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**Statement by Mr. Ngumbullu and Mr. Ukpong on Global Monitoring Report 2005—  
MDGs: From Consensus to Momentum  
(Preliminary)  
Executive Board Meeting 05/32  
April 1, 2005**

The Global Monitoring Report shows that less than satisfactory progress has been made towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to which developing countries and development partners made a commitment in the year 2000. The inadequacy of progress is buttressed by the grim reality of continuous high incidence of preventable diseases, poverty, illiteracy and despair in many low-income countries, especially in Africa; a continent considered most unlikely to achieve the MDGs. It is obvious from the staff report that without early meeting of the MDGs as agreed at Monterrey and by not fulfilling the commitments made, most countries in Africa will be seriously jeopardized.

A five-point strategic agenda, proposed in the report for accelerating progress toward the MDGs, is not only timely but requires broad international support and concerted action. Such a step would help avert the disastrous prospect of more than one billion people around the globe continuing to live in abject poverty, with the incidence of poverty projected to increase significantly in Africa by 2015.

We support the call on donors to make use of the first strategy for anchoring supportive actions to achieve the MDGs on country-led development programs of poverty reduction, with linkage to medium-term fiscal frameworks. The other planks of the agenda, i.e. improvement of environment for private sector led growth, scaling up human development services, dismantling trade barriers, and increasing the level of official development assistance also deserve broad-based support. Such support could range from technical assistance in articulating MDG-related development policies to provision of financial resources in the form of grants for execution of education and health projects to hasten progress towards the MDGs.

The staff paper while elaborating on the service delivery aspect of the agenda, suggests the establishment of a stable funding framework to fast track initiatives toward the MDGs. Although any potentially effective initiative to enhance full attainment of the MDGs is welcome, care needs to be exercised not to dissipate efforts in making several new and overlapping funding arrangements while some previous pledges have not been fulfilled.

We would like to emphasize here that Africa has been a committed reformer; and growth rates in many African countries have been impressive in recent times, yet the continent is unlikely to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Donors have largely been slow or reluctant in meeting their commitments. What is needed at this point is meaningful support to the genuine efforts of these countries to achieve the MDGs. In this regard, the various funding initiatives on the table should be concretized into an action plan with both parties meeting their commitments on time.

We appreciate the call on international financial institutions (IFIs) to play a more active role, especially in coordinating donor assistance for the MDGs. Such a catalytic role by IFIs would send a positive signal to the donor community and galvanize the type of support necessary for developing countries to enhance prospects for achieving the MDGs by 2015.