



**Statement**

**by**

**Ms. Abir Ali  
Permanent Mission of Lebanon  
to the United Nations**

**at the  
General Debate**

**of the  
Second Committee**

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*Check Against Delivery*

***Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations  
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY. 10017***

Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election to steer the work of the Second Committee during the 67<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. You can count on my delegation's full support and constructive engagement in the deliberations ahead.

Mr. Chairman,

The international community is at a crossroad; the global financial crisis is still resonating in different countries of the world. This financial crisis, compounded by the strain of food shortage, the volatility in energy prices, and the adverse impact of climate change, does not only hinder efforts to achieve sustainable development but also accentuates the pressure on vulnerable populations, such as women and youth, particularly in developing countries.

All this demonstrates on one hand, the urgent need to substantially reform the Bretton Woods institutions, and more specifically their governance structure, so that the voice of developing countries in the process of decision-making and norm setting can be better heard. Moreover, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank quotas should be modified in order to result in a more equitable voting power distribution between developed and developing countries.

On the other hand, it becomes necessary to change the current production and consumption patterns, and to provide developing countries with the appropriate means to face new challenges affecting the livelihood of millions of people around the world.

Mr. Chairman,

Today more than ever, the developed countries need to fulfill the promised ODA financial resources, and achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of their Gross National Income as ODA to developing countries. If these commitments are not met, the international community will fail to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 presented an opportunity for the international community to reiterate its collective engagement to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication. The outcome document the "Future we want" set a road map.

Lebanon has made significant progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals and in this spirit welcomes the Sustainable Development Goals. Lebanon supports the efforts for a green economy as a tool for reaching sustainable development and poverty eradication. However, a green economy should not be considered apart from the needs of national economies. Each state needs to assess and consider related opportunities, challenges, costs and risks as well as the means of implementation needed.

Mr. Chairman,

Sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable use of energy are crucial to achieving lasting social and economic development. In this regard, Lebanon voluntarily pledged at the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Summit to increase our renewable energy shares to 12% by 2020.

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon is one of the numerous beneficiaries of the efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme. This program should be reformed and strengthened so it can fully implement its mandate to establish universal membership on its Governing Council. Enlarging UNEP's financial base is necessary to deepen policy coordination and enhance means of implementation.

It is also important to mention that the contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) are important. The work already undertaken should be advanced in order to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance coordination and cooperation among MEAs.

Mr. Chairman,

Regional frameworks can be an essential element toward the achievement of successful policies. Therefore, Lebanon fully emphasizes the significance of the regional dimension of sustainable development.

The United Nations regional commissions and their subregional offices have a major role to play in the promotion of a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Supporting these institutions is necessary for reaching sustainable development, as well as warranting institutional coherence and harmonization of relevant development policies, plans and programmes. Lebanon commends the Commission for Western Asia's (ESCWA) efforts to that end, and remains committed toward furthering national development initiatives in the Western Asia region.

Mr. Chairman,

Conflict, occupation and aggression are major obstacles to achieving sustainable development. Special support is therefore required to meet the development needs of people suffering from these problems, particularly people living under occupation. The Palestinian people continue to face hardships in access to natural resources that are crucial for their social and economic development.

Mr. Chairman,

Lebanon witnessed firsthand how acts of violence can hinder national efforts. Need I remind you that the strike by the Israeli Air Force in July 2006 on fuel storage tanks in the vicinity of Jiyeh caused the worst recorded environmental disaster in the eastern Mediterranean Sea. This oil spill devastated coastal habitats, marine ecosystems, livelihoods, which hindered the efforts to achieve sustainable development.

With the support of friendly countries, Lebanon is still engaged in a large cleanup campaign of this devastating environmental disaster. Furthermore, Lebanon will continue to spearhead a UN sanctioned action seeking compensation to repair the ravages made by the Israeli army. All six resolutions by the UN General Assembly which have condemned this action have been unheeded in spite of the unwavering will of the international community to ensure Israeli compensation to Lebanon and compliance with its international obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

In the midst of the Arab Spring and the calls of people for dignity, freedom, and a better life, the work of the second committee acquires greater value. Indeed, addressing the pressing issues of youth unemployment, empowerment of women, protection of natural resources, and enhancement of ecosystem services, will enable us to give due consideration to the vitality of productive sectors and quality of economic growth we strive for. Only then, we will succeed in achieving social equity, economic vitality and greater environmental stewardship.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.