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## ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT SAYS AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT UNDERLINES CATALYTIC

### ROLE AND ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF UN IN DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Following is the text of the statement by the President of the General Assembly, Razali Ismail (Malaysia), at the Assembly plenary meeting this morning after the adoption of the Agenda for Development:

I wish to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Lesotho, Ambassador Percy Mangoela, and the Permanent Representative of New Zealand, Ambassador Michael Powles, as Vice-Chairmen of the open-ended working group on an agenda for development for successfully steering the group to a productive outcome. Both of you have the distinction of leading the first of the open-ended working groups of the General Assembly to a successful conclusion. Though both of you were new to the assignment when you assumed the post late last year, you persevered and continued to engage delegations in dialogue. Your efforts are manifested in the document before us today.

I also wish to use this occasion to record our deep appreciation to the former Chairmen of the Working Groups, namely the Presidents of the forty-ninth, fiftieth, fifty-first Assembly sessions and, particularly, the former Vice-Chairs, namely the Permanent Representatives of Sweden and Benin. As all of you distinguished delegates are aware, the working group on an agenda for development was established on 19 December 1994 by resolution 49/126. Several delegates who helped to conceive and elaborate further the mandate of the working group are no longer here at the United Nations. Like us they would have been happy with the outcome.

Credit and recognition should also be extended to the Secretariat under the Secretary-General and his officials who together with the bureau and delegations have toiled over the years to produce the document before us today.

I would also like to convey my special thanks on this occasion to all delegates of the open-ended working group on an agenda for development for their arduous and persistent efforts in concluding our work. Negotiations have been tough but eventually over time consensus has been forged through understanding and a spirit of give and take.

The Agenda for Development is timely as it underlines the United Nations continued catalytic role and active involvement in development matters. It

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serves as a welcome fillip to the special session on Agenda 21 beginning next Monday. Already the spirit of cooperation which brought about this document has influenced ongoing preparatory efforts for the special session.

Development is the most important task facing humanity today which continues to be confronted by poverty and other forms of socio-economic problems. While some parts of the world have enjoyed economic growth and sustainable development, many have not. In the last few years, the United Nations has started a process of re-examination and redefinition of development, taking into account the progress achieved in the last half-century. In this context, the Agenda for Development is a tangible attempt to address issues and problems associated with development from a common and collective perspective from the United Nations. The United Nations has a unique opportunity to act now to operationalize the Agenda for Development. It is within the power of Member States and the rest of the global community to help ensure the success of the Agenda for Development.

Development, while requiring international cooperation, is the responsibility of Member States, it can only succeed if it responds to the needs of the people, and if it articulates these needs into a coherent policy framework. The complementarities between the national and international context and connections cannot be ignored nor looked in isolation.

Before concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to express the hope of many that with the successful conclusion of the working group on an agenda for development, it could encourage other working groups to conclude their work successfully and soon. Success in the working groups clearly enhances the image and relevance of the United Nations in the eyes of the peoples of the world for which the United Nations was established.

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