

**Statement by Ms. Tehmina Janjua, Acting Permanent Representative of Pakistan on behalf of the OIC during the Fourth Session of the Social Forum, 1 September 2008**

Mr. Chairperson,

I have the honour to make this statement on behalf of Member States of the OIC.

We welcome the decision of the Human Rights Council to continue with the useful mechanism of Social Forum. It provides a unique space to exchange views among various stake-holders including grass root organizations and civil society for coordinated efforts to infuse social cohesion, equality and justice in the human rights discourse. It also addresses the social dimension of the ongoing globalization process.

We also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Mousa Burayzat for being elected as Chairperson-Rapporteur of this Forum. His professional competence and dedication to the cause of human rights are well known. We are confident that he would steer the process to a consensual outcome. Let me assure you, Mr. Chairperson that you will have the fullest cooperation of the OIC in this undertaking.

Themes chosen for this Session are of fundamental importance not only to the developing states alone as the social aspect of globalization is equally important for the developed world.

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has correctly defined Extreme Poverty as "a human condition characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights".

Development, peace and security and human rights are three important and mutually reinforcing pillars of the United Nations system, which are compatible with the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals. Fulfilment of these goals is our shared aim.

The pro-development impact of globalization needs to be supported by political decisions and actions. National efforts should be complemented by supportive global action, measures and policies aimed at poverty reduction and expansion of development opportunities for developing countries. The possible efficiency gains of globalization have to be accompanied by social justice at all levels and a reduction of inequality while maintaining national sovereignty.

During the 7th session of the HRC, the OIC had welcomed the Draft Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. We had noted that the draft guiding principles provided a workable framework, which could be further developed to help in shaping measures and activities to eradicate extreme poverty across the world. Formulating guidelines, however, is not enough. We need to find solutions to generate adequate resources to bring relief to those in need. The subject of Extreme Poverty, which is both the cause and result of human rights violations, should be addressed in a holistic manner. The Forum should come out with concrete recommendations for the Council. In this regard, we welcome the OHCHR's intention to organize an Expert Seminar in March 2009.

Ms. Louis Arbour, former High Commissioner for Human Rights, had rightly pointed that “combating poverty, deprivation and exclusion is not a matter of charity. By tackling poverty as a matter of human rights obligation, the world will have a better chance of abolishing this scourge in our lifetime”. The complex and inter-related factors of discrimination, marginalization, stigmatization, food insecurity, illiteracy and disease have further compounded incidence of poverty. We need a multifaceted approach and a multipronged strategy to address the economic, social, cultural and political dimensions of this problem. The OIC believes that poverty reduction remains an achievable goal.

In order to tackle the multiple problems of extreme poverty, we need to address its root causes both at the national and international levels. The imbalance in the macro-economic trading environment, environmental degradation, tied aid and gradual decline in ODA over years all form part of the root causes of extreme poverty. International human rights norms must be integrated into national poverty reduction plans and reflected in the international trade norms and regulations of IFIs in order to create a just and equitable international economic order. The commitment by all countries in the Millennium Declaration to “an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading and financial system” remains to be translated into action.

Efforts by developing countries to achieve the International Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs can only succeed through strengthened and more coherent action towards better global governance along three main axes; a) meaningful participation of developing countries in economic and financial institutions, particularly in decision making structures, and processes; b) greater systemic coherence; and c) enhanced global solidarity.

While calling for good governance and eradication of corruption at national levels, we need to pay equal attention to the worsening effects of foreign occupation, unilateral economic and financial sanctions and coercive measures that directly affect independent and sovereign states’ social, economic and political development as well as create additional obstacles to the full enjoyment of all human rights by peoples and individuals under their jurisdiction. Economic and financial sanctions are also one of the major obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Identifying the symptoms without addressing the causes would not help. The concept of aid should change from bringing temporary relief to supporting economic self reliance. International assistance is an important source of development financing for many of the world’s poorest countries in building capacity, improving infrastructure, ensuring basic needs and services and expanding the available resources. We need to move beyond conceptual clarity to practical actions to bring durable remedies to the plight of the most vulnerable.

Thank you.