



United Nations



29 November 2008

DAILY PRESS BRIEFING BY CONFERENCE SPOKESPERSON

A draft outcome document for the financing for development conference that opened today in Doha, Qatar, had been submitted for discussion by Member States, Enrique Yeves, Spokesperson for the President of the United Nations General Assembly said at a press briefing this afternoon.

Introduced by Maher Nasser, Spokesperson for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, Mr. Yeves said a group of countries had been negotiating the document in New York since the beginning of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. They had hoped to complete it there, but that had not been possible. A group had then met from 10 a.m. yesterday to 1 a.m. this morning and come up with a 66-paragraph document on the six themes of the Conference, which had been presented to the Main Committee at 10 a.m. today. Negotiations on the text would now continue.

Mr. Nasser, who was joined by Olav Kjørven, Director of the Bureau of Development at the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and Mohamed Abdullah Al-Rumaihi, Assistant Minister at Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reported that this morning's opening of the Conference had featured Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who had presided over a moment of silence for the victims of the attacks in Mumbai, India, as well as the election of the Emir of Qatar as President of the Conference. The first statements by State delegations had started in the plenary this morning and would run until the end of the four-day event.

He said the first round table discussion, on "Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development", was taking place from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tomorrow morning's round table at 10 a.m. was scheduled to focus on "Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows".

Mr. Al-Rumaihi then spoke of the challenges of negotiating and organizing the Conference, which runs through 2 December. The sheer numbers of Heads of State and Government, ministers and vice-ministers, organizations and other participants rendered the logistics very complex. It was part of the objective, however, to bring together as many kinds of participants from as many sectors as possible. During the Conference, it was hoped that politics would be set aside, that a meaningful outcome document would emerge from the negotiations and that speakers would propose strategies to develop true financing for development.

Elaborating on a theme introduced by Secretary-General Ban on the eve of the Conference, Mr. Kjørven mentioned how solutions to the global financial crisis could open up doors to a future of sustainable development and equitable growth and how investing in "green" technology could produce jobs, spur growth and end the global recession.

(more)

He said Governments today were faced with a complex mix of challenges. Revisiting the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, it was evident how the world had changed in the interim, and how many severe crises now dominated international attention. However, it was important to remember that a time of crisis could be a time of opportunity and that the best solutions might be found in the nexus where all the concurrent crises came together. New technologies to mitigate climate change, for example, could provide jobs and economic stimuli.

Among the challenge at the climate change meeting in Poznan, Poland, in two weeks' time would be turning financial flows and stimulus packages toward sustainable development, he said. For multilateralism to become an instrument for progress, it was important to bring together not only all stakeholders, but also all the current challenges because they were all interlinked.

* * * * *