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(GSP)

The UN: United for Peace,
Development and Human Rights



UNITED NATIONS

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The UN: United for Peace, Development and Human Rights



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA
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**Remarks by Mr. Sergei A. Ordzhonikidze
United Nations Under-Secretary-General
Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva**

Closing of the 45th Geneva Graduate Study Programme

**Palais des Nations, Salle VII
Friday, 20 July 2007, at 10:30 a.m.**

**Ladies and Gentlemen
Dear Friends:**

It is a pleasure to be with you, as we close our 45th Geneva Graduate Study Programme. I appreciate this opportunity to meet with you, as you receive your certificates, and I would like to share with you a few thoughts on the challenges before our Organization. I know that you have had three productive weeks, where you have impressed the lecturers from across the United Nations system here in Geneva with your incisive questions and sharp observations.

Your debates have no doubt demonstrated how the three pillars of the United Nations' work – security, development and human rights – are inter-linked and mutually reinforcing. We cannot achieve any one of them without addressing the others, and we cannot do it alone. We must work with other stakeholders – regional and other intergovernmental organizations, parliamentarians, civil society and the private sector. While you have been here, we have seen two examples of how the United Nations is engaging with partners. The annual substantive session of the Economic and Social Council – ECOSOC – opened here at the Palais des Nations on the day that your Programme started. This year, ECOSOC launched its biennial Development Cooperation Forum, which is a multi-stakeholder platform including Governments, United Nations system organizations, civil society, parliaments and academic experts. The Forum represents a step forward in implementing the global partnership for development, which must complement national leadership. At the Global Compact Leaders Summit later the same week, business leaders from developed and developing countries pledged to comply with labour, human rights, environmental and anti-corruption standards for a more sustainable and inclusive economy.

In the working groups you have explored some of the pressing issues on the United Nations agenda: economic and social development, environment, and human rights. You have discussed how advancing in all of these areas could help achieve our common goal of making poverty a part of history. This year, we are at the halfway point towards the deadline for the realization of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals – the MDGs. As you already know, progress has been uneven across individual goals and across regions. Many targets may be missed in Sub-Saharan Africa, if current trends continue. We must strengthen the efforts of both developing and developed countries to accelerate the pace so that we may close the gap between rhetoric and reality. I am sure that you have come up with innovative and interesting suggestions in this respect.

I welcome your intensive focus on environment, which is an urgent – and ever-growing – challenge, with severe implications for development and for security. Current projections indicate that the Earth could warm by as much as 3 degrees Celsius by the end of this century. The warming trend has already affected all continents and oceans, and it is predicted that Africa will be the hardest hit, which will significantly compound the development challenges. The General Assembly's Informal Thematic Debate on "Climate Change as a Global Challenge" later this month, and the high-level meeting to be convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September – the day before the opening of the 62nd General Assembly – will be important opportunities to galvanize further political will and sustain momentum on the issue – leading up to the meeting of the States Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in Bali in December.

In the area of human rights our challenge is to ensure that we harness the potential of the Human Rights Council. The completion of the first phase of institution building and the establishment of the Universal Periodic Review are important accomplishments in the Council's first year, and we must build on these.

The security challenges before us are vast and varied. Efforts to confront the tragedy in Darfur must be intensified, and the deployment of the United Nations-African Union hybrid force of more than 20,000 military personnel and civilian police is a critical step. The political process to resolve the causes of the conflict must continue in parallel.

The situation in the greater Middle East, with the question of Palestine at the core, requires action on both the political and the humanitarian fronts. Only yesterday, the Quartet – consisting of the United Nations, the Russian Federation, the US and the European Union – met to help drive forward the process towards a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, supporting the call for an international meeting later this year. Assisting Lebanon in its quest for a peaceful and independent future, facilitating the process of national reconciliation in Iraq, and consolidating the progress that has been achieved in Afghanistan, are also among our priorities in the wider region.

Overcoming the current stalemate in multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation efforts is not only a security challenge, but also imperative from a development angle. Annual global military expenditure now exceeds 1,2 trillion US dollars, while only just over 100 billion US dollars are spent on overseas development assistance. We could

make significant progress towards the MDGs, if some of these resources were re-directed to economic and social development efforts.

Dear Friends:

You have come to Geneva from across the globe, bringing with you perspectives and ideas that reflect your particular backgrounds. Over the past three weeks, you will have seen how these differences determine what we perceive as a priority. It is my hope that you take with you an appreciation of these differences as a strength that we must capitalize on. We need to understand what constitutes a threat or challenge for others, if we expect them to recognize our point of view. This is the foundation for making common cause against challenges that are, in fact, shared by all of us.

I am sure that you go home full of impressions and new ideas. But, you have of course also given something to us while you have been here. You have challenged us with critical comments, and you have provided creative suggestions. I hope that you will continue to allow this Organization to benefit from your energy and enthusiasm, and that you will be part of taking the important work of the United Nations forward. How we respond to the challenges that I just outlined will define not only our era, but also that of coming generations. We all have a responsibility to contribute, and to help shape a better future for all. The United Nations Organization – as a universal organization – remains indispensable, and it must be continuously strengthened. We rely on you to help us to do that.

I wish you all success in your future endeavours – and a safe trip home – and I trust that our paths will cross again.

Thank you very much.

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45th Graduate Study Programme

Palais des Nations, 2 to 20 July 2007

**Theme: The UN: United for Peace, Development and Human Rights
Making Poverty History**

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

About one billion people – or about one sixth of the world’s population - live on less than a dollar per day. Another 3 billion live on less than 2 dollars a day. If these figures are striking, they translate an everyday reality: that of “the poor”. The poor represent a wide category of people and situations, and the concept of poverty itself has received various definitions. A widely used understanding of poverty defines it as “*a condition in which a person or community is deprived of, and or lacks the essentials for a minimum standard of well-being and life*”. In order to have a worldwide measure of poverty, the World Bank (WB) and other international institutions use a global indicator of incomes of \$1 or \$2 a day. Thus, the WB defines *extreme poverty* as living on less than \$1 a day¹, and *moderate poverty* as less than \$2 a day. Other institutions like the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) favor a more ‘human’, social, and non financial-based definition of poverty. Such a definition relies on one main indicator: the Human Poverty Index (HPI), which measures human deprivations in the same three aspects of human development as the Human Development Index (HDI): longevity, knowledge and a decent standard of living.² Although several definitions are relevant and legitimate, the paper will rely on the WB definition of poverty for one main reason: this definition provides a convenient instrumental tool for the measurement of poverty worldwide.

Although poverty is a worldwide phenomenon, today’s poor are concentrated in a group of countries: the so-called “*Least Developed Countries*” (LDCs). LDCs or “Fourth World” countries are countries exhibiting the lowest indicators of socio-economic development. They are defined based on three criteria: low income, human resource weakness, and economic vulnerability. There are fifty LDCs in the world today, three quarters of which are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. As such, this region deserves particular attention and greater efforts need to be focused on this part of the world.

If poverty has emerged quite recently as a main theme on the international scene, development concerns have been at the top of the agenda of international cooperation for the last decades. Attempts at furthering the advancement of underdeveloped countries have been manifold and have involved a variety of strategies. In the late 1970s, the strategies adopted by the Bretton Woods institutions were initially mainly concerned with development issues, through the well-known “Structural Adjustment Programs” (SAPs). Following the oil crises and the first sovereign debts, SAPs were put forth in order to correct macroeconomic imbalances and market distortions through stabilization. Such strategies have had limited outcomes, however: a number of LDCs are getting poorer³, while the gap between developed countries and other developing countries and LDCs is getting even wider. Thus John Stiglitz, a Nobel Laureate in Economics (2001) and former Economist at the WB, stated the following:

“ the social effects of IMF/WB SAPs have been devastating: increased malnutrition, infant mortality, unemployment and illiteracy”⁴.

¹ This indicator is derived from taking the median of the 10 lowest poverty lines among a group of poor countries.

² See Index, p.

³ UNCTAD research papers estimates that the proportion of the population living on less than US \$1 a day in the LDCs of Africa has increased continuously since 1965-69, rising from an average of 55.8% in those years to 64.9% in 1995-99. (UNCTAD 2002 tables 19 and 20).

⁴ Joseph Stiglitz, 2001.

In 1999, in order to cope with the failure of SAPs to generate growth and to answer a raising global concern about poverty eradication, the WB introduced the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPS)*. Poverty became the main focus, replacing older development strategies with limited outcomes. In spite of the PRSPs' ambition to involve local governments and the civil society, it seems that their roles are restricted to providing safety nets rather than being involved in the overall development strategies. In this perspective, the PRSPs appear not to differ radically from their ancestors the SAPs. So far, the PRSPs have been completed by twenty eight countries.

In the same perspective, the *United Nations Millennium Declaration* signed in September 2000 set amongst its goals the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger by the year 2015: "to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than one US dollar a day; reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger; and increase the amount of food for those who suffer from hunger"⁵. Such a goal is given the first rank among the eight goals defined by the Declaration. Thus, there is, clearly, an ongoing concern about fighting poverty and making it history.

If global concern and awareness about poverty are unquestionable, the efficiency of current strategies to combat it is more problematic. This paper will focus on the PRSPs and the MDGs as they are the two major international frameworks dealing with poverty and development, the former developed by the International Financial Institutions, the latter being the result of a series of UN conferences in the 1990s. Both concepts have been advocated as top priorities of the international community. What is the potential efficiency of both PRSPs and the MDGs as they have been defined? Are they adapted in order to reach the ultimate goal of *making poverty history*? This paper aims mainly at critically assessing the relevance of these recent strategies to fight poverty. It will underline both their strengths and weaknesses in a consistent manner. Focusing on the lapses of these strategies, the paper will also make specific recommendations with the aim of enhancing these strategies' efficiency to combat poverty in the long run.

A first section of the paper will deal with the PRSPs, in both their economic and social dimension. A second section will focus on the MDGs as defined by the Declaration and their potential role in making poverty history.

I. THE ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF POVERTY REDUCTION

STRATEGY PAPERS

After more than two decades of international effort to *make poverty history*, concrete action to set-up the base for development in LDCs still departs from the objective of stimulating rapid and generalized growth. With more and more people falling below the "poverty line" the current reflection on the poverty reduction strategies implemented so far constitutes a crucial opportunity for effective change to take place.

Notwithstanding the overall aim of achieving the well being of the poor, experience derived from the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)⁶ has shown fundamental economic shortcomings. This section focuses on three major areas which play a fundamental

⁵ The UN Millennium Declaration, September 2000.

⁶ UNCTAD, *From Adjustment to Poverty Reduction: what is new?*, 2002

role in setting-up a workable framework for tackling poverty. These are *the reform of the financial institutions, investments and trade liberalization, and development aid*, which can altogether contribute to fill in the gap towards the declared aim of making poverty history.

II. INVESTMENTS AND TRADE LIBERALIZATION: EFFECTS ON POVERTY REDUCTION

One fundamental question of poverty reduction strategies is whether investments contribute to growth. In LDCs, national and foreign direct investments (FDI) have the potential to stimulate economic growth through labour-intensive methods which generate employment opportunities for low-skilled workers⁷. However, constraints on domestic resource mobilization, weakness of the domestic entrepreneurial class, aid ineffectiveness, and the multiple negative effects of external indebtedness have been major reasons for the weak relationship between investment and growth⁸. Moreover, the lack of domestic demand limits incentives for investors. In particular, FDI performance cannot be evaluated without reference to market oriented reform⁹ and governance¹⁰, reform on growth, capital accumulation, and economic diversification¹¹. Changes in such areas are not only crucial for investments to be effective in poverty reduction, but also raise a further major question as to how to make more resources available for investments.

As a result, investments should be oriented towards expanding the volume of exports, promoting jobs based on labor-intensive manufactured products and services so to reduce commodity dependence, improving labor productivity. Along with liberalization of capital accounts, reduction of trade barriers is vital for poverty alleviation since many LDCs are dependent on agricultural production and export¹². Since there has been no fundamental progress in negotiations within the Doha Round, diversification of economic activity is envisaged as a viable solution. Nevertheless, infant industries require protective measures¹³ which are not permitted under the conditions imposed by IMF and World Bank loans. Furthermore, there are risks in becoming a service oriented economy due to the volatility of certain services (e.g. the tourism industry). Linkages with transnational firms along with a framework of regulatory measures play a crucial role in alleviating poverty and setting-up the bases for development¹⁴.

However, meeting those conditions is particularly difficult for the LDCs, given the scarcity of additional financial resources available for financing investment, and the limited capacity for developing domestic entrepreneurial capacities. This leads to the crucial role played by international Official Development Assistance (ODA), since “donor dependency” reduces State incentives to develop alternative economic growth strategies¹⁵. Therefore, the applicability of ODA needs to change, in particular towards capacity building for government,

⁷ UNCTAD, *Developing Productive Capacities*, Least Developed Countries Report 2006.

⁸ UNCTAD, Least Developed Countries Report 2000.

⁹ Lowering tariff increases competition both internationally and internally.

¹⁰ Poor investment climate strongly derives from failures in implementing good and sound governance.

¹¹ UNCTAD, *Rethinking the role of Foreign Direct Investment*, 2005.

¹² Due to agricultural subsidies in industrialized countries and reduced access to markets, the least developed economies cannot compete in global markets.

¹³ An example is given by the “import substitution industrialization models” used in Latin America in the 60s and 70s.

¹⁴ Reflections on how such proposal should be implemented draw attention on the differences among countries and aid agencies should take into account the successes achieved in some countries, such as Botswana's recent economic performance, and note that other countries, such as South Africa, operate within a very different context (stronger democratic institutions but a massive AIDS crisis).

¹⁵ An estimated two-thirds of capital inflow to sub-Saharan Africa is through ODA - BERG Andy y QURESHI Zya, *Los ODM: demosles ímpetu*, Finanzas y Desarrollo, Septiembre de 2005, pp. 21-23.

in terms of capability to set-up legal frameworks for FDI¹⁶, as well as strengthening business supportive economic institutions, e.g. Chamber of Commerce. A significant part of ODA should also go towards capacity building of local Small and Medium Enterprises to be able to meet transnational companies' requirements throughout the production process. Overall, this would contribute to strengthening the linkages and encouraging positive synergies between large and smaller firms across national, regional and global levels.

Finally, highly indebted countries are viewed by private investors as endowed with high risk, which is reflected by the low rate of incoming FDI¹⁷, and which forces governments to create highly beneficial conditions for transnational foreign investment to the detriment of the local population. In some cases, this has led to interest-based agreements between political elites and transnational companies, further weakening the political system¹⁸. Finally, this might jeopardize opportunities for internal economic growth, as well as for policies directly aimed at reducing poverty.

I.2. THE ROLE OF FINANCIAL SYSTEM REFORMS IN POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS

Productive capacity building is the major driving force behind poverty reduction and long-term sustainable growth and economic development. Through the development of productive resources and business linkages, employment and hence livelihoods can be created. Apart from trade-liberalisation and the attraction of FDI as such, one crucial element for investment, the creation of productive resources and hence of livelihoods is the deregulation and opening-up of financial markets and establishing and the creation of functioning financial domestic institutions.

Financial markets play a key role in ensuring high and sustained levels of economic growth¹⁹ and hence for development, as they create strong incentives for investment that increase productivity and fosters trade and business linkages²⁰. These in turn facilitate technology transfer and improve resource as they direct investments to the productive uses²¹. Furthermore they provide broad access to assets and markets in order to build up the asset base of the poor as well as increase the returns to such assets. Financial markets also reduce risk and vulnerability and enable the poorest to participate in and benefit from growth processes²².

In order to function effectively, financial markets require competent institutions. These are first and foremost central banks, commercial banks and development banks. Central banks are key to development as they do not only supervise financial markets but also coordinate financial policies, thereby creating stability in both financial and product markets through the

¹⁶ Liberalization of capital accounts is mentioned within PRSP as a main mean to alleviate poverty by generating employment, particularly in the services sector. However, due to the lack of close scrutiny and control over foreign capital flows, it has also increased the vulnerability to financial crises as a result of speculation and the consequent rapid exit of capital, which in turn lead to large shifts in income distribution and heightened poverty.

¹⁷ According to OXFAM, Sub-Saharan Africa receives only 2.9% of FDI toward developing countries and 1.8% of portfolio investment.¹⁷ High rates of corruption in sub-Saharan Africa further increase risks for foreign investors and further deteriorate the environment for economic growth.

¹⁸ INTERMÓN-OXFAM, "África subsahariana: un continente excluido. Perspectivas económicas para la región", Informe ante la reunión del Banco Africano de Desarrollo, Mayo 2001, p.22.

¹⁹ See e.g. Levine, Ross (1997): *Financial Development and Economic Growth: Views and Agenda*. In: *Journal of Economic Literature*, Vol. 35, Issue 2, p.688.

²⁰ See Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) (2007): *Financial Market Development to Promote Business Growth*. Accessible via the webpage of IADB: http://www.iadb.org/res/publications/pubfiles/pubB-2001E_4821.pdf.

²¹ See Islam, Saiyid/ Mozumdar, Abon (2005): *Financial Market Development and the Importance of International Cash: Evidence from International Data*. In: *Journal of Banking and Finance*, Vol. 31, Issue 3, pp. 656. New York et al.: Elsevier.

²² See the UK government department for development (UK DFID) (2004: 4), accessible via the <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/finsecworkingpaper.pdf>.

control of inflation. Moreover, it supports the least developed fields of the economy by giving loans to commercial banks, which in turn can transfer liquidity to entrepreneurs and small and medium sized enterprises. Commercial banks are certainly necessary, but they cannot satisfy demand for redistribution of financial resources in the economy as they are highly profit oriented. A link between investment banks and intermediaries can grant loans at much lower interest rates. Investment banks create the mechanism of an overflow of means from investors to the companies requiring investments. They also create conditions in which investors will trust the recipient; in fact, one of functions of financial institutions is the realization of a role of a link between investors and the companies. By establishing new financial institutions and strengthening existing ones, financial markets can function more effectively.

It is for that crucial reason that Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) contain national commitments on the denationalisation and deregulation of financial markets. These commitments include market-based determination of interest rates, the deregulation of entry into banking and finance systems, and creation of a stock exchange²³ in order to attract investment and to create business linkages. Moreover, effective regulation of the financial market throughout monetary policies and the supervision of the banking system is needed in order to reduce investment related risks and hence to boost economic growth. However, although these issues have been stressed in PRSPs, least developed countries (LDCs) especially lack a well functioning financial market system and in particular a banking sector. Actually, policies for price stabilisation and adequate fiscal policies are continuously lacking²⁴, a tendency which leads to a very short money supply and hence to a very limited amount of credits which could promote domestic productive capacities.

One solution to this problem could be the fostering of development banks handing out loans below capital markets interest rates. Yet, the lack of credits is not to be attributed exclusively to a lack of liquidity in the market or interest rates being too high. In fact, it can be first and foremost accredited to the inability of entrepreneurs to provide the required collaterals, which banks, either private or public in nature, require for their feasibility audits²⁵.

Another strategy to assess this lack of activity by commercial and development banks, which has grown rapidly during the last decade, and which has come to the forefront of development discussions concerning poverty reduction, is microfinance²⁶. By handing out credits in order to create self-employment in sizes which do not require collaterals²⁷, microfinance institutes could address this deficiency. Although being probably an adequate instrument to reduce the number of people living below the poverty-line, this measure does not really compensate for the lack of banks in the long run, as it is limited in scope.

These observations show that the key role of the financial system is acknowledged in PRSPs as the most important link between the state and people affected by poverty, since these institutions help to develop the economy and, consequently, create sustainable employment. Hence, PRSPs can be regarded as important policy roadmaps, as they take into account the importance of well-functioning financial institutions. However, it has to be stated that concrete

²³ See UNCTAD (2002): *From Adjustment to Poverty Reduction: What is New?* p. 28. Geneva: UNCTAD.

²⁴ See UNCTAD (2002): *From Adjustment to Poverty Reduction: What is New?* p. 29. Geneva: UNCTAD.

²⁵ See UNCTAD (2006): *The Least Developed Countries Report 2006*. Geneva: UNCTAD.

²⁶ See Asian Development Bank (ADB) (2000): *Finance for the Poor: Microfinance Development Strategy*. Manila: ADB.

²⁷ This poverty-reduction strategy is also utilised in order to smoothen consumption, e.g. after a head of family has fallen out of business.

measures for the implementation process have to be outlined in the PRSPs and followed up effectively.

I.3. THE ROLE OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN TACKLING POVERTY

Prioritization in recipient countries

One of the main challenges facing the effective use of ODA is the involvement of multiple actors with different agendas. Efficient use of the aid can be achieved through a prioritization of the economic goals by the governments in recipient countries. What they should hopefully achieve is the focusing of the efforts of the various parties towards identified pressing issues. For example, this may be the development of productive capacities in areas where the countries have comparative advantage. Another example is the development of infrastructure such as transport networks.

Proper use of ODA

It is imperative that donor countries make an effort or an independent assessment to examine if the aid will be used properly, regardless of the content of the PRSPs. Corrupt administrative structures undermine that process. A part of the sustainable solution to this process could be the implementation of the National Integrity System developed by Transparency International, especially emphasizing the role of civil society as a watch-dog. Transfer of anti-corruption “know-how” and policy advice could be part of the aid package.

Promoting tailor-made conditionality

In order to receive ODA, countries submitting the PRSPs must ensure that certain criteria are satisfied to meet the expectations of the IFIs. However, these criteria may not be in the interest of those in poverty. For example, PRSPs typically promise to reduce tariffs or eliminate them on imported products, which is in order to comply with the rules of free trade. Nevertheless, this does not necessarily help the local producers who may need to be protected so as to be able to compete. In fact, UNCTAD’s report on LDCs in 2004 claims that growth and poverty reduction were relatively strong when LDCs pursued gradual and moderate trade liberalization instead of making radical changes. We propose that the criteria for the PRSPs be reevaluated by the IFIs, taking into account this evidence, by adjusting them on a case-by-case basis.

Donor responsibility

The donor countries have a responsibility to coordinate the provision of the ODA within a coherent and more predictable framework in order to unburden already weak administrative structures in recipient countries.²⁸ Such a framework could also include enduring plans of aid, which would allow the recipient countries to develop their long-term economic policies accordingly. Finally, the donor community could focus more on multilateral aid, since it has been proven to be more effective than bilateral aid.

II. THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS

II.1. THE PROCESS OF FORMULATING POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY PAPERS AND THE INVOLVEMENT OF SOCIETY:

PRSPs have become one of the major strategies advocated by the international

community to fight poverty. This section aims to analyse the procedural changes

²⁸ Compare to Rogerson A., (2005). Aid harmonization and alignment: Bridging the Gaps between Reality and the Paris Reform Agenda. Development Policy Review 23. In: UNCTAD 2006.

introduced by the PRSPs as well as some of the most important social aspects attached to them.

Following the concept of ‘ownership’, the PRSPs are meant to be formulated by developing countries themselves, allowing them to focus on domestic specificities and identify with economic reforms. This departed from the ‘one size fits all approach’ under the SAPs through which the IFIs imposed macro-economic conditionalities. Countries were also encouraged to focus to a greater extent on poverty reduction.

To define social conditions and identify needs the PRSPs are designed to incorporate input from civil society. This idea was very much welcomed but posed a major challenge as the kind and extent of participation was not clearly defined.²⁹

In practice, many studies conclude that participation has indeed increased in formulating strategies for poverty reduction. However, there is also evidence for several shortcomings³⁰:

- Some stakeholders tend to identify ownership primarily with governments, while participation of civil society is only seen as a functional process to reduce resistance against reform programmes throughout the country.
- Often, society as a whole has not been adequately presented. Many participation processes took the form of ad hoc meetings in capitals, thus favouring professional staffed NGOs that usually have close relations to (Western) donors. This involves the risk that empowerment of the poor will actually be undermined, which might hurt poor peoples interests, since groups with greater organizational capacities (that often belong to the middle class and have different interests) might take the lead.
- Frequently, parliaments have not been consulted. However, exclusion of parliament might undermine efforts to build a democratic system in a given country.
- There has been no participation by poor people themselves.
- Despite participatory exercises, the content of PRSPs continues to be strongly influenced by the IMF and World Bank.
- Many participatory processes suffered from organizational and technical shortcomings, as well as time constraints and lack of information.

As a result, in most countries the intended participation of civil society resulted in fact in a mere – and not binding – consultation.

²⁹ Panos Institute (2002): Reducing Poverty. Is the World Bank’s strategy working? London. p. 23.

³⁰ See for the following criticisms: Eberlei, Walter (2003): Partizipation und Ownership in den PRS. In: Zeitschrift für Entwicklung Zusammenarbeit. 11/2003. (http://www.inwent.org/E%2BZ/content/archiv-ger/11-2003/schwer_art2.html) and ÖFSE (2003): “PRSP” als Strategie zur Armutsbekämpfung. Eine Analyse. Wien. (http://www.oefse.at/download/prsp_informationen.pdf).

To achieve a truly participatory process to formulate poverty reduction strategies, the following recommendations should be duly adhered to:

- Participation of civil society should be seen as a constructive and necessary part of ownership.
- A minimum quantity and quality of involvement from various actors is needed.
- The participation process should be institutionalized, allowing enough time for the process and making sure that relevant information is available to all.
- There should be a strong emphasis on participation of parliament given the paramount importance of this body for any representative democracy. There should also be contributions by NGOs with a strong focus on grassroots organisations, paying attention to geographical distribution (i.e. including rural areas) and gender equality. Moreover, efforts must be strengthened to include those affected by poverty.
- To ensure transparency and actual representation all actors must be involved at every stage from conception, to implementation and evaluation.
- The IFIs should reconsider their policy of making debt relief and aid dependent on their final approval of PRSPs. As acknowledged by the IFIs themselves³¹, this seems to lead to PRSPs being strikingly similar to previous SAPs in order to cater to the IFIs' traditional expectations, thus possibly censoring or at least limiting civil society input.

In addition to the new procedural approach adopted by the PRSPs, strategies are expected to focus on the main social dimensions of poverty, such as education and health. The approach taken by the IFIs with regard to these two areas is examined in the following.

II.2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EDUCATION IN PRSPs

In terms of education, it has been acknowledged that poor countries need better educated workforces if they are to compete successfully in the global economy. Although education, which translates into human capital, is "a cornerstone in achieving economic growth with equity,"³² education by itself will not result in sustainable poverty reduction. However, there exists a clear link between education and rates of return. This is particularly pronounced in the investment of education in females. Female literacy levels have been associated with high social returns such as lower birth rates and the improved health and nutrition of children.³³

The significance of PRSPs to education has been extensively documented - illiteracy rates by region and gender have been found to be correlated with the level of poverty.³⁴ This emphasizes that poverty remains a barrier to education and educational access. Tuition, uniforms, books and other expenses may not just be a burden financially but also seen as unnecessary. Thus, the considerable elimination or reduction of such costs would lead to increased enrollments, as proved.³⁵

However, developing countries often face the barrier of a small tax base and are therefore confronted with lower revenues which might pose limits on funding for educational

³¹ IMF / World Bank (2002): Review of the PRSP Experience: An Issues Paper for the January 2002 Conference, 7th of January. (<http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/strategies/review/index/index.htm>).

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ F. Caillods and J Hallak (2004): *Education and PRSPs A review of experiences*. Paris: UNESCO. (<http://www.unesco.org/iiep/PDF/pubs/PRSP.pdf>).

³⁵ Mignat and Winter "Education for All by 2015" *Finance and Development* March 2002 IMF. Retrieved online <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2002/03/mingat.htm>

strategies. Mignat and Winter state that “PRSPs make it possible to consider educational resources, expenditures and expected outcomes in the context of a country’s macroeconomic, social, and poverty-reduction goals.”

In countries where PRSPs have been implemented, the expenditure on education has increased both as a percentage of GDP as well as a percentage of total government expenditures. As one study points out, educational expenditure rose from 3.6% to 3.9% of GDP, after the implementation of PRSPs.³⁶

However, some critics point out that the stance taken by traditional SAPs towards the provision of public services, including education, has not been evaluated in most PRSPs. The macroeconomic focus of SAPs led to the imposition of strong restrictions on public spending and the downsizing of the state apparatus, which in turn often led to under-financed public services or privatization of traditionally state-owned functions. Since many PRSPs did not examine nor reflect the impact of these developments, it can be questioned if they will draw upon “lessons learnt”. One might also question how the government approaches situations when educational aspirations and macroeconomic management compete (at least in the short run). Taking into account the strong focus on economic development and growth that continues to exist in the PRSPs, there is strong evidence that priority will be given to the latter.³⁷

To enhance the role of education in PRSPs as a means to poverty reduction the following is suggested:

- PRSPs should pay heightened attention to the role education plays in the development process.
- It should be taken into account that education is of value in itself and represents a Human Right as guaranteed e.g. in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Article 26) and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Article 13), and is therefore worth pursuing quite apart from any suspected economic benefit.
- Vocational training and skills acquisition should be used as a vital strategy. This may contribute to ensure food security and rural development.
- To be effective, education strategies should be promoted at all levels, including the household and community level. Efforts must be strengthened to ensure that persons belonging to the poor segments of society benefit from educational measures. A gender perspective should likewise be taken into account.
- The promotion of modern communication technologies in education may be another mean to generate development. In this respect, governments should encourage exchange of information, expertise and best practices.
- Educational material and curricula should be developed with a view to linking education and poverty reduction.

II.3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HEALTH IN PRSPs

Health also constitutes one of the new priorities addressed in PRSPs, and is identified as the non-income dimension of human poverty. The recognition of the importance of social spending for health in the macroeconomic framework has increasingly led to developing countries incorporating health issues into their Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) (e.g. in

³⁶ Jeni Lugman (no date given) PRSP and Public Spending: An Overview. Washington: World Bank.

³⁷ Walther, Miriam; Hentschel, Christine (2002): Neuanfang in der Strukturanpassungspolitik von IWF und Weltbank? Wirtschaftspolitik und Armutsbekämpfung in den PRSPs von Bolivien, Burkina Faso, Mauretanien, Tansania und Uganda. Berlin. (http://www2.weed-online.org/uploads/summ_1_2.pdf).

Kenya and Malawi). The emphasis is placed on strengthening, promoting, protecting and improving the quality of health care at the grassroots level. Pro-poor health approaches as defined in PRSPs include financing of health systems, social protection, policy coherence and cooperation in different country contexts.

Although health investment in developing countries is rising (e.g. in Kenya there is a government “commitment” to increase health spending from 5.6% to 12% of total public expenditure) it is still insufficient. Furthermore, although primary and essentially preventive health care expansion is a common feature of PRSPs, free medical treatment is being restricted to a few specified diseases (e.g. AIDS/HIV, malaria, etc.). Private care is encouraged through ‘cost-recovery’ or ‘pre-payment schemes’ (Burkina Faso, Malawi, Niger, Uganda, etc.). However, this approach has been strongly rejected by many poor countries, emphasizing the importance of free curative medicine³⁸ and stressing the impact of poverty on health.

- The elaboration and implementation of stronger and more flexible health systems is essential (e.g., differentiated subsidies and user fees which make the rich pay more for health services).

Health can be seen through PRSPs as being of intrinsic value for individuals and a key determinant of economic growth and overall human development. Good health is identified as a means of poverty reduction, and poor health an obstacle to growth and development. The economic rationale for investing in the health of the poor is clear: higher labour productivity, improved human capital, and positive demographic changes such as e.g. lower mortality. Nevertheless, health on its own cannot contribute to the eradication of poverty and a cross-sectional approach going beyond the health sector is essential. It needs to be supported by the creation of employment with adequate payment and partnership of different actors at different levels such as nations, governments, international agencies, NGOs, community groups and local authorities.

- A close link between health, the environment, and education issues need to be established in order to create a holistic approach aiming for a sustainable poverty reduction.

II.4. PROBLEMS UNDERLYING ASSUMPTIONS OF PRSPs

PRSPs are characterized by significant deficiencies, since they are based on certain underlying assumptions leading to policies which may fail to achieve sustainable poverty reduction over the long term.

PRSPs are based on the underlying assumption of reducing poverty via the achievement of economic growth. It is doubtful whether current patterns of economic growth contribute to poverty reduction. Recent evidence based on consumption data suggests that economic growth benefits only the wealthy, increasing the socio-economic inequalities within countries without helping those in need. It has been estimated that less than 10% of the growth achieved between 1993 and 2001 has benefited the poorest 50 per

³⁸ UNCTAD (2002) Economic Development in Africa. From Adjustment to Poverty Reduction: What is New? New York, Geneva: United Nations.

cent of the world's population, with people living on less than \$1 per day benefiting from just 2% of the increase in global consumption.³⁹ Of course, there are some instances where economic growth was accompanied by strong reduction in poverty, but this was fostered by very well targeted and sequenced policies.

PRSPs focus on reducing poverty via the \$1 definition of poverty. This definition might not be adequate in capturing the real issues defining poverty. For example, although the number of poor people in Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been rising steeply (to almost 20%) based on the \$2 a day definition⁴⁰, very few people are actually below the \$1 a day line (1.8%-2.5%).⁴¹ Therefore, although the overall number of poor people in this region has increased, the \$1 a day definition gives the false impression of poverty having been reduced.

Another issue related to the above is: do poor people who go above the \$1 line but live in an increasingly unequal society, actually have a better quality of life? For example, it is doubtful whether the poverty reduction claimed to have been achieved in China leads to tangible benefits in the quality of life of poor people, since at the same time the inequality in China has risen steeply. There is considerable evidence showing that inequality within a society afflicts almost solely the poor, creates macroeconomic instability, increases crime levels, corruption, low school enrolment, suicide levels, and exacerbates health problems, thereby contributing to a whole range of psychosocial problems.⁴²

III. MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POVERTY REDUCTION

In September 2000, during one of the most important symposia in the UN history -the UN Millennium Summit- world leaders representing 192 nations adopted the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration laid the ground work for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which encompass eight targeted pledges to be met by 2015, in order to address the development challenges of the 21st century. As an outcome of the international conferences and gatherings convened under the auspices of the UN since the early 1990s, they have been endorsed by the International Conference on Financing for Development in the Mexican town of Monterrey and at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, of March and August 2002 respectively.

The MDGs attempt to express the aspirations of all nations to soften the burden of millions of poor, unhealthy, illiterate, exploited and underprivileged people in great need of basic necessities. Likewise, they seek to achieve minimum acceptable standards of living. These social goals provide a solid basis for closing the economic development gap between nations, but a particular focus on economic goals is also required, in order to transfer global economic development into global and sustainable poverty alleviation. In addition, their

³⁹ Edward, P. (2006): Examining inequality: who really benefits from global growth? In: World Development 34(10). 1667-1695.

⁴⁰ World Bank (2004): World Development Indicators. Washington.

⁴¹ United Nations (2006): The Millennium Development Goals Report 2006. New York.

⁴² See on these aspects: Marmot, M. (2005) Social determinants of health inequalities. In: Lancet 365. pp. 1099-1104; Odedokun, M. and Round, J. (2004) Determinants of income inequality and its effects on economic growth: evidence from African countries. In: African Development Review 16(2). pp. 269-284; Ravallion, M. (2005): Inequality is bad for the poor. Mimeo, Development Research Group, World Bank; Wilkinson, R. G. (2004): Why is violence more common where inequality is greater? In: Ann NY Acad Sci. pp. 1036, 1-12; Wilkinson, R.G. (2005): The impact of inequality: how to make sick societies healthier. London; Wilkinson, R.G. and Pickett, K.E. (2006): Income inequality and population health: A review and explanation of the evidence. In: Social Science & Medicine 62. pp. 1768-1784.

overall success is still far from assured, as a progress report by the UN has revealed. Their achievement will depend on good cooperation between both developed and developing countries to implement our commitments.

III.1. LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR

MDGs concern minimum and basic human needs. Indeed, the MDGs are a result of international political consensus which can be described as the “Lowest Common Denominator”. For example, it is easier to reach an agreement on gender equality in primary schools rather than in the whole society in many developing countries, due to the substantial traditional ties. The Lowest Common Denominator approach makes it easier for governments to collectively agree on reachable goals. As such, they do not appear to be ambitious. However, it is the most effective method for reaching a consensus. MDGs are less ambitious than some other international agreements, such as the aspiring goal of the Non-proliferation Treaty concerning nuclear weapons. However, the MDGs are a useful example of the benefits of good governance and productive negotiations in order to match balanced interests, expectations and preferences of stakeholders. In addition, once the current MDGs are reached, international negotiations should be in a position to aim for further and higher goals.

III.2. MDGs: ASPIRING OR REALISTIC?

The MDGs attempt to achieve basic human needs, such as primary education and health. They may at first seem quite simplistic and reachable for some countries, such as Malaysia, who have already reached some of the goals⁴³. Furthermore, in China, the national poverty level has plummeted during the last 15 years. However these same targets are very difficult to achieve worldwide by 2015, and therefore may seem unrealistic. For example, the MDG 7 on sustainable environment will not be easily achieved because the issues and respective solutions are very complex and have to be deeply integrated into all policies. The high expectations set by the MDGs have disparate consequences. On the positive side, they may be motivating and inspiring, defining general values which everyone will try to strive for and do the best to achieve. On the negative side, they may be seen as being unreachable, which can be demoralizing and can lead the public to direct unfair criticism at the UN system if the targets are not met.

In order to fulfill these aspiring goals, efforts must be made so that all relevant actors, including all UN organizations, should cooperate together without promoting their own individual strategy.

Another problem which needs to be addressed is that the funds given to African regions to achieve these goals are not always correctly managed. A better distribution of funds must be promoted. Further it may be important to set mid-way targets, which would allow nations to reach the MDGs in a more methodological manner.

III.3. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN THEMES OF THE MDGs

i) EXTREME POVERTY

The first MDG addresses the most basic human needs of poverty and hunger, which means that it is the most urgent. However, in order to be more effective in poverty reduction, we also need to have a long term perspective i.e. a sustainable poverty reduction strategy which is linked to development and economic growth.

⁴³ Dwyer, G.(2004), *Achieving the Millenium Development Goals: realistic, possible?*, retrieved on the 16th of July 2007

Globally speaking, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty fell from nearly a third to 19% over the period 1990-2004. If progress continues, the MDG target will be met.⁴⁴ However, success is unequally shared. At a regional level, Eastern and South-Eastern Asia have seen dramatic improvement, which is mainly driven by rapid economic growth in China and India. Despite of the general improvement, the situation in Sub-Saharan African region is not optimistic: the population in extreme poverty only fell from 46.8% in 1990 to 41.1% in 2004.

Economic growth is a necessary condition for poverty reduction.⁴⁵ However, as Asia has demonstrated, the reduction of poverty may be accompanied by rising inequality. This means that poorest segment of the population has not really benefited from the rapid GDP growth. Therefore, it is essential to have more linkage with economic growth, i.e. creation of employment and wealth redistribution for poverty alleviation.

ii) UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

The second MDG aims to achieve universal primary education. The most obvious reason is that primary education serves as the basis for future sustainable development. Primary education in fact has multiple functions, which can be summarized as preventive and protective strategies. In this context, education plays a crucial role in combating HIV/AIDS, it enhances the ability to manage health problems, and it improves nutrition and childcare. According to UNESCO, life expectancy rises by two years for every one percent increase in literacy. UNESCO argues that an adult with a primary education earns twice as much as an adult without any schooling. Thus, education has an enormous impact on quality of life.

It is undisputable that education contributes to development in many ways. In terms of economic development it helps people to be more productive and to play a greater role in economic life. Its implications on social development range from improved health conditions to better employment opportunities. Education does not simply contribute to economic and social development, but it is a catalyst for human development, and it is a vital tool for addressing sustainable development as well. It makes people more self-reliant and aware of their opportunities and rights, as well as changing values and behavior patterns that are necessary to achieve sustainability and stability.

However, primary education is not a means of reducing poverty as it is not a necessary condition for getting employed. We argue that technical and vocational training is more likely to lead to employment opportunities. It is vocational and technical education which also improves farming practices and skills necessary to benefit from globalization and technological change. But they acknowledge that education plays an important role in achieving sustainable poverty reduction, in as much as it further improves entrepreneurial capabilities.

iii) GENDER EQUALITY

The third MDG tackles gender inequality and empowerment of women. Primary education can be an effective tool to reach gender equality, but girls are systematically left out of school for a variety of reasons in some developing countries. Frequently girls have to stay at home and work for the family, or they have to marry as young as fourteen, which means that they must stop their schooling.

⁴⁴ Data exacted from the UN MDG Report 2007

⁴⁵ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/departmental-report/2007/default.asp>

Sub-Saharan Africa is one of the areas most affected by gender inequality, although some efforts have been made since 1990 to improve the situation. For instance, women's access to primary education rose from 0.82 % to 0.87 % in 2000. In the same period, access to secondary school by women rose from 0.75 to 0.82 %.⁴⁶ These changes are not sufficient to achieve gender equality and "education for all".

The importance of gender equality for poverty reduction is great. Women consist of half of the population and consequently, are half of the potential workforce. They can make up for a country's competitive advantage with their skills. Undermining women is undermining half of the country's economic potential. Empowering women and giving them same opportunities as men develops their entrepreneurial skills and greatly adds to a country's talent. Self employment should therefore also be encouraged.

iv) HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Improving health and nutrition is one of the main objectives of MDGs one, four, five and six. UNICEF, UNAIDS and WHO are responsible for achieving a decrease in maternal and under-five mortality rates, halting the spread of HIV/AIDS through widespread condom use and education, and reducing the risk, and curing, of malaria and tuberculosis. These aims will provide a much more productive society, whereby healthy individuals are better equipped to improve the economic growth of their country through physical labour, innovation and investment. In addition, healthy individuals will reduce the financial burden on public funding for medical-related aid. The effect of these changes will be decreased costs and increased economic growth which will improve the developmental prospects of the country. An improved social and economical development, through world health improvement, will ultimately provide poverty reduction. The important MDG to reduce hunger is also directly correlated to poverty reduction, as people suffering from hunger are unable to contribute to economic growth through employment.

v) ENVIRONMENT

Until now, developed countries have been able to achieve economic growth by using the environment surrounding them and unfortunately greatly contributing to today's pollution, through the emissions of carbon dioxide. Today, the developed world is gradually realizing the importance of environment preservation. In order to reach MDG 7 and particularly the target concerning carbon dioxide, developing as well as developed countries have to also be constrained and are held responsible and accountable for these emissions. However, these efforts towards protecting, for example, the ozone layer, obviously hinder the economical growth of developing countries, as they have less means of environment-friendly machinery, which limits their production capacities and reduces employment opportunities.

However, given that many developing countries do rely on agricultural activities, ensuring environment sustainability is a means of preventing many populations from falling into the poverty cycle. For example, the current climate change has provoked extreme dryness in some areas, restricting the agricultural activities of people in those areas. Consequently, one may observe the rural population migrating towards the urban areas in search of employment. It is with great despair that rural people generally find themselves without any job opportunities and thus fall into poverty.

⁴⁶ Les objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement en Afrique: progrès accomplis et défis à relever
www.uneca.org/fr/mdgs/index.htm

To summarize, one can understand that some developing countries initially still need to exploit the environment, whether it be through deforestation, agriculture or by carbon dioxide emissions, in order to create employment and reduce poverty, as have the developed countries. However, without ensuring the preservation of the environment, many countries will not be able to continue their activities and eradicate poverty on a long term basis. In this sense, targeting environment sustainability may go hand-in-hand with long term poverty reduction, but it may also initially be a major hindrance for poverty reduction in developing countries.

vi) GLOBAL PARTENERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT

For developing countries to prosper, they need to be able to trade internationally under an open and fair system. Those countries also need more aid from richer countries to reduce poverty, as well as help with their debts. The premise of MDG 8 is to develop a global partnership for development.

According to the statistics of the UN MDG Report 2007, the development aid is decreasing, despite renewed commitments by donor countries. This trend has to be revised. However, the realization of MDG 8 should not be limited to increasing of ODA. It should also involve the restructuring of North-South Relations in a way that increases participation of developing countries and gives preferential treatment to LDCs. Furthermore, there should be a greater focus on South-South partnerships, since intraregional trade has the potential to contribute to development. Taking into account that the private sector has a great responsibility to ensure human development, the creation of Public Private Partnerships may also be a useful mean to reach MDG 8. In this respect, a promising initiative currently providing significant in roads toward fostering global partnership for development is the Global Compact (private sector involvement) initiative.

IV.) CONCLUSION

Throughout recent decades poverty has been at the center of global concerns and awareness. Among all the methodological attempts to provide guidance for relevant strategies in less developed countries, the PRSPs and the MDGs remain a fundamental framework for action towards poverty reduction. In fact, they show a crucial change in the attitude of the International Community towards improving the living standards of the poor. In this context, the focus of the paper is not on how to foster development but on how to reduce poverty. More accurately, the impact of PRSPs and MDGs towards this objective is considered, and proposals are given as to how they could be improved.

The first section of the paper dealt with the PRSPs, in both their economic and social dimension. In relation to the economic dimension, three major areas have been identified as fundamental for *making poverty history*: the reform of the financial institutions, investments and trade liberalization, and official development assistance. The analysis clearly reflects the close links among the issues at stake. In this respect, the role of financial institutions is to create incentives for investment, to foster trade and business linkages, to facilitate technology transfer, to provide poor with access to assets and markets, and to reduce risk and vulnerability by defining legal frameworks. The above mentioned measures should be clearly stated in the PRSP in order to have an impact on the eradication of poverty. Due to the explicit link that the financial system plays between the State and the poor, the development of financial institutions (central banks, commercial banks, development banks) is essential in making capital available for people affected by poverty.

On another note, recipient countries face the challenge of prioritizing the use of ODA in order to be more efficient. In particular, official development donors should closely reconsider the way conditionality measures are defined vis-à-vis their impact on domestic policy decisions on poverty reduction.

As far as the procedural aspects of PRSP are concerned, experience has shown that it has so far not been a truly participatory process. However, participation by civil society as well as the consistent involvement of national parliaments is a constitutive and necessary aspect of PRSP ownership. In regard to PRSPs' social dimension, further attention has to be paid to geographical distribution, gender equality, health and education.

The second section focused on the MDGs as defined by the Millennium Declaration, and their potential role in making poverty history. Overall, MDGs are aspiring and challenging, and by stressing the social dimension of fostering development they pave the way for the sustainability of the related strategies. It is important to emphasize that the MDGs are values in themselves which are well worth pursuing, even though they may necessarily directly lead to poverty reduction.

Finally, reducing poverty in LDCs is not only a matter of growth but implies consideration of the debt in such countries. Such an approach represents a complex debate in itself, currently ongoing within the international community. Precisely, arguments currently stand around debt cancellation, debt relief, and debt sustainability. As already mentioned, the present paper focuses on the crucial role growth played in eradicating poverty. However, due to the close correlation between growth and debt rates and the way it affects national wealth, such an approach needs to be complemented by considerations of the latter. International debate could also focus on the trade-off between the legitimacy of debt and the research on the means to pay it back.

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VI. ANNEX - Development and poverty indicators:

In the late 1980s, deploring the fact that many countries' efforts were not acknowledged whereas "these low-income countries had achieved success in putting their efforts together towards singular welfare interventions, such as spreading education, basic healthcare insurance, etc."⁴⁷, the Pakistani economist Mahbul ul Haq initiated the Human Development Index. As early as 1990, with the involvement of the Indian Nobel economist Amartya Sen, the UNDP developed this indicator in its first Annual Human Development Report. Since then, this report stands as the alternative to analyses backed by the major development institutions (WB, IMF) and based upon the per capita income.

The Human Development Index (HDI) integrates, in a complex weighting, three socio economic statistics: life expectancy, education (adult literacy and schooling rate) and standards of living (GDP per capita corrected with purchasing power equity). Some variants also include gender equity indicators (gender equity-sensitive HDI (GESI), women involvement indicators). It remains that these figures, being merely averages, do not inform us on social and special disparities, which nevertheless are existing and evolving within societies.

Thus, the poverty issue is not really addressed through this index. In its report entitled Overcoming Human Poverty (2000), the UNDP defines "absolute or extreme poverty", as well as "relative or general poverty" and "human poverty"⁴⁸. Human poverty is defined in relation to human development: the Human Poverty Indicator (HPI) focuses on the existing deficits in the three essential domains of human existence", domains already examined by the HDI but considered under the gap angle (for instance: percentage of people who are going to die before reaching the age of 40 years old; percentage of illiterate adults...). As for the economic field more broadly, it is represented by a composite sub-indicator⁴⁹ that, contrary to the HDI (which integrates GDP per capita and living standards measurements), does not integrate the monetary aspect of poverty.

If human poverty seems to be a United Nations fashioned concept, it is true that monetary poverty is more of a World Bank privilege. This institution distinguishes between "absolute"⁵⁰ and "relative"⁵¹ poverty. Once the poverty threshold has been specified, the WB uses other indicators which then enable the institution to work on deeper analyses as those of headcount ratio, poverty gap or squared poverty gap. If the WB poverty assessment definitely remains focused on the monetary aspect and consumer or income criterion, this approach has set up very useful tools for researchers: the poverty threshold of income-poor category. The absolute poverty is the "\$1 per day" threshold but the WB also uses the upper threshold of "2\$ per day". The majority of economic development institutions employ these two monetary criteria in order to measure their activities' impact on poverty.

⁴⁷ Amartya Sen, « A Decade of Human Development », *Journal of Human Development*, February 2000.

⁴⁸ A person lives in extreme poverty if she/he is not able to cover her/his basic needs. A person lives in general poverty if she/he has not available the incomes necessary to satisfy food and non food (housing, dressing, power necessities...) basic needs. Human poverty means "lack of basic human capacities: illiteracy, malnutrition, weak longevity, health problems".

⁴⁹ Composite indicators comprise drinkable water accessibility, healthcare accessibility, malnutrition measurements for children under 5 years old.

⁵⁰ According to the WB, absolute poverty is linked to the income level necessary to enable a person's subsistence, based on a basic diet.

⁵¹ According to the WB, moderate poverty shows an outlook oriented on redistribution of income, social integration as well as social life through housing, dressing, etc.

PART I **VII. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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KEYZER	Dominic
KOCOT-PUHL	Aneta
MARTINI	Monia
MBATO	Stella
NEGGAZ	Nassima
OKSUZ	Ceyda
PAVLOVIC	Branislav
PILLAS	Demetris
REIF	Angelina
SAYEED	Salma
SCHAFFER	Eva
WAGNER	Leonie Jana
WERMER	Nicola
YAPI	Abraham

PART II HUMAN RIGHTS

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I. INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a difficult concept to define; it affects a heterogeneous group of people and is multidimensional. Economic deprivation is a standard feature of most definitions of poverty. However, poverty is not only a deprivation of economic or material resources but human dignity as well. Attempts to reach a broad definition have been reiterated which has had an important influence on the way in which poverty reduction policies come to be shaped. While a monetary approach suggests a focus on increasing fiscal income (by economic growth, or redistribution), a capability approach tends to lead to a greater emphasis on the provision of public goods. Social exclusion draws attention to the need to break down exclusionary factors, for example, by redistribution and anti-discrimination policies. However, even though many have attempted to encompass all aspects of poverty in their definitions and projects, all too often, the causal as well as consequential relationship between poverty and human rights is overlooked.

Le monde n'a jamais été aussi riche et pourtant plus d'un milliard d'êtres humains vivent avec moins d'un dollar par jour. Ce paradoxe d'un monde à deux vitesses laisse en marge de la société humaine des hommes et des femmes plongés dans une pauvreté chronique remettant en cause toutes les capacités et potentialités humaines leur permettant de vivre dignement. En restreignant les potentialités humaines, la pauvreté mène indubitablement à l'exclusion sociale.

De la santé à un niveau de vie décent en passant par le droit à l'alimentation, qui garantit l'éducation, le travail acceptable et le logement, la pauvreté prive les êtres humains de tous les droits fondamentaux qui leur permettent de vivre décemment. Par ce biais, elle porte atteinte aux droits de l'homme, plus spécifiquement à ceux qui touchent aux domaines économiques et sociaux. Elle ne laisse pas non plus aux individus la jouissance des droits civils et politiques puisque la privation des droits économiques et sociaux a des répercussions gravissimes sur la jouissance des droits civils et politiques. Les Nations Unies ont certes tenté d'intégrer la notion de respect des droits de l'homme à leur combat contre la pauvreté mais malheureusement, comme le montre ce rapport, leurs actions restent insuffisantes.

First, we will evaluate poverty's effect on social, economic, and cultural rights, focusing on fundamental needs such as the right to food, water, health, right to work, education and housing. In addition, we will identify poverty's impact on certain groups most vulnerable to its detrimental effects such as women and children and how poverty specifically infringes on their rights. Secondly, we will analyze poverty in terms of civil and political rights and evaluate the wide incidence of social exclusion throughout different groups of victims in the world. Finally, we will review guidelines put forward by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), present an analysis of the World Bank Strategy and Human Rights, and conclude by offering proposals for making poverty a part of history throughout the world.

II. POVERTY, DEFIANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

La Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme prévoit, au paragraphe 1 de son article 25 : "Toute personne a droit à un niveau de vie suffisant pour assurer sa santé, son bien-être et ceux de sa famille, notamment pour l'alimentation, l'habillement, le logement, les soins médicaux ainsi que pour les services sociaux nécessaires". Les droits susmentionnés ont vocation à éradiquer les effets néfastes de la pauvreté, mais le problème de leur mise en œuvre concrète se pose avec acuité.

1. Fundamental Needs: Rights to Food, Water and Health

a. Droit à l'alimentation

Définition et instruments légaux

L'article 11 § 1 du Pacte international relatif aux droits économiques, sociaux et culturels (Pacte I) énonce, entre autres droits, la reconnaissance par les Etats parties du droit de toute personne à la nourriture. Au § 2, est prévue l'adoption de programmes concrets pour permettre à toute personne d'être à l'abri de la faim. D'après le Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM), la notion de faim renvoie au droit de recevoir la portion de nourriture quotidienne nécessaire afin de mener une vie pleinement active, productive et saine.

Situation actuelle

Chaque personne a besoin de 2350 calories par jour; or, 54 États ne produisent pas assez pour assurer ce minimum à leur population⁵². Un premier plan d'action a été adopté lors du Sommet mondial de l'alimentation tenu à Rome en novembre 1996. À cette occasion, fut adoptée la Déclaration de Rome qui prévoit de réduire de moitié d'ici 2015 le nombre de personnes souffrant de sous-alimentation chronique dans le monde. En 2002, les États se sont réunis à nouveau dans le cadre du « Sommet mondial de l'alimentation: cinq ans après ». En 2003, 852 millions de personnes ne mangeaient toujours pas à leur faim⁵³.

Défis

En septembre 2006, le Rapporteur spécial sur le droit à l'alimentation, M. Jean Ziegler, a annoncé avec regret que le premier des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement, qui vise à réduire de moitié la faim dans le monde d'ici 2015, ne sera pas atteint, bien au contraire. Le phénomène de la faim dans le monde, a-t-il relevé, ne cesse de s'aggraver, alors que la production mondiale permettrait pourtant de nourrir une population deux fois supérieure à la population mondiale actuelle. Il a toutefois salué les politiques mises en place par le Brésil pour lutter contre les problèmes alimentaires dans ce pays, de même que l'initiative du Président français d'alors, Jacques Chirac, consistant à taxer les billets sur les vols de ligne et allouer les montants de cette taxe pour moitié à la lutte contre le sida et contre la faim. Au chapitre des régressions, le Rapporteur spécial a mentionné la

⁵² FAO – Mapping of the Food Supply Gap 1998; Bread for the World Institute – Hunger Basics FAQ.

⁵³ FAO and the State of Food Insecurity in the world, 2003.

situation au Darfour. M. Ziegler a insisté sur la responsabilité des organisations internationales en matière de droit humanitaire international et de droits de l'homme.

b. Droit à l'eau⁵⁴

État des lieux

L'eau est un élément primordial car elle conditionne le droit des individus par excellence, celui à la vie. Il s'agit en effet d'une ressource vitale à plus d'un titre. Il faut souligner que si elle recouvre 70% de la planète, seuls 2,5% de cette ressource sont propres à la consommation et ils sont de surcroît inégalement répartis. Près d'un cinquième de la population mondiale n'a pas un accès régulier à l'eau potable et on estime que toutes les 15 secondes un enfant meurt d'une maladie liée à l'insalubrité de l'eau. En outre, à l'horizon 2050, près de la moitié de l'humanité pourrait être touchée par une pénurie et/ou un "stress hydrique", renforcés par l'engorgement démographique, les migrations, les catastrophes environnementales, ainsi que les possibles conflits à venir. À ce sujet, l'article 54 du Protocole additionnel I relatif aux Conventions de Genève, stipule qu'il est interdit d'attaquer, de détruire, d'enlever ou de mettre hors d'usage des biens indispensables à la survie de la population civile, [telles que les...] réserves en eau potable et les ouvrages d'irrigation.

Interdépendances eau/pauvreté

On comprend dès lors à quel point l'eau constitue l'une des clés d'un développement favorable des conditions de vie ou, a contrario, un facteur de pauvreté si elle vient à manquer. Aussi les incidences de cette ressource sont-elles pléthoriques, notamment en termes de santé, d'hygiène, d'agriculture, d'élevage ou d'énergie (barrages et centrales électriques). En ce sens, le Water Poverty Index du Centre britannique pour l'écologie et l'hydrologie recense cinq critères analytiques majeurs pour une utilisation optimale de l'eau : la disponibilité (qualité et quantité), l'accès (temps et distance), la capacité (gestion efficace), l'usage et la durabilité. Par conséquent, toute carence en ressource hydrique, en traitement et assainissement des eaux ou en réseaux de distribution a des répercussions considérables et un coût très important - ce qui achève de fragiliser et d'appauvrir des populations souvent déjà largement précarisées.

c. Droit à la santé

Définition et instruments légaux

La santé est définie comme l'état de bien-être, physique, mental et social qui ne consiste pas seulement en une absence de maladie ou d'infirmité⁵⁵. D'un point de vue mental, le stress, l'incertitude et l'isolement social que vivent quotidiennement les pauvres, à cause

⁵⁴ Sources non exhaustives :

- *L'eau, outil de lutte contre la pauvreté*, E. Herfkens, coordinatrice exécutive du Secrétaire Général des Nations Unies pour la campagne de promotion des Objectifs pour le Millénaire

- *L'eau : pénurie, conflit ou coopération ?*, D. Dechênes in *Le Bulletin de la paix*, octobre 2000

- Sites Internet : CICR, UNEP, Global International Waters Assessment, Global Water Challenges, UN Millenium Development Goals, UNDP Water Governance Programme, UNESCO Institute for Water Education, UNICEF Water, Environment and Sanitation Program, World Economic Forum Water Initiative

⁵⁵ Préambule de la Constitution de l'OMS.

de la recherche de moyens de subsistance, les affectent indirectement dans leur santé mentale. Le Pacte I contient l'article le plus complet consacré, dans le droit international relatif aux droits de l'homme, au droit à la santé. Conformément au § 1 de l'art. 12 du Pacte, les États parties reconnaissent "le droit qu'à toute personne de jouir du meilleur état de santé physique et mental qu'elle soit capable d'atteindre" et le § 2 de ce même article contient une énumération, à titre d'illustration, d'un certain nombre de "mesures que les États parties [...] prendront [...]".

Situation actuelle

Après la faim, les causes de mortalité les plus importantes au monde sont le VIH/sida, la malaria (paludisme) et la tuberculose. A la fin de 2006, environ 39,5 millions de personnes dans le monde vivaient avec le VIH/sida. Les efforts déployés pour lutter contre la malaria se sont révélés payants mais il reste des efforts à faire, sans compter que les cas de tuberculose sont en augmentation⁵⁶.

Défis

Le Rapporteur spécial sur le droit de toute personne de jouir du meilleur état de santé physique et mentale susceptible d'être atteint, M. Paul Hunt, a affirmé en mars 2007 que la plupart des professionnels de la santé à qui il s'est adressé n'ont aucune connaissance du droit à la santé ni comment les perspectives des droits de l'homme peuvent les aider à mieux faire leur travail. Ce qui montre selon lui que l'image de la santé doit être dynamisée.

2. Social and Economic Aspects: Rights to Work, Education and Housing

a. Droit au logement

La pauvreté, que bon nombre considèrent comme la négation des opportunités de choix les plus essentielles au développement humain, transparait à travers une crise du logement, alors que l'article 11 du Pacte international relatif aux droits économiques, sociaux et culturels prescrit pour tous le droit à un logement décent. L'insuffisance du niveau de vie amène des gens à vivre dans des logements campés sur trois pieds de bois, sans la moindre infrastructure. D'autres, les sans-abri, sont exposés aux aléas de toutes sortes. Aussi, la crise du logement affecte-t-elle incidemment les autres droits sociaux. La crise du logement ne peut qu'entraver la jouissance par l'individu d'un certain nombre de droits pour le moins essentiels. En effet, une maison délabrée expose la famille à des dangers imminents mettant en péril le droit de tous à la sûreté personnelle. Aussi, le logement non convenable compromet-il le droit de l'individu à un meilleur état de santé physique et mentale tandis que, parallèlement, les sans-abri ne peuvent nullement se prévaloir d'une vie privée, encore moins d'une intimité.

Par ailleurs, le logement non convenable confère à l'individu une indigence telle que ce dernier ne peut nullement accéder à l'enseignement. Il est donc impérieux de souligner que le logement, outre qu'il renvoie à un droit cardinal, se veut le socle fondamental sur lequel s'édifient d'autres avantages.

⁵⁶ Millennium Development Goals, Goal 6, pp. 18 ss.

Si les lieux de pauvreté ne sont certes pas les meilleurs territoires pour l'épanouissement des droits de l'homme, il n'en demeure pas moins que certains facteurs exogènes soutiennent la pauvreté et entravent la réalisation des droits de l'homme. Il y a lieu, ici, de citer le manque de coopération internationale sincère ou encore le détournement de l'aide allouée au développement. Car, si, aux termes des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement, l'humanité souhaite l'éradication de la pauvreté, il importe de souligner que malgré ce constat de misère effroyable, le Nord se montre encore réticent à octroyer 0,7% de son PIB à l'aide au développement. En outre, l'infime aide allouée au développement est dilapidée par des autorités gouvernementales corrompues enfonçant davantage encore l'individu dans les affres de la misère. Ces détournements de fonds sont autant d'atteintes graves au droit de l'individu et des peuples au développement.

b. Right to Education

The right to education is a fundamental human right taking a central position in the promotion and advancement of other indispensable human rights. Its double-function as a human and an empowerment right at the same time puts it at the centre of potential poverty reduction efforts.

Definition and legal instruments

As a first and very precise commitment to the right to education, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines in Article 26, that everyone has a right to free primary education. In addition, states should be obliged to progressively introduce free and equal secondary education for all and equal access to free higher education on the basis of merit. Later on, the right to education has been taken up in several other relevant legal instruments, hereunder the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Current Situation: Link between Poverty and the right to education

Taking into closer consideration the Amartya Sen's "capability approach", poverty consists of "the failure of basic capabilities to reach certain minimally acceptable levels of well-being", in which education plays a decisive role.⁵⁷ All around the world about 72 Million children of primary school age did not participate in any form of primary education in 2005, 57 per cent of whom were girls.⁵⁸ Despite the fact that countries are making progress towards the achievement of the second Millennium Development Goal - Universalising primary education in all countries by 2015 - sub-Saharan Africa is especially still facing serious problems: With only 70 per cent of its children of primary school age enrolled, sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest percentage in the world.⁵⁹ Generally speaking, the available data shows that children from poorer households or living in rural areas of the developing world are least likely to go to school.

⁵⁷ See A. Sen 1992: *Inequality Re-examined*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, p. 109.

⁵⁸ United Nations 2007: *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ *Ibid* p. 11.

c. Right to Decent Work

The enjoyment of the right to decent work is essential for poverty reduction as well as for securing other rights, such as the right to food, health care and housing.

Definition and legal instruments

The right to work encompasses the right to enter into employment and to not unjustly be deprived of work defined in Article 6 of the Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights.⁶⁰ A broader and currently even more relevant conception is the right to decent work, also comprising Article 7, the right to just and favourable conditions of work, and Article 8, the right to form and join trade unions.⁶¹ The decent work concept was formulated by the constituents of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and it defines priorities and targets in national development frameworks. Related to the right to work are other conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC, 1989) and several ILO Conventions on Child Labour and Forced Labour.

Current situation: the link between poverty and the right to decent work

According to the ILO, decent work deficits come in the form of unemployment and underemployment, poor quality and unproductive jobs, unsafe work and insecure income, rights which are denied and gender inequality. For example half of the world's workers are unable to lift themselves and their families above the US\$ 2 per day per person poverty line. Another important aspect is the prevailing significant gender gap in both quantity and quality of employment. Additionally, there are more than 85 million unemployed youth between the age of 15 and 24 and more than 86 million migrant workers around the world, 34 million of which are in developing regions.⁶²

3. Vulnerable Groups: Women's and Children's Rights

a. Women's Rights

Many vulnerable groups are suffering from poverty, among which women and children are the most affected. Equality for women has been a focus of the work of the UN since its founding in 1945. The Organization has played a leading role in the global struggle for the promotion and protection of women's human rights, in efforts to ensure that women have equal access to public life and equal opportunity with regard to all aspects of economic and social development.

⁶⁰ United Nations 2006: Human Rights. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Fact Sheet No. 16 (Rev.1): p. 13.

⁶¹ United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights 2002: Draft Guidelines: A Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies: http://www.unhchr.ch/development/povertyfinal.html#* [16.07.07].

⁶² International Labour Office 2006: Facts on Decent Work. Geneva, Switzerland.

Definition and legal instruments

The Commission on the Status of Women has elaborated international guidelines and law for women's equality and non-discrimination notably, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the 1990 Optional Protocol to the Convention. It also prepared the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in 1993, which includes a clear definition of violence as being physical, sexual or psychological violence occurring in the family or the community and perpetrated or condoned by the state. Another relevant legal instrument is: the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention adopted by the International Labour Conference on 29 June 1951.

Poverty is highly related to discrimination against women. The connotation that "Women do two-thirds of the world's work, receive ten percent of the world's income and own one percent of the means of production"⁶³ explains this vulnerability of women vis-à-vis poverty. Women are discriminated against throughout various stages of life. They are deprived of basic and fundamental rights; access to education, equal access to job opportunities, access to basic health care services, access to formal court systems and poverty increases the risk of engaging in unsafe sex for money, housing, food and education. Despite the efforts of non-governmental organizations engaged in human rights activities and certain legislative modifications of governments, the efficient progress in women's rights is particularly made at the local level of regions and cities. The "feminization of poverty" is discussed and unfortunately this phenomenon is on the increase. The question is crucial: who is responsible and what are the solutions to trigger a real change?

b. Children's Rights

In the context of poverty, children are particularly vulnerable. Therefore, the link between poverty and children's rights under education, health and nutrition needs to be emphasized.

Definition and legal instruments

The most widespread definition of children and their rights can be found in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989⁶⁴. According to Article 1, a child is defined as every human being below the age of eighteen years. Other relevant legal instruments in this regard are two ILO conventions pertaining to the problem of child labour. These are the ILO Minimum Age Convention (1973) setting a general minimum age for admission to employment and the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (1999) requiring Member States to take immediate action against the worst forms of child labour.⁶⁵

⁶³ Robbins, Richard H. 1999: Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism. Allyn and Bacon, p. 354.

⁶⁴ United Nations 2006: Human Rights. The Rights of the Child. Fact Sheet No. 10 (Rev.1): p.17

⁶⁵ International Labour Office 2005: Rules of the Game: A Brief Introduction to International Labour Standards: p.30.

Current situation: The link between poverty and children's rights

Taking into account the Millennium Development Goals, one important poverty aspect depriving children of their rights is hunger. Although child hunger is declining in all regions, the proportion of children in Southern Asia under the age of five who are underweight is still at 46 percent, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (29%) and South-Eastern Asia (28%). With respect to achieving universal primary education, Sub-Saharan Africa is making progress but is still only at 70 percent of net enrolment ratio, which is the lowest percentage in the world. In general, girls and children from poorer or rural families are least likely to attend school. Regarding children's health and poverty, child mortality is again worst in Sub-Saharan Africa with 166 per 1,000 live births. Other health-related urgent problems are HIV and AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis.⁶⁶ High mortality rates caused by these diseases are also interrelated with other poverty aspects, such as child labour. The International Labour Organization's newest Global Report indicates that there are still more than 217 million children working world wide with about 126 million occupied in hazardous situations or conditions that qualify as worst forms of child labour according to the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention⁶⁷.

4. Conclusion

On the whole, a human rights based approach to poverty reduction with respect to economic, social and cultural rights is relevant to evaluate the rights of individuals. This approach helps to identify and raise awareness to the institutions and actors at all levels responsible for reducing poverty. However awareness about human rights is not sufficient. Codification of human rights is rather a theoretical framework that needs to be put into practice. This discrepancy between theory and practice seems to be the biggest challenge the UN is facing. One suggestion for improving human rights implementation could be integrated technical cooperation programs congruently concentrating on several economic, social and cultural rights. An example could be to integrate their health, education and food component into one program. This combined approach could also be of particular importance for the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals. Making human rights important and reducing poverty requires a holistic approach. This includes other human rights dimensions such as civil and political rights.

III. LA PAUVRETÉ AFFECTE AUSSI D'AUTRES DROITS

La pauvreté peut être aussi envisagée dans une optique plus globale sans tenir compte des frontières géographiques ni du critère de développement économique de l'Etat. Elle affecte tous les droits des individus et pas seulement leurs droits économiques, sociaux et

⁶⁶ United Nations 2007: The Millennium Development Goals Report 2007: pp.8.

⁶⁷ International Labour Office 2006: The end of child labour: Within reach. Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, Geneva: p.6.

culturels. En effet, on constate que les personnes en situation de pauvreté deviennent transparentes dans leur propre société; on parle même de « citoyens de seconde zone ». Dès lors, leurs droits civils et politiques ne sont ni reconnus ni respectés. Les droits affectés s'inscrivent à plusieurs niveaux : droits intrinsèques, propres à l'individu même; droits de l'individu ayant trait à sa place dans la société; et droits de l'individu à l'échelle de l'humanité.

1. Les droits intrinsèques à l'individu

a. La libre disposition de chacun à sa vie

"Tout individu a droit à la vie, à la liberté et à la sûreté de sa personne"⁶⁸

Les personnes en situation de pauvreté sont particulièrement vulnérables aux trafics humains. Elles sont souvent la cible de réseaux de criminalité organisée tel que des réseaux de prostitution, de travail forcé, de vente d'organes, etc. Les femmes qui subissent ces exactions sont souvent victimes de violences sexuelles qui peuvent dans certains cas aboutir à des grossesses non désirées, entraînant un nombre conséquent d'avortements. Ces jeunes femmes, pour la plupart pauvres, n'ont pas accès à des soins de qualité et doivent se tourner vers des moyens alternatifs et souvent dangereux pour leur vie et leur santé. Ainsi, le taux de mortalité des femmes suite à un avortement clandestin ou pratiqué dans de mauvaises conditions sanitaires est un problème majeur, particulièrement en Afrique. Sur les 70 000 femmes qui meurent chaque année des suites d'un avortement clandestin⁶⁹, la moitié vivent en Afrique. Garantir l'accès à des soins de qualité et garantir notamment la possibilité d'avorter dans de bonnes conditions sanitaires mène non seulement au respect du droit à la santé de ces femmes mais également au respect de leur droit à la vie. Toutes ces morts pourraient être évitées, car il existe des moyens de limiter les décès dus aux avortements; mais les gouvernements des pays développés ou certaines agences internationales, entre autres, n'accordent pas l'aide nécessaire à ces pays dans le besoin.

De même, la libre disposition de chaque individu à sa vie exclut le fait d'être sous l'emprise d'un autre individu et de subir des traitements inhumains ou dégradants. L'esclavage et le travail forcé ont été prohibés par différentes conventions internationales. Malheureusement, force est de constater aujourd'hui que cette interdiction reste bafouée. En effet, même si l'abolition de l'esclavage est quasi générale, on assiste désormais à la montée en puissance de nouvelles formes d'esclavage qualifiées d'« esclavage moderne ».

Cette pratique, qui peut nous paraître aujourd'hui d'un autre âge, est en réalité bel et bien contemporaine : aucun pays, aucun continent n'échappe au fléau. En effet, des millions d'hommes, de femmes et d'enfants à travers le monde sont forcés de vivre comme des esclaves. Même si ces exploitations ne sont pas toujours nommées ainsi, les conditions sont les mêmes. Il s'agit généralement de personnes en situation de grande vulnérabilité

⁶⁸ Article 3 de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme de 1948.

⁶⁹ Elizabeth MAGUIRE, president and chief executive officer of IPAS (Advancing women's reproductive rights)

qui sont victimes de ce système : elles sont souvent vendues comme des objets, forcées à travailler pour une rémunération très en dessous des normes légales, parfois non payées et à la merci de leurs employeurs. Leurs papiers d'identité ont souvent été confisqués, elles sont parfois séquestrées et n'ont plus de lien avec leur famille⁷⁰. Ces personnes sont souvent issues des milieux défavorisés et le fait d'être victime de ces nouvelles formes d'esclavage les maintient dans la pauvreté.

Les États ont indubitablement un défi sérieux à relever. Il faut impérativement renforcer les mesures préconisées par certaines institutions internationales telles que l'UNICEF, l'OMS ou encore l'OIT, pour lutter contre ces fléaux. Les populations défavorisées doivent en être préservées et les victimes doivent être protégées et rétablies dans leurs droits et leur dignité.

2. Les droits de l'individu dans la société

« Le manque de droits et de libertés politiques est à la fois une cause et une conséquence de la pauvreté. Les personnes socialement et politiquement exclues courent davantage de risques de se paupériser, de même que les pauvres sont plus exposés à l'exclusion sociale et à la marginalisation »⁷¹. Le nonaccès aux instances politiques et publiques de l'État par les personnes les plus démunies est une des conséquences de la non-réalisation du droit de participation, qui peut prendre diverses formes selon le développement économique de l'État.

Tout d'abord, la discrimination envers ces personnes entraîne pour elles un déficit voire une absence totale d' « expression de leurs préférences » dans la conduite des politiques de leur pays. Leur condition sociale discriminante entraîne parfois la non-reconnaissance de leurs droits politiques (droit de vote, droit d'être élu). De plus, leurs droits devraient être garantis pour ce qui est de leur possibilité d'accéder à la justice sans discrimination. Or, aujourd'hui encore, ce droit n'est pas assuré pour les plus démunis dans un grand nombre de pays, que ce soit en raison de la corruption, du fait d'une discrimination, par manque de confiance dans le système judiciaire, en raison d'autres facteurs psychologiques⁷² ou pour des raisons économiques (absence de moyens financiers). En effet, souvent, les personnes les plus pauvres ne peuvent assurer leur défense équitable devant un tribunal car elles ne peuvent pas payer les honoraires d'un avocat; lorsqu'elles s'en voient commettre un d'office, il s'agit souvent d'un avocat peu diligent ou alors l'aide juridictionnelle s'avère simplement insuffisante. Une des conséquences les plus significatives de cet accès inégal à la justice est illustré par le cas du système pénal américain⁷³ où la grande majorité des condamnés à mort sont des pauvres. Dès lors, la pauvreté affecte indirectement le droit de chaque individu à la vie, alors que les Nations

⁷⁰ On peut citer le cas des sans-papiers en Europe, qui en sont réduits à travailler au « noir » et souvent payés en dessous du salaire minimum légal; le cas de la confiscation des pièces d'identité des travailleurs chinois en Algérie; ou encore le cas de la vente en esclavage des minorités noires soudanaises par la majorité blanche.

⁷¹ www.unesco.org : la liberté d'expression et participation.

⁷² Les personnes en situation de pauvreté se sentent exclues du système

⁷³ 95% des condamnés à mort sont des personnes pauvres : rapport d'Amnesty internationale « *Life imprisonment without Parole: A viable alternative* », Journal, 27 november 1998, p. 5.

Unies sont « convaincue[s] que l'abolition de la peine de mort contribue à promouvoir la dignité humaine et le développement progressif des droits de l'homme »⁷⁴. La marginalisation des personnes en situation de pauvreté est poussée à l'extrême lorsque leur droit à l'identité⁷⁵ n'est pas respecté. Ainsi, le Pérou compte-t-il, selon les estimations, entre un million et demi et trois millions de personnes ne possédant pas de carte d'identité voire d'acte de naissance. Or, sans ces documents, il est impossible de voter, d'ester en justice, de réaliser un quelconque acte administratif, notarial ou commercial, d'intégrer la fonction publique ou encore de s'inscrire dans le système de sécurité sociale. N'ayant alors aucune identité « officielle », ces personnes deviennent totalement invisibles face aux pouvoirs publics, ne pouvant dès lors assurer l'exercice de leurs droits les plus fondamentaux.

Cette violation du droit à l'identité rend les personnes les plus pauvres encore plus vulnérables et les place dans une position plus difficile que les autres membres de la société, dans la mesure où elles ne peuvent accéder aux mêmes possibilités de développement, prouvant ainsi l'importance du droit à l'identité en tant que condition fondamentale de la réalisation de l'ensemble des droits de l'homme de l'individu au sein de la société.

La discrimination engendrée par ces différentes pratiques accentue l'exclusion des personnes déjà socialement en difficultés, ce qui entraîne leur paupérisation croissante, les plaçant dans un cercle vicieux duquel elles ont du mal à sortir.

3. Les droits de l'individu dans la perspective de l'humanité

a. The Right to Peace

The right to a “peaceful world” is synonymous to the modern concept of living in harmony at all levels, national; regional and international. Moreover, some analysts have advocated that the vagaries of conflicts arise as a result of poverty on the nation, since states need alternatives to arm sales and this overshadows the decorum of peace building.

Indeed, developed countries often make official statements on the importance of the right to peace. On the contrary, their approach to this issue has not been effective and the policies put in place have not been appropriate. Developing countries have at times diverted resources meant for development to other areas. A large number of youth of developing nations engage in arms trade due to the failure of the policies, which implies a threat to peace.⁷⁶ The youth are then recruited into State and Non-State armed groups in over 85 countries. The right to peace as an instrument to eradicate poverty has been lagging mostly in Sub-Saharan nations. A typical example of countries worst hit by

⁷⁴ Préambule du Protocole facultatif se rapportant au Pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques, visant à abolir la peine de mort, adopté et proclamé par l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies dans sa résolution 44/128 du 15 décembre 1989.

⁷⁵ Ce droit à l'identité repose sur le droit à la reconnaissance de sa personnalité juridique, le droit au nom et le droit à être inscrit dans un registre d'état civil, reconnus par divers instruments internationaux : Art. 6 de la Déclaration universelle des droits de l'homme de 1948, Art. 16 et 24 du Pacte international relatif aux droits civils et politiques de 1966, Art. 7 et 8 de la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant de 1989.

⁷⁶ In a recently published report by World youth report 2005

political turmoil in the 1990s—2000s are Angola, Nigeria, Burundi, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Liberia. These countries have seen their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decline. In total, at least twenty countries with more than half of the region's population are actually poorer now than in 1990. The cause may not lie solely in the lack of developmental policy initiatives but may also be due to the lack of daily subsistence for the majority of the population.

United Nations attitude in most African states has helped in restoring peace in certain instances. However, the lack of a standardized approach in peace policy-making is also a factor affecting the right to peace. The failure to implement a general policy where all nations are treated on equal terms has affected the peace in the world.

b. Le droit à un environnement sain

La politique de certains États développés démontre qu'ils considèrent pouvoir se débarrasser de leurs déchets toxiques et nucléaires dans des pays pauvres. En effet, ces États pauvres acceptent cette situation afin de renforcer leur économie. Le 9 mai 2006, les membres de Greenpeace se sont prononcés contre la navigation du navire Blue Lady avec 46 000 tonnes de déchets toxiques destinés à être enterrés en Inde; le navire, qui appartenait auparavant aux forces militaires norvégiennes, est parti de Malaisie. La situation écologique s'aggrave, la qualité de l'environnement où vivent les populations baisse, ce qui entraîne l'augmentation du nombre de maladies et de morts et la diminution de l'espérance de vie de ces populations d'origine défavorisée.

4. Conclusion

La pauvreté, mère de tous les vices, est donc aujourd'hui un obstacle réel au droit à une vie décente et à la pleine citoyenneté. Aujourd'hui, aucune société ne semble avoir pleinement et totalement accompli la protection de l'ensemble des droits de l'homme, alors que celle-ci est une obligation incombant à chaque État.

Dès lors, les politiques étatiques de lutte contre la pauvreté doivent promouvoir l'insertion et la reconsidération des personnes socialement vulnérables, afin de leur garantir la pleine jouissance de leur personnalité et de leur capacité juridique.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS AS A MEANS FOR POVERTY REDUCTION: EXISTING PROPOSALS AND NEW INITIATIVES

1. Selection of Existing Proposals regarding Human Rights and Poverty Reduction

a. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The MDGs are a political commitment set around eight goals and specific targets to be achieved by 2015. They serve both as a framework for fostering extreme poverty reduction and as an inspirational outline for engaging the international community towards achieving that goal. Despite being set around the concept of sustainable development and dignity of humankind⁷⁷, the MDGs – and the ways to attain them – are not expressly linked to the need of a human-rights approach to poverty. Moreover, they do not address directly the concept of poverty as the neglect of human rights, limiting the targets and goals to a basic notion of welfare. In that sense, they seem not as much of a destination, but mainly a point of departure orientated at providing the most basic needs for all humankind.

- Strengths: gain momentum for the poverty cause; promote universal commitment and foster international partnerships;
- Weaknesses: may be interpreted in a technical – non political – way, excluding specific reference to human rights; limited and by no means comprehensive in order to guarantee the accomplishment of human rights as a whole

b. The Global Compact

The Global Compact was established in the year 2000 as a network destined to bring companies together with UN agencies, labour and civil society in order to support universal environmental and social principles.

The OHCHR is among the six agencies involved, and the two first principles are based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and, thus, refer to a broad notion of respect for human rights⁷⁸.

- Strengths: promote human rights and encourage commitment of the private sector; set up standards for a better understanding amongst the different social actors.
- Weaknesses: voluntary initiative, lack of enforcement mechanisms; furthermore, the initiative is limited to the formal sector of economy and workers, it ignores the “outsiders” (unemployed, informally employed and socially excluded), largely to be found amongst the poorest populations.

⁷⁷ Part V of the Declaration specifically refers to human rights and good governance as part of its purposes. “Human rights, democracy and good governance” § 24. *We will spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.*” A/res/55/02

⁷⁸ Ten Principles <http://www.unglobalcompact.org/AboutTheGC/TheTenPrinciples/index.html> (16.07.2007)

c. Poverty Reduction Strategies: Some of the International Organizations Proposals

i. World Bank Strategy

The World Bank's slogan is "Working for a World Free of Poverty". However, its main work in the field of poverty reduction has been limited to an economic – quantitative or technical - approach to the subject, basing its projects on the allocation of funds, economic growth and – most recently – distribution⁷⁹. Hence, human rights were traditionally ignored in the making and implementation of Poverty Reduction Strategies.

"Many development practitioners – including the World Bank staff – typically think of human rights abuses in terms of violations of civil or political rights, actions not necessarily associated with economic development and often perceived as neutral in terms of their impact on economic growth. Many would even argue that the provision of civil and political liberties generally follows from sustained economic growth or is a by product of growing prosperity"⁸⁰ (Ingram: 2, 2007). This has been interpreted (Moser, 2004: 5) as an "indirect" promotion of human rights, thorough economic growth, assuming that the latter would eventually foster the former. Although this tendency has been somehow "softened" in recent years, it is still a fact that the World Bank is not mainstreaming human rights into its strategies, at least not in a substantial or sound way.

ii. OHCHR Principles and Guidelines for a Human Rights Approach to Poverty Reduction Strategies

Following the 2004 "Human Rights and Poverty Reduction: A Conceptual Framework", the OHCHR issued policy guidelines aimed at promoting human rights and the fight against poverty. The comprehensive document consists of eight guidelines addressing not only specific rights, but also stressing the importance of the process of formulating, implementing and monitoring a human-rights-based poverty reduction strategy. They identify different levels of policy making and implementing, as well as emphasizing the importance of international assistance and cooperation. Although general, these guidelines serve the purpose of introducing human rights not only as an item, but also as the core part of poverty reduction strategies, in order to make them effective, substantial and, consequently, successful.

2. What Can be Done: Proposals

The examples mentioned above highlight a trend in the international community to include human rights into poverty reduction strategies, as well as acknowledging that poverty implies a series of violations of human rights. Nevertheless, it cannot be ignored that practical results regarding this "link" are seldom achieved concretely.

We assume that the main cause of this "failure" is not within the documents or the proposals themselves but rather on the lack of political will in order to implement, enforce and account for these policies. We underline the need for a genuine political commitment to a common goal to eradicate poverty in all its forms and context through

⁷⁹ Such as World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development.

⁸⁰ INGRAM, J (2007), Human Rights and Development. Development OUTREACH.. World Bank. Page 2

the effective implementation of human rights especially for the most vulnerable groups, such as women, children, refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), minorities and migrant workers.

The political commitment we are referring to is that of the States – primary responsible for the well-being of their people – but also that of the private sector, civil society and non state actors, since they all constitute key stakeholders for the fulfilment of human rights. In this regard, UN's responsibility cannot be ignored especially in the implementation of human rights standards and the adoption of policies and actions that affect the fulfilment of these rights - for instance, when economic sanctions against a political regime are adopted, they more often than not result in depriving people of their basic rights. We believe that the following principles must constitute core elements in every action undertaken to fight poverty, whereas in the international, national or local level: empowerment of the poor, accountability mechanisms and above all a strong political will by all the relevant stakeholders.

From this point of our report, a crucial question appears: Why has a human rights-based approach failed to alleviate poverty despite the strong links between poverty and human rights? What new measures strengthening human rights could help making poverty history? We will now try to highlight a few proposals.

a. Empowering the Poor

La bataille contre la pauvreté doit être d'abord menée par ceux qui, au quotidien, subissent les affres des conditions d'existence inhumaines : les pauvres eux-mêmes. Ils doivent donc se donner les moyens de mener à bien leur combat. La stratégie de lutte des victimes de la pauvreté devra donc se structurer autour de trois piliers, à savoir : leur capacité à s'organiser ; l'accès à l'éducation ; et, enfin, la lutte pour la bonne gouvernance.

i. Renforcer le droit d'association pour les pauvres

Dans tous les domaines, la meilleure manière d'atteindre les objectifs qui auront été fixés est de s'associer. Les pauvres devront donc s'unir et s'organiser; ce sont des droits reconnus par le système universel des droits de l'homme. Il faudrait donc agir concrètement au niveau local pour encourager les personnes souffrant de pauvreté à se regrouper en association.

ii. The Access to Education, «Sine Qua Non» Condition for Overcoming Poverty

Education is the key to poverty reduction, empowering the poor to develop, participate and be responsible of their own welfare. Despite the fact that a wide range of commitments have been undertaken to achieve conformity with universal primary education in the world, the vicious circle of lack of education and poverty has not yet been broken. As a future challenge, the international community must make a concerted effort to strengthen the link between human rights and education as a motor for development. However, education can only provide empowerment and participation if it is up to date and adapted to the specific characteristics of the pupils' situation. We

therefore suggest taking into account the following aspects when implementing education as part of a poverty reduction strategy:

- *Education up-to-date* – Achieving universal literacy today implies not only knowing how to read, write and calculate but mainly how to use and profit from information and communication technologies.
- *Education of Life Skills* – School curricula should be enlarged and adapted to local and regional characteristics such as environmental (pollution), health (HIV/AIDS), cultural and political (HR violation) issues in terms of “Life Skills Education”.
- *Education of Human Rights* – and in the spirit of Human Rights principles raise the pupils awareness of being part of a global community and therefore, building a conscience of global citizenship, having rights and the responsibility to respect the rights of others.
- *Education for Development* – The implementation of education for development in all national schools’ curricula is an important step towards a worldwide sensitisation and understanding of poverty and the necessity for its reduction. In addition, partnerships between schools of developing and developed countries should become standard to strengthen partnership between individuals and to give the urge to poverty reduction a human face.

iii. Endiguer la corruption et encourager la bonne gouvernance: le combat des pauvres

La pauvreté, généralement, est due au fait que les responsables étatiques n’ont pas su définir des politiques publiques adéquates et sont sujets à la corruption. Les victimes de la pauvreté devront se prendre en charge elles-mêmes et participer à la vie politique de leur pays. Les pauvres sont nombreux et constituent un poids électoral indéniable; ils peuvent donc à travers des élections se donner des dirigeants qui répondront à leurs aspirations et se donneront les moyens de lutter efficacement contre la pauvreté.

b. Strengthening Accountability

Accountability of all the relevant stakeholders for the deprivation of fundamental human rights has to be combated directly. States are not the only duty bearers responsible for human rights violations having the obligation to alleviate poverty. Transnational corporations and business enterprises (TNCs) have a dominant position in the international scene, affecting directly by their policies and actions the livelihood of millions of people. The emergence of new forms of slavery such as enforced labor and child exploitation, discriminatory treatment of women, human trafficking, direct or indirect engagement in armed conflicts for maximizing profit, arms trade and exploitation of natural resources violate fundamental human rights and values, amounting in some cases to international crimes.

The binding effect of the existing human rights’ standards to TNCs, the establishment of common and clearly defined international rules for corporate responsibility, not only civil but also criminal, alongside with a universally effective and transparent system of enforcement based on the rule of law is an indispensable tool in addressing the protection of basic human right norms, especially those of the most vulnerable groups (women,

children, elderly people and persons with disabilities, refugees, IDPs, minorities, migrant workers).

At the international level, the Human Rights Council (HRC) as the principal UN organ for the protection of human rights should address the issue of poverty alleviation as one of its primary goals, examining, in this respect, not only states' but also transnational corporations' violations of human rights obligations especially in conflict situations and post-conflict societies. At the national and local level, TNCs and small enterprises can play an active role by participating in the adoption and implementation of poverty reduction strategies, by training and employing the poor in conditions of full respect of their fundamental needs and rights, and thus, contributing actively in their empowerment.

c. Human Rights as a Common Language to Alleviate Poverty: Towards a Better Cooperation

Several UN agencies along with other international organizations and a number of various NGOs try to address the problem of poverty. Their actions reflect diverse approaches, as we have seen through the initiatives of the OHCHR and the World Bank. The World Trade Organization (WTO) with the negotiations of the Doha Round and the UNICEF with programs targeting children also highlight poverty as a priority. But too often, there is a lack of common "language" between these actors which often leads to overlapping and duplicating actions with unsatisfactory results. A Human Rights Approach can be that common language for dealing with poverty, facilitating the cooperation between different actors. As an example, the multilateral partnership accomplished at the international level between UN agencies, civil society, TNCs and academia, enunciated with the Global Compact, can be incorporated at regional and most importantly at national and local level.

Indeed, human rights are a cross-cutting issue and can be used as a transversal approach to address poverty in its multidimensional nature. This could lead to a greater coherence in the poverty reduction strategies launched by different actors and lead to comprehensive and durable solutions for the eradication of poverty. In order to achieve this goal, the OHCHR should continue to promote and diffuse human rights approaches so that every organization integrates them in their programmes thus facilitating cooperation between the relevant actors and forging synergies.

d. Strengthening Global Partnerships

In order to address poverty and ensure the fulfilment of Human Rights the international community needs to embrace and reinforce global partnerships.

That is to say; the existing commitments such as the results of the Global Compact Summit; the aforementioned Millennium Development Goals. Including the Millennium Declaration and the Declaration and Platform of Action of the World Summit on Sustainable Development; which all conceive fighting against poverty as their main objective. And above all, regarding specifically the right to water; the Chief Executive Officer Water Mandate (CEO).

e. The Need for Effective Communication: The Need for Advocacy

Raising public awareness both on global and specific issues, by conveying clear messages and by implementing and developing effective communication strategies, has to remain one of the principal objectives of the UN system through Public Communication campaigns. Effective communication, whether carried out through media campaigns or through other community-based channels, results in the change of perception of social issues, such as human rights violations amongst the populations living in the poorest areas of the world. In this respect, the use of the media remains of paramount importance, in order to influence the public opinion and to create people's willingness to take action, both individual and common. The example of the "Stand Up Against Poverty" Campaign, launched on October 17th, 2006 (UN International Day Against Poverty) illustrates the importance and effectiveness of public awareness campaigns. During the aforementioned initiative, in fact, more than 23 million people in 87 countries stood up and took action to remind the world of the necessity of concrete action in order to eradicate extreme poverty. It was the largest single coordinated mobilization in the history of the Guinness World Records⁸¹.

As public campaigns affect the criteria used by people to judge policies and policymakers, creating public will on both specific and global issues will motivate public officials to take effective political action, which will result from a bottom-up process rather than a top-down one. In this respect it remains of paramount importance to reinforce the links and the partnerships with the civil society and between the various UN departments, agencies and programmes, in order to raise one strong voice and to achieve many effective goals against human rights violations.

V. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This brief insight into the poverty issue through the human-rights approach reveals the deep link which exists between poverty and the human rights perspective. It appears that these two issues possess a direct link and should be addressed hand in hand. Considering poverty through a human-rights approach demonstrates the fact that poverty affects every aspect of human life. As all human rights are universal, interdependent and interrelated, in instances of poverty, civil and political rights are affected as well as social and economic rights, both globally and on specific issues. Poverty alleviation challenge and the effective implementation of human rights need to be brought together in order to move away from poverty and into greater prosperity for the vast populations of this world. As stated above, poverty is not only a matter of income deficiency but mainly a multidimensional problem in which human capabilities are limited, neglected or even denied. Therefore, we need to address poverty reduction from a human-rights perspective because:

- Poverty is a holistic problem, which in turn requires a holistic solution
- Human-rights approach empowers people: it goes beyond superficial satisfaction of short-term needs and reinforces sustainable solutions.

⁸¹ <http://www.standagainstpoverity.org/>, 17th July 2007

- Human-rights approach stresses the responsibility, which lies within all the relevant actors.

However, although a human-rights approach has been taken, as explained in the report, it has achieved limited success. The reasons for this limited success may be, as mentioned, related to a sort of “implementation deficit”, rather than in misleading or incorrect design and formulation of the initiatives.

This report puts forth recommendations, which are fivefold:

- *empowering* the poor in all institutional mechanisms at local and international level. This can be translated into three options: reinforcement of the right of association for all, access to education as a means for active participation in the local and global society and fight against corruption;
- *strengthening and institutionalizing accountability* of transnational corporations, international organizations and States as the main duty-bearers for the promotion and protection of all human rights;
- *identifying human rights as the common language* of poverty alleviation initiatives in order to raise in a coherent manner a unique, strong voice against poverty;
- *raising public awareness*, both in the developed and in the developing countries, through effective communication campaigns addressed at all social groups; and
- *strengthening partnerships* between all the relevant stakeholders, such as states, international organizations, civil society, private parties and rights-holders at national, regional and international level.

A human rights approach to poverty reduction which ensures equality, non-discrimination, empowerment, accountability and transparency is inevitable in order to provide welfare, peace and development for all, would help the international community in its action to make poverty history.

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Introduction

La communauté internationale est aujourd'hui à mi-parcours du délai fixé pour l'atteinte des objectifs du Millénaire pour le développement (OMD). Les enjeux environnementaux sont directement visés par le septième OMD : assurer un environnement durable. Cependant la question environnementale dans le développement économique et social des pays est transversale et concerne indirectement trois autres OMD: diminuer de moitié la pauvreté, réduire la mortalité infantile et améliorer la santé maternelle.

La pauvreté est une situation dans laquelle se trouve un individu qui n'a pas accès aux ressources nécessaires pour satisfaire ses besoins. Ces ressources s'entendent sur le plan économique (ex: revenu), social (ex: éducation) et physiologique (ex: santé). La question de la pauvreté est directement liée aux enjeux environnementaux pour trois raisons principales.

Tout d'abord, en référence au concept de « capacité » développé par A. Sen, l'accès aux trois formes de ressources évoquées plus haut est à la fois dépendant des capacités développées par l'individu et des opportunités présentes dans l'environnement socioéconomique et naturel dans lequel il évolue. La pauvreté, caractérisée par un manque de «capabilités» dépend donc aussi du contexte de vie de l'individu, telle que la biodiversité, la qualité de l'air, de l'eau, etc.

D'autre part, la réalité de la pauvreté s'exprime non seulement par l'extrême rigueur des conditions de vie de ces individus mais aussi par l'extrême vulnérabilité qui les menace, à chaque instant, dans leur intégrité physique et morale. En effet, la restriction de leur accès à une ressource met directement en péril leurs conditions de vie actuelles car celles-ci sont dépendantes de quelques ressources très limitées.

La relation entre pauvreté et environnement peut être représentée par un cercle liant pauvreté, environnement et développement socioéconomique.

L'interprétation traditionnelle de cette représentation est de considérer que la pauvreté exerce une pression sur l'environnement qui peut parfois entraîner la dégradation de celui-ci en affectant la régénération des ressources, la richesse des écosystèmes, etc. Par conséquent, la restriction des ressources naturelles affecte les opportunités de développement économique et les capacités de couverture des besoins des générations futures et même dans un futur proche. La lutte contre la pauvreté, par des biais économiques et sociaux, est donc stratégique pour parvenir à un développement durable.

Mais, d'autre part, ces relations, loin d'être remises en causes, doivent également être complétées par la mise en lumière de l'intérêt de la protection de l'environnement pour diminuer la pauvreté, notamment en diminuant la vulnérabilité des pauvres, grâce à l'élargissement, à la diversification et la sécurisation de leur accès aux ressources naturelles.

L'objectif de ce rapport est de mettre en valeur les impacts socioéconomiques et environnementaux, ainsi que les enjeux de gouvernance environnementale élargie, que révèle la relation circulaire entre environnement et pauvreté.

L'exposé sera structuré en trois temps : en un premier temps, on propose un panorama, non exhaustif, des problèmes environnementaux qui se posent dans le contexte de la pauvreté. Puis nous prendrons un exemple concret - le cas du Soudan - qui nous semble être représentatif des différents impacts et enjeux aussi bien au niveau local que national et international. Le Soudan est l'un des pays les plus pauvres du monde, en dépit de ses richesses naturelles et est en situation de guerre depuis plus de vingt ans à propos de la propriété et de la gestion des ressources naturelles territoriales. Nous formulerons enfin quelques recommandations afin de rendre plus efficace la gouvernance environnementale et la mettre en cohérence avec les politiques de développement, dans l'optique de la réduction de la pauvreté.

I. Panorama des problèmes environnementaux dans le contexte de la pauvreté

1.1 Mauvaise gestion des ressources naturelles, non-préservation de la biodiversité

1.1.1 The question of water

Poverty reduction which is a complex issue, need specific targeted actions to ensure support to the weak and marginal communities in terms of policy, technical, institutional, environmental and financial.

Water is one of the most important components for poverty reduction strategy but this has not been well articulated. It was recognized in the Ministerial Declaration of the International Conference on Freshwater held in Bonn in 2001 that "combating poverty is the main challenge for achieving equitable and sustainable development and water plays a vital role in relation to human health, livelihoods, economic growth as well as sustainable ecosystems."

Yet, there is still a global crisis in water and sanitation. Billions of people live in the kind of squalor and disease that was eradicated long ago in the rich world. For instance, 1.1 billion lack access to clean water; 2.6 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Water needs are intricately woven through the daily life of poor communities and, in particular, in the lives of poor women and children. It is a crisis that is killing as many as 5000 children a day, driven by inequality and poverty where the burden falls most heavily on women. Many poor people also face other problems with water security: they are vulnerable to disasters, they are victims of conflicts over water resources and ill health that undermines the family's livelihoods on investments destroyed by disasters or face declining stocks of fish or other products essential to their livelihoods.

There is no denying water insecurity brings poverty and bad living conditions. At last, water crisis hampers economic growth and income generation. In Africa, an estimated 5% of GDP is lost to illnesses and deaths caused by dirty water and the absence of sanitation. By 2035, as many as three billion people may live in areas with severe water shortages, especially if they live in Africa, the Middle East or South Asia, predicts the World Bank.

In order to avoid such a situation, the need for water security was adopted at the 2nd WWF in 2000 in The Hague as a major development challenge for the 21st century. Water security implies that all people, including the poor, have access to water services to meet their basic needs, that they are able to take advantage of the opportunities that water resources provide, that they are protected from water-related hazards (floods, droughts,

typhoons, landslides, pollution), and that they have recourse where conflicts over water arise.

1.1.2 Dégradation de la forêt

- **Fonction humaine de la forêt : La forêt source de nourriture pour l'homme**

Selon la Banque mondiale, en 2004 plus d'un milliard d'habitants de la planète dépendaient des ressources forestières pour satisfaire une partie de leurs besoins. Ce phénomène est dû au fait que ces populations pauvres manquent de terres cultivables du fait de l'avancée considérable du désert et de la surexploitation de la terre dans certains pays, comme le Soudan précisément. Ces populations manquent également de techniques culturales. Elles utilisent des méthodes à faible rendement telles que l'agriculture extensive. Ces populations manquent de moyens financiers pour supporter leurs activités agricoles.

Par ailleurs, 350 millions d'habitants des zones riveraines tirent la majeure partie de leurs revenus et de leur nourriture des ressources forestières, et 2/3 des espèces végétales et animales dépendent de l'écosystème forestier pour leur survie.

- **Fonction économique**

Agriculture et forêt : Il serait irréaliste de négliger le rôle que la forêt joue dans l'agriculture. En témoigne l'exemple de la région de Lin'an, en Chine, qui figure au nombre des régions rurales où l'agriculture est tributaire des produits forestiers. L'industrie du bambou est aujourd'hui le pilier économique du Lin'an rural. À ce jour, plus de 30 000 ménages s'adonnent à la culture du bambou et Lin'an est devenu le plus grand jardin de bambou comestible de la Chine méridionale.

Par ailleurs, il faut savoir que l'agriculture a nécessairement besoin d'eau; or, la forêt joue un rôle dans la maîtrise de l'eau, tout comme le climat joue également un rôle indéniable dans la préservation des terres cultivables. Ainsi, il y a parmi les pauvres des individus qui s'orientent vers la culture de la terre non seulement pour subvenir à leurs besoins quotidiens, mais aussi pour vendre les produits issus de l'agriculture sur les marchés nationaux ou internationaux. Le manque de protection de la forêt réduirait indéniablement leur capacité de production.

Animaux et forêt : La forêt est aussi le lieu où vivent et se nourrissent les animaux. Il a été démontré que le déboisement fait fuir les animaux, qui partiront en quête de refuge. Ces animaux sont d'une part utiles à la consommation des hommes mais aussi au tourisme. Ainsi, la disparition des animaux implique-t-elle une perte de ressources qui contribue à la pauvreté.

La forêt et l'emploi : Il existe des entreprises qui exploitent la forêt. La création d'entreprises crée des emplois et encourage la formation de la main-d'œuvre.

La bonne gestion de la forêt peut ouvrir la voie à diverses activités dans le domaine de la transformation du bois - qui constitue aujourd'hui une source de revenus pour les États exportateurs de bois.

Tourisme et forêt : La forêt contribue enfin à la création de parcs nationaux qui sont des sources de revenus non négligeables pour les populations locales. Par exemple, dans le parc national Kruger en Afrique du Sud, la préservation de la faune et de la flore est 18 fois plus rentable que d'autres activités telles que l'élevage ou la culture (rapport du PNUD en 2005).

- **Fonction écologique : la forêt assure la stabilité climatique et réduit les risques naturels**

Les forêts sont plus qu'un stock de bois; elles sont un élément-clé de la régulation du climat, puisqu'elles absorbent le dioxyde de carbone et dégagent de l'oxygène. Leur destruction dégage d'énormes quantités de CO₂.

À l'échelle de la planète, 25 % des émissions de ce gaz à effet de serre sont dus à la destruction de la forêt. De plus, une fois détruites, les forêts ne peuvent plus jouer leur rôle de régulation des cycles de la pluie ou de protection contre l'érosion.

1.2. Activités humaines et dégradation de l'environnement

1.2.1 Impact of Sustainable Practices on Environment and Poverty Reduction

Often development or human progress in a general sense and environmental issues are considered conflictive concepts. The perception of adversity between those issues is due to common sense, since population growth, human occupation of territories and the development of significant economic activities often require the consumption of natural resources and generate wastes that are not easily disposable. Therefore a trade-off between development and environment is often the case. Civil society and governments have engaged in finding solutions that would allow nations to keep their pace of development causing less harm as possible to the environment. New technologies were developed and political agreements have been signed, however, some specialists argue that the only way of reducing the effects of human activity over the environment would be through the reduction of the level of growth that nations have been experiencing over the last years.

At the same time the development of economic activity in many countries has lead to great wealth concentration. It is recognized among economists that globalization has had no positive impact in reducing inequalities between countries. So far, the difference between the richer (more industrialized exports) and the poorer (more reliable on primary goods, most of which are agricultural exports) was even intensified. Since the Doha Round negotiations have not yielded results, the least developed nations are kept from markets and opportunities, watching wealth being highly concentrated in North America, Europe and high income Asia-Pacific countries.

As a result, hundreds of millions struggle to survive on a dollar or two a day (which is considered the line of poverty). Low-income countries are often agricultural-based economies.

Therefore, considering the assertions mentioned above and aiming at raising points to evaluate this groundwork, this section is to discuss an example of sustainable development policy that may at the same time deny the perception of incompatibility between development and environment conservation and help alleviate poverty.

This could be expected as the outcome of a *Biofuel* incentive policy in some industries, impacting on the relationship between *Agriculture and the Developing World*. The growth in the adoption of this kind of resource as energy base would have significant positive impacts on three main fronts: the amount of harmful gases expelled into the atmosphere, the oil oligopoly practiced by a few nations and trade perspectives for developing countries.

- **Effects on Environment**

When compared to fossil fuels, *biofuels* are considered less carbon intensive. There is no certain measure on the volume of CO₂ emission in order to precise a comparison between these two kinds of resources, especially because those emissions vary depending on the feedstock used, production processes etc, however, under most scenarios *biofuels* are more favorable than fossil fuels⁸².

Yet some argue that impacts of *biofuels* are not integrally considered to be the most optimistic, as there are negative effects to be pointed out. For instance, the intensification of agricultural activity would lead to massive increase of production on existing land, higher use of irrigation and fertilizers that could cause degradation of soil and therefore disruption of water and nitrogen cycles.

- **New Approach to Trade**

The emerging *biofuel* market would generate a much higher demand that would allow farmers to grow more crops. Products like palm, soy, rapeseed oil, corn, sugar beets can be converted into biodiesel and ethanol, which creates great market opportunities. As the markets grow, more industrialized countries would have reduced necessity for subsidizing their farmers and therefore developing nations would be more likely to export their products. Therefore, poorer countries tend to benefit the most from this, as new jobs will be created in the rural areas by the construction of export markets; and poverty in these areas would then be reduced.

However, the perils of these promises must also be considered. For instance, the common quoted aspect of land ownership in developing countries as well as the existence of governance and infrastructure difficulties in most developing countries could still be considered a barrier to the success of a fair wealth distribution that could be expected. But foreign investments may as well help modernize farm practices and create more opportunities for the poor.

1.2.2 La pollution

Parmi les activités humaines qui contribuent à la dégradation de l'environnement, la pollution - surtout celle liée au CO₂ - joue un rôle de première importance. L'accumulation du CO₂ dans l'atmosphère accélère l'effet de serre; elle perturbe le climat à l'échelle mondiale, entraînant pour ce dernier des changements néfastes. Ce

⁸² OECD Trade Policy Series (1999), Environmental and Energy Products: The Benefits of Liberalizing Trade.

sont ces menaces qui ont justifié la tenue, en décembre 1997, à Kyoto, d'une grande conférence mondiale sur cette question de la pollution - conférence qui a abouti à l'adoption d'un Protocole destiné à guider les efforts mondiaux visant à limiter les effets néfastes des diverses activités humaines. Au-delà du problème environnemental que représente la pollution, nous cherchons à mettre en évidence comment, dans ses différentes manifestations, elle contribue à engendrer et/ou aggraver la pauvreté dans les pays en développement.

- **La pollution est un phénomène nuisible à la santé:** dans les pays en développement, la population active, qui produit l'essentiel des revenus nationaux, représente souvent le tiers de la population totale. Elle est en outre déjà très exposé à des risques de pandémie et de maladie que les systèmes de santé locaux n'arrivent pas toujours à prévenir, ce qui constitue déjà en soi un facteur d'entrave au développement. Si à cela s'ajoutent les effets de la pollution, les rendements de cette population active risquent d'être encore limités par les maladies cardiovasculaires issues du rejet des gaz à effet de serre dans l'atmosphère.
- **La pollution peut engendrer aussi des catastrophes climatiques :** le réchauffement de la terre entraîne la fonte des glaciers ainsi que le relèvement et l'avancée du niveau de la mer vers les terres. Ces phénomènes entraînent non seulement la disparition des petites îles mais aussi l'inondation des zones côtières basses, ce qui engendre inévitablement le déplacement des populations touchées et pratiquement l'éradication de toute forme de vie humaine dans ces espaces inondés. Les pays en développement n'ont pas les moyens de prévenir de telles conséquences, encore moins de les prendre en charge seuls. Les conséquences ont trait à la dislocation des tissus économiques locaux, à l'émergence de pandémies, à l'intensification des migrations vers d'autres pays et à l'aggravation de la pauvreté.
- **Enfin, la pollution a des impacts financiers lourds:** les plans et les programmes de lutte contre la pollution grèvent les budgets des pays en développement. N'investissant pas dans la prévention de la pollution, ces pays réagissent en mettant en place des plans coûteux, qui se chiffrent en millions, pour tenter d'endiguer les effets de la pollution, alors que cet argent pourrait servir à financer des projets sociaux, éducatifs ou économiques susceptibles d'améliorer les conditions de vie des populations concernées. De surcroît, ces plans de lutte contre la pollution sont souvent inefficaces puisqu'ils sont généralement très sectoriels et restent localisés alors que le problème de la pollution est global et interagit avec d'autres aspects comme la politique industrielle ou la politique des transports.

1.2.3 Les catastrophes naturelles

Depuis le début des années 90, on constate une forte augmentation des catastrophes naturelles dans toutes les parties du globe, due au réchauffement de notre planète. En effet, plus de deux cent millions de personnes par an ont été touchées par des fléaux naturels ou des accidents technologiques depuis 1990. La Croix-Rouge signale à ce sujet que plus de soixante mille personnes ont été tuées chaque année suite à des catastrophes naturelles.

Les Nations Unies sont aujourd'hui présentes sur deux fronts principaux pour tenter de résoudre ce problème. Le premier est le secours aux victimes, en particulier par le biais du Bureau de Coordination des Affaires Humanitaires (OCHA, selon l'acronyme anglais), établi en 1991 par la résolution 46/182 de l'Assemblée générale. Il est actuellement désigné comme le fer de lance des Nations Unies pour ce qui est de la gestion des catastrophes. Le second réside dans la recherche de stratégies pour prévenir les situations d'urgence. On peut, par exemple, parler ici de la Stratégie internationale de prévention des catastrophes (ISDR, selon l'acronyme anglais), qui a largement contribué à la déclaration de Hyogo de 2005 pour la prévention des catastrophes, ou encore du PNUD qui a mis au point l'Indice de Risque de Catastrophes naturelles (IRC). Sur ce dernier point, Salvano Bricerno, actuel Directeur de l'ISDR a déclaré qu'il fallait désormais oublier le terme « naturelles », en ce sens que les catastrophes naturelles sont nommées comme telles car la vulnérabilité sociale et humaine existe.

On peut par exemple comparer les politiques de prévention cubaine et américaine en matière de risque de passage d'ouragans. Pour des raisons économiques, les dirigeants successifs de la Nouvelle-Orléans n'ont pas tenu compte de la grande vulnérabilité des digues qui entouraient la ville et qu'ils savaient pourtant très vulnérables au passage d'un ouragan.

À l'inverse, les autorités cubaines ont depuis très longtemps mis en place des politiques de prévention très efficaces et les passages d'ouragans sur l'île ne donnent généralement lieu qu'à des dégâts matériels.

De manière globale, les catastrophes naturelles ont pour conséquence soit de mettre en évidence des situations de pauvreté des populations touchées, soit de créer ces situations. Le « tsunami de 2004 » a par exemple plongé de nombreuses personnes dans des situations extrêmes de pauvreté.

Les périodes successives de sécheresse dévastatrice qu'a connues le Soudan ces dernières années ont provoqué des déplacements de populations qui ont eux-mêmes entraîné les conflits que connaît actuellement le pays.

1.2.4 La question des guerres et des conflits

Il est possible aussi que nous assistions à une sorte de « spirale infernale » dans les prochaines décennies si nous n'agissons pas de manière plus significative.

En effet, si nous n'assistons pour l'instant qu'à des conflits intra-étatiques ou régionaux, nous pourrions dans les années à venir assister à des guerres entre États de plus en plus nombreuses et de plus en plus fréquentes... et malheureusement, lorsque deux États entrent en guerre, ils emploient des stratégies sans limites en ce sens que qu'ils n'hésitent pas pour s'affaiblir mutuellement à nuire à l'environnement et aux écosystèmes des uns et des autres dans l'unique but de ralentir l'économie ou la capacité « logistique » de l'adversaire.

Tel est le cas, par exemple, de la dernière guerre du Liban durant laquelle l'armée israélienne a délibérément pollué les eaux libanaises pour affaiblir économiquement le pays. Mais la conséquence pour l'environnement a été la destruction partielle de tout un écosystème de notre planète. L'armée iraquienne avait également fortement nuit à l'environnement lorsqu'elle avait enflammé des centaines de puits de pétrole au Koweït durant la première guerre du Golfe, avec pour seul objectif de ralentir l'économie de son adversaire. Actuellement, l'État soudanais n'est préoccupé que par la question de la guerre et les populations voient leur situation s'aggraver et leur pays

continuer à se détériorer, alors que c'est une question environnementale - l'accès aux ressources naturelles - qui est à l'origine du conflit.

D'un point de vue général, les différents liens qui existent entre enjeux environnementaux et pauvreté montrent l'importance qu'il y a d'agir pour la protection de l'environnement afin de protéger la survie de l'être humain et notamment des plus vulnérables. La deuxième partie, basée sur l'exemple du Soudan, permettra de mettre en valeur l'urgence d'une action rapide, efficace et coordonnée, aux niveaux local, national et international.

II. Case study : current situation in Sudan

Change in the global environment affects the whole world, but some countries are, at this state in time, more affected than others. In the already underdeveloped parts of the world, problems related to the environment and the use of its resources prevents development and poverty reduction.

This report tries to show the direct consequences that environmental related questions have on Sudan. In fact, different problems related to environmental issues contribute to the vicious circle of conflict and poverty in Sudan. Furthermore, much attention is paid to the development in this country in international media as well as international and non-governmental organizations. But still, the whole country suffers under the eyes of the global public.

Background information on the situation in Sudan

In January 2005, the Sudanese Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Nairobi, putting an end to 22 years of civil war due to north-south tensions and allowing the deployment of UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

Since spring 2003, the civil war in Darfur has dominated the international view on Sudan. Despite success of the international community in solving the civil war, its measures have not yet been able to stop the killing in Darfur: Regarding the conflict, the UN Security Council has passed various resolutions. Cases of war crimes have been transmitted to the International Court of Justice (Security Council Resolution 1593). African Union forces have also not been able to stop the fighting, and attempts to send UN forces to Darfur have been undermined. In May 2006, a peace agreement was signed between the government of Sudan and the biggest Darfur rebel faction which, however, has not been able to bring peace to the region. Not all rebel groups signed the agreement and the conditions of implementation are vague. Moreover, conflict has spread to the neighbouring countries. 200,000 people have died as a direct result of the conflict. Over 2 million people are displaced from Darfur into Chad, 230,000 Chadians are displaced as well as 150,000 from the Central African Republic. The signing of the peace agreement in 2005 officially lead to major political changes. Southern Sudan is governed autonomously and will decide on its independence in 2011 which could exacerbate tension between north and south if political consequences and actions are not strict enough in advance.

Southern Sudanese Rebels are included in the Sudanese government, but they only hold 48% of the votes in the government as opposed to 52% of the National Congress Party which has shown reluctance to power-sharing. Democratic instruments such as elections and the enforcement of human rights are supposed to strengthen democracy, but a number of problems remain:

According to international critics, the political system remains centralistic and strongly clientelistic with power in the hands of a small elite who is primarily interested in extracting personal revenues and impedes the rule of law. Long-term solutions to the huge environmental and social problems do not exist and are unlikely to emerge under those structures. Furthermore, the state power is geographically limited, especially in the west and the east. Rebel groups control large areas of Sudan imposing their own rule and gaining revenues from a prospering war economy. Due to lack of integration into the political systems, regional conflicts have emerged. Thus, political reform foresees a strengthening of the different regions in Sudan. However, political implementation has remained slow and weak so far.

Civil society organizations in Sudan remain weak and centralized in the capital Khartoum. Due to the lack of anchorage in society and the lack of interaction with the political parties, their democratic ideas which could help to find long-term political solution to the pressing environmental and social problems on a national level and the empowerment of local groups and individuals will hardly find implementation in the near future.

In the following paragraphs, we will analyse the linkages between these environmental problems and poverty in Sudan. Looking closer to causes and effects and by linking the different aspects of environmental challenges, we will try to provide a coherent environmental analysis explaining the complexity of the whole environmental Sudan puzzle.⁸³

2.1 Biodiversity in Sudan

Sudan lost a number of wild life species in the last two decades; many more are endangered or vulnerable as they are confined to core protected areas and remote desert regions. In the northern part, the biggest damage was caused due to habitat destruction and fragmentation from farming and deforestation. In the south, unrestrained and untenable hunting has devastated wildlife populations and caused the local eradication of many of the larger species, such as elephant, rhino, buffalo, giraffe, eland and zebra⁸⁴. The most threatened species are mammals, higher plants and birds. Several grasses and herbs have disappeared due to overgrazing, repeated droughts and fires. Fires are responsible for an annual loss of 30% dry fodder, otherwise available to wild life and the 103 million heads of livestock. From a total land area of 250,581,000 ha, only 8,473,000 ha (4.9%) are protected areas⁸⁵ like nature reserves, wilderness areas and national parks. Many of these important areas are located in regions affected by conflict and have hence suffered from a long-term absence of the rule of law. Sudan does not have any Wetlands Sites and only two Biosphere Reserves with a total area of 1,251,000 ha.

Sudan's coral reefs are the best preserved ecosystems in the country. UNEP found that the marine and coastal environment is in a rather good condition. Nevertheless, because of the rapid economic growth and shipping boom for the oil export facilities on Port Sudan, the environmental situation may change for the worse.

⁸³ Information taken from the Bertelsmann Transformation Index 2006: Sudan, available at www.bertelsmann.com,

Öhm, Manfred (2006): Sudan: Politischer Übergang ohne Machtwechsel, available at www.fes.de,

UNEP (2007): Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment, available at www.unep.org.

⁸⁴ UNEP, Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment P.14

⁸⁵ <http://earthtrends.wri.org>

2.2 L'eau, un problème crucial au Soudan

Pays semi-désertique, le Soudan doit faire face à de grands problèmes d'approvisionnement en eau. Actuellement, une grande partie de la population soudanaise souffre du manque d'eau pour la consommation ainsi que pour l'agriculture. Cette pénurie est le résultat de deux facteurs combinés : les conditions naturelles, d'une part, et le sous-développement, de l'autre. Le manque d'eau - ressource essentielle pour la vie comme pour le développement - a également des répercussions importantes sur le maintien de la paix dans la région.

- **Quelles sont les ressources en eau du Soudan ?**

Le Soudan dispose de ressources en eau relativement importantes, grâce - en particulier - au bassin du Nil, fleuve dont les deux tiers se trouvent à l'intérieur des frontières du pays; le pays dispose en outre d'importantes réserves souterraines. Les autres principaux bassins se trouvent au nord-ouest, à l'ouest (bassin du lac Tchad), au sud-est (bassin du lac Turkana) et au nord-est (Bassin Baraka). Deux éléments viennent cependant nuancer cette situation : une grande disparité régionale des ressources en eau disponibles d'une part, et, d'autre part, de grandes fluctuations selon les années voire au cours d'une même année. Ces déséquilibres occasionnent de grandes difficultés dans les régions les plus sèches et constituent de puissants motifs de conflits associés au manque de ressources. Ainsi, le conflit actuel au Darfour trouve-t-il en partie son origine dans des problèmes d'accès à l'eau (cf. § « Eau et conflit »).

La consommation d'eau se répartit entre l'agriculture (près de 97%), la consommation domestique (2,6%) et l'industrie (0,7%). Cette eau vient majoritairement des ressources de surface, mais l'extraction en profondeur progresse rapidement.

- **Quels sont les problèmes que rencontre le Soudan en ce qui concerne l'eau ?**

Le pays rencontre différents problèmes en ce qui concerne ses ressources en eau. Parmi ceux-ci, il faut citer le cas des grands barrages (problème des dépôts de sédiments, mais aussi destruction des écosystèmes environnants liée au détournement de l'eau dont ces écosystèmes ont besoin pour se maintenir). Il existe aussi des problèmes associés aux barrages plus traditionnels : en effet, les *hafirs*, alimentés par les pluies qui fournissent l'eau pour la consommation domestique, comme cela existe au Darfour, souffrent des variations de précipitations ainsi que des dépôts sédimenteux. D'autres problèmes ont trait à la conservation des zones humides, nécessaires à la survie d'espèces sauvages durant les périodes de sécheresse, à la prolifération d'espèces invasives de plantes (« *water hyacinth* » et « *mesquite* »), à la pollution des eaux, à l'extraction d'eau en profondeur, ainsi qu'à la pêche en eaux douces.

- **L'eau comme source du conflit au Darfour**

La guerre civile qui sévit au Darfour est un conflit armé localisé à l'ouest du Soudan. Les origines de ce conflit sont d'ordre politique, mais celui-ci trouve aussi ses racines dans l'appropriation des ressources - pétrole, eau, terres -, le tout sur fond de nettoyage ethnique. Les organisations qui travaillent dans la région sont convaincues que ce sont des querelles à propos de l'eau et des pâturages qui ont tout déclenché. Selon certains témoignages, comme celui d'Ismail Algazouli, ingénieur au SUDO, organisation soudanaise de développement social, ce conflit a été déclenché par des affrontements à propos de l'accès à l'eau et aux pâturages entre petites communautés de paysans africains et groupes d'éleveurs arabes. Ces groupes sont devenus de plus en plus nombreux et les affrontements se sont multipliés. Le tournant s'est produit en 2003 lorsque de puissants dirigeants des Janjawid, « les hommes à cheval », ont

demandé l'aide de leurs alliés du Gouvernement, ce qui a conféré à ce conflit une autre dimension. Les Janjawid se sont emparés des points d'eau dont ils avaient besoin pour leur bétail. Des populations ont été chassées de leurs terres et ont été contraintes de se réfugier dans des camps à la frontière du Soudan et du Tchad. Ces déplacements de population ont à leur tour eu des conséquences importantes, dans la mesure où les populations déplacées n'avaient dès lors plus accès à l'eau en quantité suffisante. On voit comment le manque de cet élément vital - tant pour la vie que pour l'agriculture - qu'est l'eau est en partie à l'origine des conflits armés qui sévissent dans la région et comment les conflits contribuent à leur tour à l'aggravation de cette pénurie et des problèmes d'accès à l'eau, c'est-à-dire comment les problèmes environnementaux et une mauvaise gouvernance de ceux-ci ont des conséquences néfastes pour la paix, la sécurité alimentaire et le développement. Le cas du Darfour illustre bien la nécessité d'une bonne gouvernance environnementale dans l'optique de la réduction de la pauvreté.

La gestion durable des ressources naturelles telles que l'eau est donc un des éléments de la solution pour parvenir à la stabilité sociale et pour assurer des moyens de subsistance économique ainsi qu'un développement qui soient durables, ce qui permettra une réduction de la pauvreté. Selon la recommandation du Programme des Nations Unies pour l'environnement, il faut investir dans la gestion environnementale pour soutenir une paix durable au Darfour et éviter les conflits liés aux ressources naturelles dans le reste du Soudan.

2.3 Desertification and land degradation in Sudan

Desertification is especially a problem in northern and western Sudan where the soil is sandy and prone to water and wind erosion. The northern parts of the country are especially affected by what can literally be called desertification because it is estimated that the border between the Sahara Desert – which accounts already for about 29% of the area of Sudan – and its neighbouring semi-desert areas has shifted 50 to 200 km southwards in the last 70 years.⁸⁶

This development is mainly due to regional climate change, more precisely the decline in rainfall. In northern and western Darfur, for example, the annual rainfall declined by 34% and 24% respectively during the last 50 years.⁸⁷ Although drought can be regarded as a natural phenomenon in northern Sudan, the increasing decline in rainfall lead to a disproportionate number of devastating droughts in the last years. Trees and bush vegetation that normally manage to regenerate after a drought died and left large scale of degraded and deserted land behind.

Furthermore, the existing humid environments within the desert – such as wadis and oases – continue to dry out, which is not, however, on account of climate change, but mainly human-induced factors. Overgrazing and deforestation in these vulnerable areas have in many parts of the country lead to degradation. Climate change again facilitates human-induced degradation since over-used land becomes more vulnerable to drought.

Even in the areas where there still occurs a sufficient amount of rainfall, over-exploitation of the environment is often the case. Especially in the conflict-struck region of Darfur, larger camps of internally displaced persons as well as the abandonment of villages and fields result in large-scale land degradation.

⁸⁶ UNEP-Report 2006: Sudan – Post-conflict Environmental Assessment, p. 9, available at: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_Sudan.pdf

⁸⁷ UNEP-Report 2006: Sudan – Post-conflict Environmental Assessment, p. 60, available at: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_Sudan.pdf

All these different factors of desertification and land degradation contribute directly to poverty in Sudan. Individuals and communities as well as the country's overall economy – despite its oil resources – still depend heavily on agriculture. Taking into account that 25% of the agricultural land is located in semi-arid regions that are prone to degradation and desertification, action has to be taken in order to save Sudan's agricultural sector. Furthermore, the loss of grasslands and arable lands intensified the conflicts about land use in Darfur, since many Sudanese were forced to move southwards. So indirectly, desertification and degradation also contributed to the vicious circle of conflict and poverty.

2.4 Deforestation in Sudan

Sudan possesses a great variety of different types of forests, from the desert and semi-desert trees and shrubs in the north to tropical forests in the south. Due to different sources of data and varying definitions of deforestation, it is difficult to exactly quantify the loss of these forests, but clearly northern, eastern and central Sudan have already lost a great amount of their forest cover. FAO measures an 11.6% loss of forests from 1990-2005 in the whole country.⁸⁸

Deforestation is principally driven by energy needs. Trees, in the form of fuelwood, are the main energy source for most urban and rural households in Sudan. The wood is not only needed for direct household energy supply – cooking, for example – but also plays a major role in the production of charcoal and bricks. Agricultural clearance is also a threat to the Sudanese forest cover, since the burning of vegetation is a widespread practice in order to obtain arable land. The small sector of commercial timber industry has – unlike in many other countries – no major impact on deforestation. However, this sector has a potential for development, and an uncontrolled growing of the timber industry could easily lead to vast deforestation. In the Sahel belt, deforestation is not only related to the energy needs of the population, but also to ongoing drought situations due to climate change which leads to the disappearance of the vegetation.

The removal of the forest cover has a negative impact on the environment as well as on the Sudanese people. Deforestation encourages land degradation and erosion, which is particularly a problem in the Nile riverbed where severe flooding has increased significantly during the past twenty years.⁸⁹ Ecosystems and biodiversity, which contribute to the ecologic stability of the country, suffer as well. Furthermore, it can be observed that especially in densely populated areas such as the north of the country the urban environments and around the refugee camps in Darfur, deforestation is most severe. The growing need for fuelwood in these areas has a great potential to lead to future conflicts between regions that still possess enough wood resources, namely the south of Sudan, and those that will soon have consumed all fuelwood reserves.

At this state in time, deforestation is a problem in Sudan, but the management of its forests in the near future will determine whether the country will use its natural resources for economic and sustainable development or whether deforestation will intensify poverty. An ongoing clearance of the forest cover can foster desertification, land degradation and erosion, which will seriously affect the agricultural practices and therefore aggravate poverty and hinder sustainable development. However, the use of its forest resources in a controlled and sustainable manner could also bring positive

⁸⁸ FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2005, available at <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/fra/en/>.

⁸⁹ UNEP-Report 2006: Sudan – Post-conflict Environmental Assessment, p. 66, available at: http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/UNEP_Sudan.pdf.

development to Sudan's economy. However, so far, governance concerning this issue has been weak.

2.5 Sudan's industrial impact on the environment

Sudan is experiencing a rapid industrialization due to the growth of the oil industry and associated service industries and imports.

The different industrial sectors are:

- Crude oil industry;
- Refined oil and products industry;
- Utilities (power generation and water supplies);
- Food processing (sugar, sesame oil, cereals); and
- Miscellaneous (including mining, textile manufactures, tanneries and workshops)⁹⁰.

Until recently, virtually all of the major industries in Sudan were state-owned or state-controlled. This has now changed, as many of the main manufacturers have been privatized. Apart from the newer oil facilities, the industrial sector has suffered from a lack of investment, which is reflected in the condition of the plants and their environmental performance.

The sudden rise of the industrial sector without environmental governance is a result of chronic problems, including lack of skilled labour force, raw materials, and, as mentioned before, investments.

The main industries are: tannery and leather production, weaving mills, spinning mills, gum Arabic production, paper mills, minerals, ores, and raw materials extraction. The tannery industry creates 6% of the country's exports.

Oil deposits were found in the 1960s and 1970s and Sudan started its extraction in the 1980s. Most of the oil deposits are located in the southern part of the country. Disputes over how the oil revenues would be used fuelled the civil conflict and made construction of extraction facilities and a pipeline difficult. On many occasions, opposition groups have blasted some of the pipelines and cut production.

Oil extraction and export in Sudan has benefited from cooperation with foreign companies. Focusing on the oil industry, exporting oil represented 14% of the 2005 estimated gross domestic product for Sudan⁹¹. One of the major problems of crude oil industry is the "produced water". During the extraction of oil by wells, water, too, is pumped up; this water has to be treated before released. As the amount of "produced water" is very high, especially at the end of the oil wells life, no treatment is done and the result is a serious pollution of the environment.

Oil industry has various impacts on the environment; in fact the obtained gas at the well extractions is burned off (gas flaring) uselessly, which increases the Green House Gases (GHG) emissions and at the same time, it is a waste of energy resources that could help reduce the dependency on fuelwood. Oil exploration also has an impact on the Sudanese forest environment; in fact, a common practice is the construction of access roads and placement of seismic surveillance using bulldozers to cut tracks of four to twelve meters. In the next years the growth of the oil sector will also increase the traffic in Port Sudan, which is a strategic point for oil export. Unfortunately, the risk of oil spills of loaded tankers during the navigation through the Red Sea is very

⁹⁰ UNEP Sudan Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment

⁹¹ The Economist Intelligence Unit (2006). Country report: Sudan (December 2006), London: EIU.

high. Numerous small islands, sand bars and coral reefs, can make the navigation very dangerous.

Moreover, gas reserves are significant in Sudan^{92,93}. Unfortunately, no large market has been developed for this resource. Liquid Petroleum Gas (LDG) production is becoming more and more significant.

Sudan is the biggest producer of Arabic gum that is extracted from the resin of Senegalese acacia trees. Its production covers 80 percent of the world consumption. The gum is used in foodstuffs, the chemical industry, cosmetics, pharmaceuticals, and lithography. Sudan is the third largest producer of sugar in Africa, after South Africa and Egypt. The government plans enlargement of crop fields near the Nile River. In the country, there are large deposits of copper, gold, chrome, iron ore, lead, wolfram, zinc, uranium, diamonds, marble, talc and plaster.

Concerning the sugar production industry, also in this case, industrial waste is discharged into rivers without pre-treatment having a Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) of 800-3000 ppm. This happens in particular in the Blue Nile, being the prevalent reason of fish killing. BOD concentration of industrial waste should be reduced for preventing the urban wastewater pollution and consequently water-induced diseases.

Sudan comes third in Africa after South Africa and Egypt in the volume of industrial activities. The total investments in the industrial sector are estimated at 15 billion US dollars, mostly in agricultural industries, including sugar, textile fabrics, vegetable oil industry, tanneries, canning factories, milk factories, in addition to agriculture related industries such as agricultural equipment, fertilizers, chemicals, medical and veterinary products, etc.

Through the sudden development of Sudan's industry there are chronic environmental problems, which range from air emissions and water pollution to hazardous and solid waste disposal, no matter how big the facilities are. Air and liquid discharges are found to be mostly uncontrolled, and untreated effluents are discharged directly into watercourses.

At the moment, Sudan's government does not take environment into consideration. The only positive achievement on improving waste management was the Atbara cement factory, which became private after 1994. The only condition for privatization was the reduction of the emissions; as the emissions were not reduced the Governor of Nile closed the plant by decree. Within three months, the company had completed the installation of filtration system and the plant was permitted to re-open. Emissions are now reported to be significantly lower and the plant is undergoing a number of other improvements.

2.6 Les effets des déplacements des personnes sur l'environnement

Les déplacements massifs de population s'accompagnent de dommages graves qui affectent toute la région. C'est ce qu'illustre le cas du Soudan, qui nous révèle :

- la disproportion entre les fortes densités de population et les ressources disponibles dans les zones d'accueil des réfugiés ;
- la tendance des organisations internationales et des organisations non gouvernementales à installer les camps de réfugiés dans des zones écologiquement

⁹² United Nations Joint Logistics Centre (2006). Fuels 2006: A Survey of the Humanitarian Fuels Situation in the Context of Humanitarian and Peacekeeping Operations in the Republic of the Sudan.

⁹³ US Energy Information Administration. World Proved Reserves of Oil and Natural Gas, Most Recent Estimates.

fragiles, car elles pensent que leur mission principale est de veiller au bien-être des réfugiés et non pas de protéger à long terme l'environnement.

– et, parmi les réfugiés, un manque de motivation à préserver l'environnement et à respecter les principes d'une exploitation durable des ressources, dû au traumatisme de la guerre et du déplacement et au fait que la terre qu'ils occupent ne leur appartient pas. Les réfugiés peuvent ainsi être vus comme des « déprédateurs exceptionnels de ressources ».

S'agissant des réinstallations planifiées – c'est-à-dire contrôlées par le gouvernement ou, plus couramment dans le contexte africain, par le HCR –, la préoccupation principale est le plus souvent l'accès à l'eau et à l'assistance alimentaire et non pas la qualité de la terre, jugée comme secondaire.

Les camps présentent un ensemble unique de risques écologiques qui sont liés à l'utilisation massive de pesticides et d'insecticides (pour contrôler les vecteurs porteurs de maladies) et aux problèmes relatifs à l'eau potable et au stockage des déchets. À cela, il faut ajouter l'insuffisance fréquente de l'assistance, ce qui explique que les réfugiés soient obligés d'utiliser les ressources locales pour subvenir à leurs besoins.

Il est possible de distinguer les impacts « immédiats » – par exemple sur les ressources nécessaires à la construction d'abris – et les « impacts progressifs » provoqués par les prélèvements liés aux besoins de bois de chauffe, d'eau et de fourrages.

Une surexploitation des pâturages se produit lorsque les réfugiés amènent avec eux leurs troupeaux; cette surexploitation peut avoir des répercussions très graves non seulement sur les moyens d'existence des éleveurs locaux mais aussi sur les risques d'érosion des sols par manque de couverture végétale.

La présence des réfugiés peut entraîner la disparition des espèces végétales ou animales (qui nécessitent parfois une protection particulière) - lesquelles sont prisées comme nourriture et comme valeur médicinale ou rituelle par les habitants locaux.

2.7 Le Darfour, un exemple d'insécurité alimentaire liée à des problèmes environnementaux

Les villages du Darfour ont été attaqués et incendiés, le bétail a été massacré. Le conflit à l'ouest du Soudan a entraîné le déplacement d'un grand nombre de personnes et les Soudanais déplacés ne sont pas en mesure de cultiver leurs terres. « La sécheresse et l'insuffisance des récoltes, avec l'absence de réserves en raison du conflit, font peser des risques graves sur l'état nutritionnel des populations »⁹⁴. On assiste au Darfour à une crise alimentaire grave. En plus, avec l'augmentation des prix des aliments de base et les mauvaises récoltes, les villageois disposent de peu de réserves.

Le Programme alimentaire mondial (PAM) a pour but d'apporter une aide d'urgence aux populations souffrant de la faim, car les Soudanais ont besoin de l'aide internationale pour faire face à la « saison de la faim » avec le programme de distribution alimentaire. Selon le PAM, « près de la moitié de la population au Darfour manque de la nourriture nécessaire pour une vie active et saine ». Mais la saison des pluies entraîne la famine à cause des difficultés d'accès pour les humanitaires dues à l'inondation des routes.

⁹⁴ <http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/pdf/Interventions79.pdf>

Le CICR, en revanche, aide les populations dans les zones rurales en les encourageant à rester dans leur village quand la sécurité le permet et en leur donnant les moyens de devenir autosuffisant. Il poursuit plusieurs objectifs :

- distribution des vivres et des semences pour se nourrir en attendant la récolte
- distribution des outils pour cultiver la terre, pour la saison des plantations
- soutien aux activités de pêche par la distribution d'équipement
- relance par des activités agricoles (distribution de semences et d'outils, réhabilitation et construction de greniers, formation des fermiers)
- surveillance et définition des indicateurs de sécurité alimentaire.

Cette étude de cas permet de comprendre les liens directs de cause à effet qui existent entre dégradation de l'environnement et vulnérabilité des conditions de vie des populations. D'où la nécessité d'agir plus vite pour maîtriser les effets du changement climatique et la dégradation de ressources naturelles engendrés par l'activité humaine. Et ce, dans le but de garantir aux êtres humains, même les plus pauvres, un accès durable à de ressources de qualité, nécessaire à des conditions de vie décentes.

III. Recommendations to improve environmental governance

L'urgence d'un développement durable pour réduire la pauvreté et protéger l'environnement est maintenant prise en considération au niveau global. Cependant, les actions menées demeurent faibles face à l'importance des enjeux. Dans ces conditions et suite aux observations effectuées, les propositions suivantes sont à considérer.

3.1 Propositions d'orientation générale des politiques et négociations environnementales futures :

Les conséquences du changement climatique qui commencent déjà à se faire sentir rendent nécessaire l'augmentation des actions de prévention afin de prévenir les risques liés aux catastrophes naturelles. Cette recommandation permettrait de réduire les coûts humains et économiques résultant de ces désastres. Parallèlement, un fond financier permanent et solidaire (et non pas ad-hoc), basé sur des cotisations gouvernementales, semble nécessaire pour faire face à court terme à ces situations d'urgence.

Ensuite, le principe du « pollueur-payeur » devrait être appliqué dans une perspective de coopération internationale afin d'ancrer son effectivité. Cette recommandation pourrait se matérialiser par l'application d'une taxe liée à la pollution résultant soit des entreprises soit des États. Dans cette dernière optique, le montant de la taxe serait proportionnel non seulement à la quantité de pollution mais aussi à l'importance du PIB. L'argent récolté permettrait de mener des programmes de dépollution et des campagnes de protection de l'environnement.

De plus, une gouvernance environnementale efficace nécessite aussi un meilleur partage de l'information, ce qui pourrait être encadré par l'extension de la Convention d'Aarhus à l'échelle globale.

Par ailleurs, l'environnement étant un bien public, l'atteinte à celui-ci peut être considéré comme un crime contre l'humanité (voir l'article 7 du statut de la Cour pénale internationale). Ainsi, des actes de guerre nuisibles à l'environnement doivent être véritablement considérés et sanctionnés en tant que crimes de guerre par la CPI, comme le prévoit l'article 8.

D'autre part, orienter le développement vers le développement durable pourrait également favoriser l'utilisation des énergies renouvelables. Afin de parvenir à la démocratisation de l'accès à ces ressources pour tous et au plus vite, l'idée d'un partenariat public-privé pourrait permettre de financer les recherches et les investissements nécessaires.

Enfin, considérant l'urgence de la situation et la lenteur des avancées dans la protection de l'environnement, il semble nécessaire de renforcer le pouvoir de contrainte des traités et conventions existantes et futures. Différentes propositions ont déjà été formulées à ce sujet, comme la transformation du PNUE en une organisation mondiale de l'environnement, fondée sur des membres gouvernementaux. Quelle que soit la forme de cette institution de négociation des règles environnementales, l'objectif de cette proposition est de mettre en valeur la nécessité d'un organe de surveillance et de sanction en cas de non-respect des conventions par un pays signataire. Pour accéder à une gouvernance environnementale efficace, basée sur des données scientifiques et dont les engagements seront ancrés dans la réalité, les gouvernements doivent accepter de déléguer une part de leur souveraineté nationale lorsque les enjeux concernent le bien global qu'est l'environnement.

3.2 Advice on policy making

Therefore it is necessary to strengthen environmental diplomacy on all levels. First of all, it is crucial that all action follows the principal of "think global-act local". Environmental decisions taken at the international level need to be transferred to the regional, national and local levels. At the same time, it has to be recognized that policies created through a bottom-up approach can often lead to better and sustainable implementation. Consequently, in addition to decentralizing the policy-making process, that same process has to take in consideration not only political actors, but private and public actors as well. NGOs and, even more important, the business sector must be integrated into environmental policy-making. Many specialized actors trying to address a lot of different environmental issues and problems, but an effective coordination is lacking. The aim in policy-making should therefore be to try to find the existing synergies in order to introduce coherence in environmental governance. Regarding politics, cooperation between states is necessary on the regional level in order to prevent catastrophes like, for example, environmental induced conflicts. However, most importantly, cooperation is needed at the international level, since most of the environmental problems we face are of a global nature.

3.3 The national level: public services

States are responsible to take action, since they still are the legally binding bodies in our world. It is their responsibility to protect the national and global environment in the first place, and on the other hand, the adaptation to already ongoing climate and environmental changes lies in the hand of states. With the help of international institutions, countries must focus on reducing the vulnerability of their citizens. In developing countries in particular, vulnerability to disaster and problems like the lack of water or food resources induce poverty on a large scale. Monitoring these problems on poor populations should be extended so that governments can take more appropriate actions. Infrastructures must then be improved, especially in the water and sanitary sector.

In addition, structural change cannot replace a change in behaviour. So special regard has to be paid to environmental education because all change of governance starts at the individual level. A consequence of a decent environmental education should be

that states put measures in place that force individuals as well as public actors, such as enterprises, to live in an environmentally sound manner. The state should be able to protect the environment through proper legislation. Because the access to our natural resources, be it air, water or food, must be secured, not only for the short term, but for the long term. This can only be achieved through a concerted effort that includes individuals, states and the international community as a whole.

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- ¹³ <http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/pdf/Interventions79.pdf>

IV. List of participants

AUBOU	Audrey
CAMARGO BORGES	Alexandre
CIONGOLI	Bernardino
COULIBALY	Soriba
DIAKITE	Ansoumane Douy
DIOM	Babakar
FERDJOUKH	Karim
GANDIN	Jérôme
GÜLER	Asli Seda
HAGEMANN	Simon
MANGOS	Anaï
OZSEREZLI	Bozkurt
SALL	Ousmane
SEELIGE	Kathrin
SIROK	Nela



45th GENEVA GRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME

2-20 JULY 2007

"The UN: United for Peace, Development and Human Rights"

PLENARY MEETINGS:

COUNCIL CHAMBER, 2 TO 6 JULY
CONFERENCE ROOM VII, 9 TO 20 JULY

WORKING GROUPS:

Environmental issues: Room A 206

Moderators:

Mr. Wondwosen Asnake, Programme Officer, Civil Society, UNEP

Mr. Aniket Ghai, Coordinator Geneva Environment Network, UNEP

Economic and Social Development

Council Chamber 2-6 July
Room VII: 9-20 July

Moderator:

Mr. Michael Herrmann, Economic Affairs Officer, Policy Analysis and Research Cluster Special Programme for Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

Mr. Mike Pfister, Economic Affairs Officer, UNCTAD

Human Rights: Room H-3

Moderators:

Mr. Victor Fernandez, Information Officer, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Mr. Ben Majekodunmi, Human Rights Officer, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Monday 2 July 2007 **Council Chamber**

10:15 a.m. **Information about the Graduate Study Programme:
Council Chamber**

Ms. Marie Heuzé, Director, United Nations Information Service, Geneva (UNIS)

Ms. Elena Ponomareva-Piquier, Chief, Press and External Relations Section, UNIS

Ms. Gertrude Nimako-Boateng, Coordinator, Graduate Study Programme, Press and External Relations Section, UNIS

2.30 p.m. **Guided Tour of the Palais des Nations:
Visitors' Service**

3:45 p.m. **Visit to the UN Library and League of Nations
Museum**

Ms. Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert, Chief, Users Services Section

5.30 p.m. Cocktail: Bar 13-15, Palais des Nations

Tuesday 3 July 2007 **Council Chamber**

9:30 a.m.: **Introduction to moderators and set-up of Working
Groups:**

1. Environmental issues
2. Economic and Social Development
3. Human Rights

11.30 a.m. Photo-opportunity

2:30 p.m.: **Working Groups**

Wednesday 4 July 2006 Council Chamber

10.00 a.m.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Mr. Jose Riera, Special Adviser, UNHCR

11.30 a.m.

Association of United Nations Correspondents (ACANU)

Mr. Bradley Klapper, Correspondent, Associated Press

Mr. Jamil Chade, Correspondent, Estado de Sao Paulo, Brazil

2:15 p.m.:

Visit to International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Screening of film "Panorama" (in English)

Presentation by Mr. Jacques Forster, Vice-President, ICRC

Thursday 5 July 2007 Council Chamber

10:00 a.m.:

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Mr. Jean-Philippe Chauzy, Spokesperson, IOM

11.30 a.m.

Ms. Lucinda Longcroft, Senior Legal Officer, Copyright and Related Rights Sector, WIPO

2:30 p.m.:

Working Groups

Friday 6 July 2007 Council Chamber

10:00 a.m.:

Conference on Disarmament (CD)

Mr. Jerzy Zaleski, Senior Political Affairs Officer, Disarmament Affairs

11.30 a.m.

World Food Programme (WFP)

Mr. Simon Pruess, Spokesman, WFP

2:30 p.m.:

Working Groups

Monday 9 July 2007

Room VII

9:30 a.m.:

UN Recruitment -Office of Human Resources
Mr. Sergei Raskalei, Human Resources Officer

11:00 a.m.:

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)
Mr. Ricardo Espinosa, NGO Liaison Officer,
Office of the Director-General, UNOG

2:30 p.m.:

Working Groups

Tuesday 10 July 2007

Room VII

9.30 a.m.:

International Labour Organization (ILO)
Mr. Stephen Pursey, Senior Adviser,
Office of the Director-General, ILO

11:00 a.m.:

**United Nations Inter-Agency Secretariat of the
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
(ISDR)**

Brigitte Leoni, Media Relations Officer,

2:30 p.m.:

Working Groups

Wednesday 11 July 2007 Room VII

9.30 a.m.:

**United Nations Conference on Trade and
Development (UNCTAD)**
Mr. Shigehisa Kasahara, Economic Affairs Officer,

11.00 a.m.:

**UNAIDS – Joint United Nations Programme on
HIV-AIDS**
Dr. Bob Verbruggen, Programme Management
Adviser, Mainstreaming Department, UNAIDS

2:30 p.m.:

Working Groups

Thursday 12 July 2007 **Room VII**

9:30 a.m.: **Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**
Ms. Elisabeth Byrs, Spokesperson, OCHA

11:00 a.m. **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)**
Mr. James Heenan, Human Rights Officer, OHCHR

2:30 p.m.: Working Groups

Friday 13 July 2007 **Room VII**

9.30 a.m.: **World Trade Organization (WTO)**
Development Division

11: 00 a.m.: **World Health Organization (WHO)**
Dr. Ian Smith, Adviser to the WHO
Director-General

2:30 p.m.: Working Groups

Monday 16 July 2007 **Room VII**

9.30 a.m.: **United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**
Ms. Miranda Eeles, Communication Officer, UNICEF

11.00 a.m.: **International Association of Soldiers for Peace**
Mr. Laurent Attar-Bayrou, President, IASP

2:30 p.m.: Working Groups

Tuesday 17 July 2007 Room VII

11:00 a.m.: **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)**
Mr. Yanos Pasztor, Director, UN Environment and Management Group, UNEP

2:30 p.m.: Working Groups

Wednesday 18 July 2007 Room VII

9:30 a.m.: **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE)**
Mr. Patrice Robineau, Senior Adviser to the Executive-Secretary, UN/ECE

11:00 a.m.: **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**
Ms. Lara Srivastava, Director, New Initiatives Programme

2:30 p.m.: Working Groups

Thursday 19 July 2007 Room VII

11:00 a.m. Plenary: Discussion of Working Groups' proposals
Adoption of the final document
Debate co-ordinated by Moderators of Working Groups

2:30 p.m.: Ad hoc drafting group to edit final document

Friday 20 July 2007

Room VII

9:30 a.m.

Closing ceremony, Room VII, Presentation and adoption of the final document, concluding remarks and distribution of certificates by Mr. Sergei ORDZHONIKIDZE, Director-General of UNOG

Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director-General of UNOG

Ms. Marie Heuzé, Director, United Nations Information Service, Geneva (UNIS)

Ms. Elena Ponomareva-Piquier, Chief, Press and External Relations Section, Press and External Relations Section, UNIS

Ms. Gertrude Nimako-Boateng, Coordinator, Graduate Study Programme, Press and External Relations Section, UNIS

* *** *

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