



PAKISTAN

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Statement

by

**Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan
Ambassador Farukh Amil**

on

**Agenda Item 3 (a) Social Integration
at the 47th Session of the Commission
for Social Development**

**February 5, 2009
New York**

**Statement by Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan Ambassador
Farukh Amil At the 47th session of the Commission for Social Development
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**Chairperson,
Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs,
Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,**

The Pakistan delegation congratulates you warmly on assuming the chairmanship of this important Commission. We offer similar felicitations to all other members of the Commission. We thank the outgoing Bureau, in particular, Ambassador Alexei Tulbure of Moldova for the very able stewardship of the Commission during its 46th Session.

2. Our delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Chairperson,

3. We meet at a difficult and extraordinary time, when the world is in the throes of a development emergency triggered by an unprecedented confluence of multiple crises of finance, food and fuel. Only to be further aggravated by the destruction and economic losses inflicted by ever increasing natural disasters on account of changing climate.

Chairperson,

4. Clearly, these are no ordinary times. The choice of "social integration" as the theme for this Session is, therefore, both appropriate and timely.

5. For history is witness that in any development crisis, let alone a crisis as gigantic as the one we face today, and one which is being described as "worst since the Great Depression", the poorest and the most vulnerable are hit the hardest. This will obviously, among others, put greater strain on the efforts and initiatives already under way in the developing world for greater social inclusion and integration. The challenge of social integration, undoubtedly, will become more complex and daunting.

6. In addition to the adverse impact of the unfolding crises, existing poverty in developing countries further undermines progress in social development. The asymmetric impact of globalization, failure of the Doha round of trade negotiations and increased inequities in the global economic architecture demands

a comprehensive review and fundamental rethink of the way we ought to do business in a globalized world.

Chairperson,

7. Social integration is one of the three priority areas for actions identified in the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995. Together with the priority areas of poverty eradication and the promotion of full employment and decent work for all, social integration constitutes an important objective of socio-economic development. Indeed social integration is one of the prerequisites for social development. The very goal of social integration is to bring and involve all social groups and individuals without discrimination into the political, social, cultural and economic spheres of the society. In other words, the promotion of mutual respect, trust, co-operation, understanding and tolerance across communities are keys to sustainable integration.

8. It is no secret that regardless of expanding boundaries of economic exchange and cultural contacts, benefits of globalization have not been shared equally among all nations. In majority of countries, it led to greater social exclusion. An integrated people centered approach for eradication of poverty, fostering social integration and promotion of employment and decent work for all is imperative.

9. Importantly, social integration must be induced and encouraged while giving sufficient attention to the need for cultural diversity.

Chairperson,

10. Pakistan attaches high priority to its commitments made during World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995 through promoting employment, enhancing its economic growth, development and welfare of people. Over the past few years, Pakistan has undergone a qualitative transformation achieved through broad based structural reforms in all sectors. The government has taken following important steps in this regard:

One: A comprehensive poverty reduction plan in the shape of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) within the broader framework of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been chalked out. The PRSP incorporates a focused human development strategy with a central role for the provincial and local governments.

Two: For social support of the poor a revolutionary Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has been launched with an initial amount of Rs 34 billion. Under the programme, Rs 1,000 per month will be given to each of 3.5 to 4.5

million families, covering about 14 to 15 per cent of the population in the lowest income bracket.

Three: A National Employment Policy (NEP) is being prepared with a particular focus on youth and women employment. The Government has launched a National Internship Program in 2006 with an objective to provide financial relief to young degree holders.

Four: Persons with disabilities have been provided quota in civil superior services. A National Plan of Action (NPA) has been finalized that includes early intervention, assessment and medical treatment, education and vocational training, employment and rehabilitation and strengthening of institutional mechanisms.

Five: Social insurance system governed by the Employees Old Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) and Provincial Social Security Institutions for ageing, invalids and widows has been in place since long.

Six: As a labour exporting country, the government is managing phenomena of international migration through making efforts to export skilled workers, protecting the rights of migrant workers, and facilitating expatriates in sending remittances through legal channels.

Seven: The Ministry of Women Development has launched "Gender Reform Action Plan (GRAP)" for empowerment of women and gender equality. GRAP is mandated to undertake a coherent gender reform agenda through phased implementation processes including political participation, institutional restructuring, women employment in the public sector, and gender responsive policy and budgeting.

Eight: To protect minorities the Government has set up a National Commission under the chairmanship of Minister for Minorities. In order to mainstream them at grass root level, the Provincial Governments have established District Interfaith Harmony Committees with representation from prominent religious leaders of minority and majority communities.

Chairperson,

11. Let me finish by saying that the Commission remains the essential place for all countries to come together to discuss the issues of social development. It is important to identify examples of good practices and policy approaches so that

these may be shared among all countries. This sharing of experiences is one positive aspect of intergovernmental cooperation.

12. Social integration is all about building better understanding and tolerance within and between communities, whether national, regional or international. This should be taken as a collective responsibility of us all and must not left with individual government. Therefore an improved international cooperation, including through financial assistance, poverty reduction, support and strengthening of the Commission for Social Development must be followed. It is important to identify through this forum, examples of good practices and policy approaches so that these may be shared among all countries.

I thank you Chairperson.