

United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

25 September 2015

Interactive Dialogue 1: Ending Poverty and Hunger

Statement by H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg
Prime Minister of Norway

Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our goal number one is to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. This is ambitious, but it is possible.

The MDGs proved successful. They helped lift one billion people out of extreme poverty. Countries like China and Brazil led the way. Through trade and market-based economic growth, food security and social protection programmes. Africa also showed great progress. Including in the areas of education and maternal and child health.

We now need to scale up our efforts to reach the remaining billion:

- The 60 million children who are still not in primary school.
- The 6 million children who still die each year before the age of five.
- The 60 million refugees and displaced people.

(Check against delivery)

We should have no illusions that this will be easy. The remaining billion living in extreme poverty are often found in more affluent countries. We cannot solve this problem without achieving a more equal distribution of wealth. National governments must take ownership. Norway remains committed to helping. We invest 1 per cent of our Gross National Income in Official Development Assistance. We encourage other countries to join us in meeting the UN target.

I have recently travelled in Africa and Asia in my capacity as co-chair of the UN Secretary General's MDG Advocacy Group. When I meet children and youth, they all tell me the same thing:

- They want education.
- They want to become teachers, nurses, doctors and engineers.
- They want to contribute to their communities and build their nations.

Gender equality leads to social progress and economic growth, and it is simply the right thing to do. If a girl attends school, this brings multiple benefits, not least in terms of health. This is why Norway will double its aid to education. For vulnerable children and refugees. For girls, who are still too often unable to complete secondary school.

Investing in partnerships for improving maternal and child health will remain a top priority for Norway. Gavi and the Global Fund have been great successes. The Global Financing Facility shows great promise. Let us build on these initiatives to reach every woman and every child.

Undernutrition is a leading cause of under-five mortality. 200 million children suffer from stunting. The human cost is huge. If children are without nutrition, their bodies and brains can suffer long-term damage.

Humanitarian aid for children in need of nutrition or education is a crucial investment in long-term human development. The Syrian crisis is an urgent case. We must step up our aid efforts. Norway has doubled its level of assistance to alleviate the Syrian crisis. We urge others to do the same.

Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger is a matter of good governance, sustainable development and climate change mitigation. If we are to succeed, we must engage in partnerships and multilateral cooperation. If we join our efforts, we have a historic possibility to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030.

Thank you.