

UN-tasks eminent persons stress commitment to poor States' development



Ban Ki-moon (R) and Alpha Oumar Konare

13 October 2010 – A member of the Group of Eminent Persons appointed by Secretary-General Ban K-moon to look into development problems facing the world's poorest countries today stressed that both developed and developing countries must fulfil their commitments to poverty reduction strategies for the efforts to bear fruit.

"The international community has to commit to financially supporting developing countries, and we need partnership against corruption in developing countries," said Alpha Oumar Konaré, the former President of Mali and co-chair the Group of Eminent Persons for the fourth UN conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Speaking to reporters after the Group's first meeting, Mr. Konaré said donors should also make efforts to ensure that funds are managed in a transparent manner, bearing in mind that the LDCs had the national responsibility for development efforts in their respective States.

"The simple answer is that it is not just more money, and it is very clear in the developing countries themselves that we cannot deal with development unless we look at the question of governance, unless we look at shared responsibility," said James Wolfensohn, former World Bank President and co-chair of the Group.

During the Group's gathering, the Secretary-General said the stature and experience of the members made it well-placed to advocate for the major UN conference on LDCs in Istanbul, Turkey, next May. He said the upcoming meeting would usher in a new generation of international measures for the LDCs in key areas such as aid, trade, foreign direct investment, remittances, transfer of technology, debt relief and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The event in the Turkish capital will assess the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the LDCs – the outcome document adopted at the 2001 LDC conference – and reach agreement on a new generation of international support measures for the LDCs.

The 10-year Brussels Programme of Action outlines measures to be taken by both industrialized nations and the LDCs themselves to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development.

“By raising public awareness and building strong political commitment, especially at a challenging time for global solidarity, you can help reinvigorate the compact in support of the development and transformation of the LDCs over the next decade,” Mr. Ban told the Group today.

Its other members are Jacques Delors, former president of the European Commission; Fazle Hassan Abed, the founder and chairperson of the Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee (BRAC); Nancy Birdsall, the founding president of the Center for Global Development; and Kemal Dervis, former head of the UN Development Programme (**UNDP**) and current vice president and director of Global Economy and Development at Brookings Institution.

It also comprises Hiromasa Yonekura, chairman of Sumitomo Chemical Company Ltd.; Louis Michel, European Parliament member and formerly the European commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid; Louis A. Kasekende, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Uganda and formerly executive director at the World Bank; and Sir Richard Jolly, Honorary Professor of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

They were appointed by the Secretary-General in August to examine obstacles to economic progress and recommend new paradigms for transforming low-income economies.

The Group’s ten members were chosen for their “high international stature, expertise and strong commitment to global development,” Mr. Ban’s spokesperson said in a **statement** at the time.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

Low-income countries to benefit from advocacy by UN-appointed eminent persons