

**First Forum on the Millennium Development Goals
in the Islamic Republic of Iran
Tehran, 15 December 2003**

The United Nations System in Iran, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held the First Forum on the Millennium Development Goals in the Islamic Republic of Iran on Monday, 15 December at the Iranian Centre for International Conferences in Tehran (IPIS). The Forum was held as a key event in the launch of the national campaign on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It aimed to raise awareness of the MDGs; highlight Iran's progress towards the attainment of these Goals; and identify strategies to put poverty and sustainable human development at the centre of the national development agenda. A list of the Millennium Development Goals, Targets and Indicators is attached as Annex I.

Panelists and participants at the Forum included representatives from the Government, NGOs and civil society, bonyads and charities, universities and research institutes, the media, and main donor countries.

The forum was organized in three sessions as follows:

- Session I: An overview of the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs and the United Nations global strategy to support member countries in achieving the Goals.
- Session II: A roundtable discussion by senior Government officials of Iran's progress towards the Goals in relation to other countries in the region.
- Session III: The role of civil society organizations, bonyads and the private sector in the MDGs campaign.

The programme is attached as Annex II.

Session I: The Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals at a Glance

Chair: Ambassador Bozorgmehr Ziaran, Director-General, Economic Affairs and International Specialised Agencies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Speakers: - Mr. Frederick Lyons, UN Resident Coordinator
- Mr. Turhan Saleh, Director, Millennium Development Goals Unit, UNDP New York
- Mr. Antonino De Leo, UN Coordination Officer

In September 2000, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders from 189 member countries agreed on the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration has been based on the clear values of freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance and respect for nature and recognizes that development rests on four pillars, namely democracy, rule of law, human rights and peace.

This unprecedented agreement spawned the Millennium Development Goals: eight time-bound and measurable objectives for combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, discrimination against women, and attaining a more peaceful world by 2015.

While ambitious, the Millennium Development Goals are achievable, but only through concerted efforts from groups and individuals at all levels. The responsibility does not rest on the shoulders of governments alone. Civil society organizations, foundations, university and research institutes and the private sector are part and parcel of national campaigns to put poverty and sustainable human development at the centre of national agendas; to help governments set priorities and use resources more effectively. Rich nations must also take ownership of the Millennium Development Goals and support policies and initiatives that strive to meet them.

Like other middle-income countries, Iran's rising to the challenge of MDGs would require political commitment, informed and mobilized citizens, broad consensus on achievements and challenges and tailored MDGs to address country-specific priorities. The MDGs campaign should be seen as an opportunity to strengthen development management in the country as it calls for rethinking of priorities and policies, partnerships and resource mobilization strategies, institutional capacity, international and regional cooperation and outcome monitoring and measurement.

Session II: The Millennium Development Goals - achievements, opportunities and challenges in Iran

Chair: Dr. Hossein Raghfar – Chair, Director of the Institute for Management and Planning Studies, Management and Planning Organization (MPO)

Panelist Speakers:

- Dr. Mohammad-Reza Vaez-Mahdavi, Deputy for Social Affairs, MPO
- Ms. Margarita Guerrero, United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific, Tokyo
- Mr. Majid Yarmand, Director-General, Social Security Bureau, MPO
- Dr. Robabeh Sheikholislam, Director, Community Nutrition, Ministry of Health and Medical Education
- Mr. Abbas Hajiaghaloo, Director-General, Primary Education, Ministry of Education
- Ms. Zahra Mollavardi, Center for Women Participation
- Dr. Bahram Delavar, Director-General, Population and Family Health, Ministry of Health and Medical Education
- Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Gouya, Director-General, Centre for Disease Management (HIV/AIDS), Ministry of Health and Medical Education
- Ms. Zahra Javaherian, Director-General, Planning Bureau, Department of Environment
- Mr. Naser Nikooseresht, Deputy Minister for Housing and Planning, Ministry of Housing
- Dr. Sadegh Bakhtiari, Deputy Minister for Planning and Employment Policies, Ministry of Labour
- Mr. Ahmad Mirzaei, Deputy, Statistical Centre of Iran

Although a number of countries in Asia and the Pacific have made considerable progress towards attaining the MDGs, it is clear from present trends that many will fall short of their targets, particularly in the health, education and environment sectors. Although partly linked to external factors, the achievement of the MDGs remains largely dependent on the efforts of individual countries. In Iran, the first and foremost challenge is to generate and appropriately analyze the relevant data. Such information should be made available for regional and global comparisons.

The Management and Planning Organisation, has almost completed data collection for the first MDGs Progress Report for Iran. However, there are still information gaps on a number of the indicators. While ample statistics of good quality are available for most areas, there are several sectors where the data is either out-of-date or difficult to interpret. For instance, out of 152 MDGs and ICPD indicators, only 72 items are being reported on regularly. According to the data gathered thus far, considerable achievements have been made in areas such as education (MDG 2) and health (MDGs 4,5,6). However, much work remains in areas such as the environment (MDG 7) and youth employment.

The education sector in Iran caters to 17 million students and employs approximately 1.2 million staff. The country is well ahead of MDG targets: no children in remotest parts of Iran are deprived of education due to lack of schools or teachers; and emphasis is placed on the enrolment of girls and quality enhancement. The major challenge before this sector therefore, is to become more streamlined, more efficient and more responsive to global changes. To meet this challenge, the Ministry of Education is planning a “change-and-adapt” policy in line with the MDGs.

The Centre for Women’s Participation, under the Office of the President, is the main Government body working on gender equity. Its efforts are concentrated on awareness raising and programmes to improve women’s health and education. While previous development schemes paid little attention to gender empowerment, the 4th Five-year Development Plan (FFYDP) has a much greater focus on women’s issues including the promotion of women’s NGOs. Iran is also considering the accession to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Currently, only 0.25% of every government organization budget is dedicated to gender empowerment.

Iran is well ahead of MDG targets on child mortality and other health-related MDGs, and the mortality pattern in the country is shifting towards the pattern in developed countries. In recent years, both maternal and perinatal mortality as well as child mortality have fallen sharply due to improvements in medical care. In addition, children’s health has improved with the extension of inoculation programmes to a very high proportion of the population. Nevertheless, there are still sections of the population, particularly those in rural/ less developed areas that do not have access to health care and more who are not adequately covered by the health insurance system.

Protection of the environment, sustainability and land-use planning are major areas of focus in the FFYDP. The Plan also calls for greater capacity of the Department of Environment. It is estimated that about 12 percent of the Iranian population (approx. 4.5 million) live in “informal” settlements. Cabinet recently adopted an action plan to

address the situation and to provide lower income groups with an enabling environment and better access to urban services. In addition, a World Bank project has selected 5 pilot cities where new housing strategies for informal settlements will be tested. If successful, the results of the exercise will be extended to other cities and urban enclaves.

The government Office for Deprived Areas is also implementing special programmes to improve access to potable water, healthcare, roads and housing in the least developed areas of Iran. So far, 38,000 development projects have been initiated in underdeveloped villages benefiting approximately 10 million people.

Session III: The Role of Civil Society Organizations, Bonyads and the Private Sector in the IR of Iran

Chair: Dr. Nasrin Mosaffa, Head, Centre for Human Rights Studies, University of Tehran

Panelist Speakers:

- Mr. Mohsen Khalili, Chairman, Iranian Industrial Confederation
- Dr. Baquer Namazi, Director, Hamyaran Iran NGO Resource Center
- Mr. Hossein Anvary, Deputy for International Affairs, Emam Khomeini Foundation
- Ms. Victoria Jamali, Co-founder, Women's Society against Environmental Pollution
- Dr. Siamak Moattari, Director, Green Front of Iran
- Mr. Keyhan Hasheminia, Deputy for Culture and Sport, Janbazan, Moustazafan Foundation
- Mr. Asghar Arjmandnia, Director-General, Institute for Research and Sustainable Development
- Dr. Hashem Shemshadi, Director-General, State Welfare Organization
- Mr. Shahryar Khashe, Chairman of the Central Council, Iranian Industrial Confederation
- Ms. Zahra Maranlou, Training Center for Iranian CSOs

Public sector enterprises have an important role to play in financing the MDGs. About 20 percent of Iran's economy is controlled by the private sector. So far, this sector has been given few chances to take part in country's planning processes. Enabling the private sector to realize its potential will require greater dialogue between the public and private sectors and a climate that supports investment and private-sector development.

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have an equally crucial role in promoting the MDGs and in building up ownership of the goals among the grassroots population. To employ these capabilities, more emphasis must be put on creating an enabling environment for NGOs. CSOs and NGOs should be recognized as full-fledged partners in the MDGs campaign. To achieve this, it is suggested that:

- CSOs and NGOs have a monitoring role with regard to the progress made towards achieving MDGs at the national, provincial and local levels;

- the Government, UN and CSOs establish a tripartite “development committee” with emphasis on poverty reduction and job creation;
- annual and multi-year MDGs work plans are prepared with built-in monitoring mechanisms;
- UN programmes be shifted from “Government execution” modalities to NGO execution;
- a “Youth Consultative Committee” and a trust fund be established to support small-scale job creation programmes;
- the responsible Government authorities establish more active links with international NGOs and that they utilize the capacity of Iranian nationals living abroad;

Finally, the needs of women, children, youth, the handicapped and other vulnerable groups must remain paramount. These groups should become part of decision-making systems at all levels.

Conclusion

Speaker: Mr. Frederick Lyons, UN Resident Coordinator

The UN System is committed to working with all stakeholders, including the Government, NGOs, civil society, academia, private sector and the general public to achieve the MDGs. UN agencies in Iran are supporting the production of the first national MDGs Progress Report. The report will highlight the areas where Iran is on track to meet the Goals and where urgent efforts are needed. Through events such as the Forum, the UN and its development partners are also working to ensure ownership of the MDGs by Iranians. It is fortunate that the current work on MDGs complements with the priorities identified in the FFYDP. Full advantage needs to be taken of this coincidence to build the MDGs into the national plan as appropriate.

Annex I. Millennium Development Goals

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, TARGETS AND INDICATORS

Goals and Targets	Indicators
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	
Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proportion of population below \$1 per day (PPP-values) 2. Poverty gap ratio [incidence x depth of poverty] 3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Prevalence of underweight children (under-five years of age) 5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	
Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Net enrolment ratio in primary education 7. Proportion of pupils starting grade 1 who reach grade 5 8. Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	
Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and to all levels of education no later than 2015	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education 10. Ratio of literate females to males of 15-24 year olds 11. Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector 12. Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	
Target 5: Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Under-five mortality rate 14. Infant mortality rate 15. Proportion of 1 year old children immunised against measles
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	
Target 6: Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. Maternal mortality ratio 17. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	
Target 7: Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the spread of HIV/AIDS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 18. HIV prevalence among 15-24 year old pregnant women 19. Contraceptive prevalence rate 20. Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS
Target 8: Have halted by 2015, and begun to reverse, the incidence of malaria and other major diseases	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Prevalence and death rates associated with malaria 22. Proportion of population in malaria risk areas using effective malaria prevention and treatment measures 23. Prevalence and death rates associated with tuberculosis 24. Proportion of TB cases detected and cured under DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short Course)

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	
<p>Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources</p>	<p>25. Proportion of land area covered by forest 26. Land area protected to maintain biological diversity 27. GDP per unit of energy use (as proxy for energy efficiency) 28. Carbon dioxide emissions (per capita) <i>wo figures of global atmospheric pollution: ozone depletion and the accumulation of global warming gases]</i></p>
<p>Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water</p>	<p>29. Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source</p>
<p>Target 11: By 2020, to have achieved a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers</p>	<p>30. Proportion of people with access to improved sanitation 31. Proportion of people with access to secure tenure <i>rural disaggregation of several of the above indicators may be relevant for monitoring improvement in the lives of slum dwellers]</i></p>
Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development*	
<p>Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system <i>Includes a commitment to good governance, development, and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally</i></p>	<p><i>Some of the indicators listed below will be monitored separately for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Africa, landlocked countries and small island developing states.</i> <u>Official Development Assistance</u> 32. Net ODA as percentage of DAC donors' GNI [targets of 0.7percent in total and 0.15percent for LDCs] 33. Proportion of ODA to basic social services (basic education, primary health care, nutrition, safe water and sanitation) 34. Proportion of ODA that is untied 35. Proportion of ODA for environment in small island developing states 36. Proportion of ODA for transport sector in land-locked countries</p>
<p>Target 13: Address the Special Needs of the Least Developed Countries <i>Includes: tariff and quota free access for LDC exports; enhanced programme of debt relief for HIPC and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction</i></p>	<p><u>Market Access</u> 37. Proportion of exports (by value and excluding arms) admitted free of duties and quotas 38. Average tariffs and quotas on agricultural products and textiles and clothing 39. Domestic and export agricultural subsidies in OECD countries 40. Proportion of ODA provided to help build trade capacity</p>
<p>Target 14: Address the Special Needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states <i>(through Barbados Programme and 22nd General Assembly provisions)</i></p>	<p><u>Debt Sustainability</u> 41. Proportion of official bilateral HIPC debt cancelled 42. Debt service as a percentage of exports of goods and services 43. Proportion of ODA provided as debt relief 44. Number of countries reaching HIPC decision and completion points</p>
<p>Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures in order to make debt sustainable in the long term</p>	

<p>Target 16: In co-operation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth</p>	<p>45. Unemployment rate of 15-24 year olds</p>
<p>Target 17: In co-operation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries</p>	<p>46. Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis</p>
<p>Target 18: In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications</p>	<p>47. Telephone lines per 1000 people 48. Personal computers per 1000 people <u>Other Indicators TBD</u></p>

Annex II : Programme of the First Forum on the Millennium Development Goals in the Islamic Republic of Iran (15 December 2003)

Session I	The Millennium Development Goals at glance (Chair: Ambassador Bozorgmehr Ziaran, Director General Economic Affairs and International Specialized Agencies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)
08:00 – 08:30	Registration: tea and coffee will be served
08:30 – 08:40	Welcoming remarks by Mr. Frederick Lyons, UN Resident Coordinator, Islamic Republic of Iran
08:40 – 08:50	Opening statement by Ambassador Bozorgmehr Ziaran, Director General Economic Affairs and International Specialized Agencies, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
08:50 – 08:55	Overview and Objectives of the Forum (Mr. Antonino De Leo, UN Coordination Analyst, Islamic Republic of Iran)
08:55 – 09:15	The Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals, Targets and Indicators (Mr. Turhan Saleh, Director of the Millennium Development Goals Unit, UNDP New York)
Session II	The Millennium Development Goals: achievements, opportunities and challenges in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Chair: Dr. Hossein Raghfar, Director of the Institute for Management and Planning Studies, Management and Planning Organization)
09:15 – 09:35	The Millennium Development Goals in the Islamic Republic of Iran: current situation and trends in the last ten years (Dr. Vaez-Mahdavi, Deputy for Social Affairs, Management and Planning Organization)
09:35 – 09:55	A Regional Perspective on the Millennium Development Goals (Ms. Margarita Guerrero, Lecturer, United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and Pacific, Tokyo)
09:55 – 10:25	Tea break
10:25 – 12:25	A review of the Millennium Development Goals and their links to the Fourth-Five Year Development Plan: planned activities to boost progress towards the Goals (presentations by a panel of senior Government officials moderated by the chair)
12:25 – 13:25	Question and answer session
13:30 – 14:30	Lunch break
Session III	The Millennium Development Goals: the role of Civil Society Organizations, Bonyads and the Private Sector in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Chair: Dr. Nasrin Mosaffa, Head of the Centre for Human Rights Studies of the

University of Tehran and Secretary-General of the Iranian Association of UN Studies)

- 14:30 – 16:10 Promoting the Millennium Development Goals: The role of Bonyads, Civil Society Organizations and the Private Sector (a panel of selected representatives moderated by the chair)
- 16:10 – 17:30 Question and answer session; Wrap up (Mr. Frederick Lyons)