *poverty reduction* represents a major concern for the international community and is unlikely to be homogenously achieved by the year 2015. Thus, urgent steps must be taken at the international and national level to mitigate increase of the food and fuel prices.

In Moldova, for instance, having revised the preliminary indicators and objectives for 2010 and the final ones for 2015, the Government established new tangible targets and concrete actions for reducing poverty rate.

In *education*, it was realized that at this stage Moldova is undertaking significant efforts to improve the quality of general secondary education by applying new teaching methods, similar to the ones used in the European countries.

The goal of improving *maternal health* is a priority of the healthcare system. During the past six years progress has been achieved in this field and positive dynamics registered in the area of health services.

Finally, considering the level of MDGs attainment by the Republic of Moldova, it is important to underline that all eight goals are closely interlinked and that development

strategies rarely target just one objective. As a consequence, our attention must be focused on defining a more coherent development agenda, which would address each particular MDG from the prospective of positive impact on the entire MDG agenda. The Government of the Republic of Moldova will continue the implementation of MDGs, accomplishing the agenda with relevant and fully integrated national policies, encouraging the participation of the entire society.

On the other side, if the country is to attain MDGs, the international support remains essential. Development assistance, in particular stable and predictable financing and enhanced access to international trade are critical to achieving development goals, including sustained economic growth and sustainable development, especially in the context of a low-income country.

Mr. President,

The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals is already half-way through and the next few years will be critical for obtaining significant results. Their achievement is possible in most countries, if concerted and well targeted actions in support of all MDGs are permanently increased and sustained until 2015. It requires a shared global strategy which would foster inclusive sustained growth, solid context-sensitive national poverty strategies, sound governance, gender equality and empowerment of women, increased public and private investments, enhanced production capacity and the creation of working places, so that all development partners can join forces in further advancing this process. To accelerate progress, enhanced focus on sharing best practices and replicating those that have proven effective is also indispensable.

The strengthened Economic and Social Council is to further play a central role in promoting improved coordination between the UN bodies in the effective implementation of major UN summits and conferences outcomes, achieving the targets of the Millennium Summit and advancing worldwide dialogue between the states, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector on global policy issues in the economic, social, environmental and humanitarian fields.

In the same line, we welcome the endorsement by the General Assembly of the annual meetings on monitoring the commitments and implementation by all countries of the development goals, as well as holding the MDGs event to be organized by the President of the General Assembly and Secretary-General on September 25, 2008. This would represent additional opportunities to ensure global support for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you.