



United Nations



2 December 2008

**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WELCOME CONFERENCE OUTCOME,**

**NOTE ‘MISSED OPPORTUNITY IN SOME RESPECTS’**

Welcoming a proposed United Nations meeting on the financial crisis and its impact on development, non-governmental organizations attending the development financing conference in Doha, Qatar, said this afternoon that while the just-concluded four-day event had made advances in several areas, it was also, in many respects, “a missed opportunity”.

Evaluating the outcome document adopted by acclamation at the closing session of the Conference, the non-governmental organizations released a statement that was read out at a press conference featuring John Foster of Social Watch International Network, Gemma Adaba of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, Sylvia Borren of the Global Call for Action against Poverty and Ziad Abdel Samad of the Arab NGO Network for Development.

They said 250 civil society organizations, representing more than 100 million citizens around the world, had come to a Civil Society Forum in advance of the Doha Conference. “The Review Conference reaffirmed Monterrey goals, took hesitant note of the current crises and their impacts, failed to move adequately forward in a number of urgent subjects, but moved beyond Monterrey in several important areas,” the statement said.

The outcome document went far beyond the 2002 Monterrey Consensus in making the link between the promotion of gender equality, women’s economic empowerment and equitable and effective development. However, that would only be meaningful if the systemic issues underpinning poverty were decisively addressed. Cuts in public services, for example, would increase the burden of unpaid and invisible work carried out by women.

With regard to decent work, the non-governmental organizations welcomed the clear recognition of its centrality to development strategies and poverty eradication. However, decent jobs must be created for women and men. On tax issues, civil society had asked for the upgrading of the United Nations Committee on Tax to an intergovernmental body, but that had not been agreed, though consideration of the matter continued and there had been some advance in the focus on tax leakages. Non-governmental organizations were prepared to continue contributing to strengthened action on the issue through the United Nations.

Members of the group also welcomed progress on innovative financing mechanisms and commented that there was no slipping backwards in Monterrey commitments on the Millennium Development Goals, the right to development and the need for just and democratic societies. There was evidence that some of the advice conveyed to the Conference by the Civil Society Forum had been incorporated into the outcome document, although not as much as had been hoped.

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They also reminded delegates and officials that those most seriously affected in every country were expecting material action that reversed the slide into poverty, increased resources for development and mobilization against climate change, stimulated employment and supported life and access to health for “those marginalized and threatened by disease and disaster”.

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