

SUMMIT OF SOUTH AMERICAN-ARAB COUNTRIES - ASPA

II Meeting for the Ministers in Charge of Social Affairs and Development (Brasília, 1-2/Mar/2010)

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THE BRASILIA COMMUNIQUÉ

The Ministers in Charge of Social Affairs and Development of the Arab and South American countries, gathered in their second bi-regional meeting, in Brasilia, on March 2nd, 2010, upon the kind invitation of His Excellency, Mr. Patrus Ananias, the Minister of Social Development and Combating Hunger of Brazil;

Recognizing the importance of ASPA as a mechanism for bi-regional approximation and for the promotion of human development and mutual cooperation to achieve welfare and better living standards for both regions' populations; and, in this context, *emphasizing* the importance of South-South cooperation and its pivotal role in promoting solidarity among developing countries and in achieving development and progress in all domains;

Reaffirming the outcomes of the first Meeting of Ministers of Social Affairs and Development of ASPA, held in Cairo (3/May/2007), highlighting the imperative of bi-regional cooperation, in accordance with the principles laid out in the "Brasilia Declaration", of the First ASPA Summit (Brasilia, 10-11/May/2005), and the "Doha Declaration", of the Second ASPA Summit (Doha, 31/Mar/2009);

Regarding highly the resolutions and outcome of the Arab Economic, Development and Social Summit held in Kuwait, 9th January 2009, in particular the Arab leaders' endorsement of the Arab Program to eradicate Poverty and the Arab Program to achieve the MDGs, which could substantially enhance Arab Welfare and Guarantying the food security, equality of income distribution and social cohesion;

Expressing satisfaction for the progress made in the institutionalization of UNASUR, particularly with the results of its Third Ordinary Meeting of Heads of State and Government (Quito, 10/Aug/2009) and with the results of the First Meeting of the Ministers of the South American Council on Social Development (Quito, 11/Dec/2009), which approved a regional Biannual Plan of Action on social development;

Recalling that economic and social development, peace, full implementation of human rights, access to all types of social services, in particular education and quality health services and decent work are interrelated and constitute prerequisites for a better, more equitable and socially inclusive society;

Reiterating the fundamental importance granted by the governments of both regions to the protection and promotion of human rights, their universality, indivisibility and interdependence, which are cornerstones of democracy and necessary elements for constructing more just societies, *underscoring* the relevance of UN Agencies initiatives to promote access to knowledge to visually impaired citizens;

Emphasizing the pivotal role of family in fostering social inclusion and social cohesion and determined to strengthen this role and give further empowerment to the family to ensure its welfare and good living standards through practicing its socioeconomic functions;

Recognizing the necessity of emancipation from extreme poverty and hunger as a key human right and for its critical role in cementing social cohesion and harmony, accelerating nation building and strengthening political stability;

Stressing the need to improve opportunities and choices for the people in order to ensure the most basic human development, especially in life expectancy, knowledge, education and decent living standards, and change the inequality in the distribution of consumption and expenditure matters, and to improve income distribution;

Affirming the necessity of pro-poor macroeconomic strategies, which need to be incorporated into public investment as a core vehicle for sustainable growth, and for fostering investment on the poor, based on unconventional approaches, in order to build up their productivity and their labor standards;

Considering the need to adopt new mechanisms to diminish inequality by investing in the poor and using macroeconomic policies to help improve human capital;

Emphasizing employment for women and young people, to assist reducing gender and age disparities and provide greater voice to these marginalized population groups in social decision making processes;

Recognizing the necessity of accelerating the reduction in under-five and maternal mortality, malnutrition, disparities between rural and urban areas, and between the rich and the poor, among others;

Recalling the commemorative meeting during the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women in order to mark the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action” (Beijing + 15), in which the importance of empowering women, increasing their participation in economic activities and addressing the negative impacts of the international financial crisis on their status shall be stressed;

Stressing the importance of the activities of the Arab Women Organization and the programs of the Arab Women’s International Humanitarian Law Commission, the works of which started during the organization’s meeting that was held in Tunis on 21-22 February 2010 with the objective of the empowerment of Arab women;

Reaffirming the importance of providing productive and decent employment for all as one of the most important development areas, where accelerated progress is needed, through mainstreaming decent work into development policies, strategies and programs, including concrete measures for a wider social protection floor, improved social dialogue, and the promotion of international labor standards;

Stressing the importance of undertaking efforts to address the social impacts of the recent international economic and financial crisis, which must serve as an opportunity to enhance permanent social protection systems so as to avoid that the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups suffer the worst impacts, taking into account the ILO Global Jobs Pact and the Social Protection Floor Initiative;

Calling upon donor countries to fulfill their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their national income on official development assistance, and recommending that they take actions in order to help Arab and South American countries progress towards the attainment of the development goals, especially within the context of current financial crisis;

Stressing that allocation of Official Development Assistance should be driven by development priorities, and not by political considerations, and should be distributed efficiently among the developing countries, especially to the LDCs and those in conflict, as they are the most at risk of not achieving the development goals; and considering that the donor countries should ensure that all debt relief be treated separately from ODA;

Acknowledging the need for identifying new sources of predictable funding to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, especially with regard to reducing poverty, promoting food and

nutritional security, as well as sustainable pro-poor growth in developing countries, mainly in rural areas, with a view to ensuring their rights to food;

Taking into account the principles of the Declaration of the World Summit on Food Security (Rome, 2009); and *considering* the need to overcome the world food crisis by strengthening collaborative action amongst all relevant stakeholders in the scope of the renewed Committee for World Food Security, which is a central component of a Global Partnership for Agriculture, Food Security and Nutrition;

Reaffirming that the continuation of occupation of Palestinian and other Arab territories hinders development, and in particular, the achievement of MDGs for the Palestinian People, therefore they reaffirm the need to reach a just, durable and comprehensive peace in the Middle East on the basis of the principle of land for peace and relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly of the United Nations, in particular Resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) of the Security Council, as well as the Madrid Framework, the "Arab Peace Initiative" and the "Doha Declaration" of the II ASPA Summit (31/3/2009), that ensures the realization of security for all countries in the region. They also highlight the necessity of the full implementation of the "Road Map", in light of the social implications that the occupation imposes on the Palestinian people, particularly the ones that live under blockage in the Gaza Strip, according to reports of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Reaffirm the need for the materialization of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, and for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1515 (2003), and the establishment of the independent Palestinian State, based on the 1967 lines, living side by side with the State of Israel, and the withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab territories to the lines of 4th of June 1967, and the dismantling of the Settlements including those in East Jerusalem and calling upon the international community to accelerate their aid and development assistance to allow Palestinian society to flourish and make progress towards development and welfare. They duly take into account the advisory opinion rendered on 9th July 2004 by the International Court of Justice related to the "Legal Consequences of the Construction of a Wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory", and call upon all parties concerned to comply with the said advisory opinion, and put an end to the blockage against the Palestinian people which is widening poverty among them.

Expressing solidarity with the Chilean people affected by the earthquake of February 27th, 2010;

Expressing solidarity with the Haitian people and support for the ongoing and future reconstruction efforts in Haiti, affected by the earthquake of January 12th, 2010;

Recognizing the necessity of further coordination among ASPA member-States to provide humanitarian assistance in cases of socio-natural disasters, in a timely manner, taking into account the cultural habits of the assisted populations, whether within both regions or third locations;

Calling to upgrade the capacities of both regions' countries in the areas of data collection and information systems, developing both regions' own capacities to review and monitor their progress towards a development pattern that increases social inclusion, social cohesion and social capital.

Agree to:

1. Adopt the "Brasilia Plan of Action for Social Cooperation" (*Annex 1*), which is an integral part of this Communiqué; commit themselves to implement the actions therein listed;
2. Welcome the presentation of the structure and attributions of the ASPA Sectorial Committee on Social Cooperation at the VI Meeting of the Council of High Officials (Quito, 26-27/Feb/2010) and propose that it be provisionally coordinated by the Technical Secretariat of the Council of Arab Ministers of Development and Social Affairs and the Presidency of the Council of Social Development of UNASUR, with the support of the South American Coordinator of ASPA (Brazil), until the Co-Chairs of all ASPA Sectorial Committees be decided;
- 3- Call upon the industrialized countries to fulfill their resource mobilization commitments assumed at the High Level Conference on Food Security, held at FAO, in June of 2008; also, emphasize both regions' commitment to reinforce the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) as the multilateral forum in which States can find coordination to resolve the world food insecurity;
- 4- Assess and analyze the outcome of the III UN Forum on the Alliance of Civilizations, which will occur in Rio de Janeiro (28-29/May/2010), and other relevant initiatives, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), so as to formulate the appropriate program and policies; and celebrate the importance of 2010 as the Interamerican Year of Women, as declared by the Organization of American States, in which a series of activities to disseminate international conventions and national legislations that promote the human rights of women as well as gender equality shall take place;
- 5- Express appreciation to the Government of Lebanon for its offering to host III Meeting of Ministers of Social Affairs, in 2012;

6- Express a high gratitude to the Government of Brazil in particular the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger for its successful organization of the II Meeting of the ASPA Ministers of Social Affairs, in the period of 1-2/Mar/2010.

Brasilia, March 2nd, 2010.