

**Statement by Mrs Ermelinda Meksi,  
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In the briefings organized by Parliamentarian for Global Action  
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**Dear Mr/Mrs, dear colleagues,**

I am particularly delighted that I have been invited to brief this honourable audience about the MDGs in Albania. I am sure that the briefing will be a very useful learning exercise, and I would like to thank our PGA colleagues that make this exchange of experiences happen.

**Albanian context.** Two words on our countries' context is advisable in such gatherings. Albania is a small country situated in Balkans. Part of the communist block, since 1944, Albania joined the Central and Eastern European countries in changing the economic, political and social system from a communist to a democratic free market economy country.

Those who have visited Albania in 1991 and have turned back in 2005 may testify what tremendous changes have happened in our country. The GDP per capita from almost nothing in 1991, reached 800 US\$ per capita in 1998, and over 2400 US\$ in 2004. Though, tremendous progress has been marked in all areas, still Albania remains a poor country. Twenty five percent of Albanian population live below the poverty line and many others are just above the line. One may observe other problems related to health and education status, gender and environment, access to drinking water and governance. This is why we consider MDG framework as extremely relevant for Albania

**Which are major highlights regarding Albanian experience related to MDGs?** As you may have already heard, Albania is considered as a unique country in terms of making use of MDGs not only as a framework but also as a tool for development. Major highlights from the Albanian experience include:

- *Localization of MDGs.* The process of localization started from the global MDGs. The global MDGs were then 'domesticated' taking into consideration the local needs but also regional perspectives; and with regional perspectives I understand the EU integration perspective for Albania. The localization process resulted in new goals, targets and indicators. Let me mention some of them: improved governance resulted as the ninth goal for Albania; it was considered not only as a goal in itself but also as a major precondition for the achievement of all other MDGs and EU integration. In education, the focus was not limited in basic education, but higher and university education was also considered. The quality of education as suggested by Albanian perspective of joining EU is also something new for Albania or at least for EU countries. In addition, a number of targets were more ambitious than the internationally one agreed upon. Finally, a number of new indicators were also introduced<sup>1</sup>.
- *Making use of MDGs as a tool for development.* Albania is probably the only case where the MDGs have been used to promote local development through regional development strategies (RDS). The RDS are regional council's strategic documents prepared making use of MDGs as final goals. All twelve regions of Albania have now what we call MDG Regional Development Strategies. The main purpose of the sub-national reports was to explore and demonstrate how the MDGs could be used to build support and momentum for the MDGs from the bottom up, to assess local poverty challenges and to serve as an engine for comprehensive local development. Again, the global MDGs, national goals,

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to MDG report 2004

EU goals and indicators and local needs were considered when setting the regional targets. For instance, in infant mortality, Kukës region has set a target that is equal to EU current level in 2002<sup>2</sup>. That involves a lot of efforts to bring the maternal mortality rate from more than 16 to 4.5.

– *Integration of MDGs into strategic planning documents.* Through a consensus building and difficult process, Albania has succeeded to integrate the already ‘domesticated’ MDGs into the main strategic document called National strategy for Socio-Economic Development, which is Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) of Albania. Very recently, Albania approved an Integrated Planning System (IPS), which embraces national vision, national strategy, mid term and annual budget, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. From now on, different strategic documents guided by different donors and ministries should be considered in an integrated manner through IPS. Integration of MDGs into national vision and NSSD gives now more chances to be taken seriously even in terms of financing.

– *Involvement of Albanian parliament.* In July 2003, the Albanian Parliament passed a resolution in support of MDGs. According to this resolution the Parliament encourages the government, other institutions and civil society to work together to achieve these objectives. In addition, monitoring, evaluation and reporting are considered as effective means to ménage for results. Finally, the parliament commits its self to assist the achievement of the MDGs in Albania in every way possible.

**Where we are in terms of health, education and gender status and what is underway?** Let us take the three of them one by one very shortly.

*Education.* During the transition from a centralized to a free market system, the *education status* of Albanian citizens was deteriorated. From an almost universal basic education status during the centralized system, in 2002 the adult literacy rate fell to around 98% and the rate of completion of 8 year education fell to 97%. The enrolment in higher education fell as low as 37%. In addition, the quality of education was remarkably deteriorated. To address that situation, in line with MDGs, the NSSD targets 100% adults literacy rate, 100% completion of 8 years education, 90% completion of higher education, and an impressive increase in the average years of schooling from 9 to 13.5 years.

*Health.* During the transition period, even the *health indicators* deteriorated. In 2002, the maternal mortality was 22.7 per 100 thousands live births, and the child mortality was 17.4 per one thousand live births. The NSSD, in line with MDG targets a challenging reduction in maternal mortality of 10 per 100 thousand and 10 per one thousand in child mortality in 2015.

*Gender.* The gender status is mixed. The ratio of number of girls to boys in primary education is lower than one; 0.94 in 2003. One can observe the same status in higher education; the ratio for 2003 is 0.92. That said, the ratio of number of girls to boys in university education in 2003 is 1.66 which means that many more girls than boys go to university during the transition period. The target is gender equality in 2015 for all levels of education. Major gender issues exist however in participation of women in politics and non agricultural employment. In the last parliament, the number of women in was 8, and in 2003 the part of women in non agricultural employment was 25%. As an update, the recently elected parliament (September 2005) has 10 women and the new government has only one woman. The NSSD target that in 2015, the number of women in parliament and the part of women in non agricultural sector will be at least 30%.

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<sup>2</sup> UNDP, 2005, Advancing Development through Sub-national MDG Reports: a case study of Albania, page 7

To achieve the above mentioned targets, Albania has adopted as partially explained a multidimensional approach. The *Government of Albania* (GoA) through its IPS intends to support the attainment of MDGs – including in health, education and gender – through policy reform, institution building and infrastructure improvement; *local government* has started to implement the MDG Regional Development Strategies; *civil society* is also welcomed in terms of representing the stakeholders interests but also in terms of creating a new culture and increasing individuals and institutions capacities. That said, the MDGs philosophy – Goal 8: Global partnership - calls for more active involvement of donor countries. This is foreseen both in GoA and local government MDG related plans.

**Remaining Challenges.** Although Albania is advanced in terms of using MDGs as an effective means to promote human development, a number of challenges are to be overcome in order that the already made efforts to improve people's lives. Some of these challenges could be formulated as follows:

*Implementing MDG Regional Development Strategies (RDS).* The implementation of RDS requires major efforts from local government, but also from central government, civil society and donor community. Transferring more resources and increasing the capacities of local government in line with GoA decentralization reforms is very important. Besides this, linking MDG RDS with Integrated Planning System seems to be crucial for increasing the MDG financing chances;

*Further integrate MDGs with EU social inclusion approach.* Efforts have been made to integrate MDGs with EU social inclusion approach but more efforts are needed tailor MDGs to take into consideration Albanian EU integration perspective in terms of social inclusion.

*Monitoring and reporting the progress towards achievement of MDGs.* Monitoring should be made at several levels. First, at domestic level, local and central government should track the progress towards MDGs achievement. Monitoring and reporting on MDGs would increase politician's accountability and reduce the speculations in the political 'market'. Now, since we are parliamentarians, I think that parliament should be also be involved in monitoring MDGs. In Albania, even though the parliament has passed a resolution in support of MDGs, little has been done at operational level. The parliament to my perspective should monitor a limited number of outcome/status indicators and make sure that enough resources are allocated to achieve MDGs. The development of a good statistical base is key for MDG monitoring.

I talked about domestic level but I think that *changes are probably needed at UN level as well*. For the time being, UNDP is designated as score keeper and campaign manager for MDGs. I think that this a heavy burden UNDP. A structure above UNDP should be involved in monitoring and increasing international accountability regarding MDGs. I think that such a structure should report to UN Secretary General

Before concluding, I would like to invite you to consider a number of dimensions of the Albanian example, as dimensions to replicate in other countries. I refer here to localization of MDGs, to make use of MDGs when preparing local plans, etc.

Thank you very much for your attention!

**A final note:**

We may provide you a copy of a number of documents related to MDGs in Albania. For those who are interested in Albanian experience a lot of useful documents are found in the web page: [www.undp.org.al](http://www.undp.org.al)

**List of documents to be considered**

1. MDG report 2004
2. UNDP, 2005, Advancing Development through Sub-national MDG Reports: a case study of Albania;
3. Brochure:
4. Localizing MDGsParliament resolution

## Objektivat kryesore te SKZHES-se

Objektivi (njësi) [Synimi i OZHMve nqs relevante]	Aktual				I synuar	
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2006	2015
<b>Rritja</b>						
PBB/fryme (\$)	1386	1557	1950	2604	2660	
Rritja e PBB-se (%)	7.6	4.7	6.0	6.0	6.0	
Deficiti buxhetor si perqindje e PBB-se (%)	6.6	5.6	4.4	4.6	5.0	
Inflacioni (%)	3.1	5.2	2.4	2.9	3.0	
<b>Varferia</b>						
Niveli i varferise absolute per fryme (%) [1]		25.4			20.0	10.0
Niveli i varferise extreme per fryme(%) [2]			4.7		3.0	0
Niveli i papunesise (%) [3]		16.4	15.8	15.0	14.4	12.0
<b>Shendetesia</b>						
Vdekshmeria foshnjore per 1,000 lindje te gjalla [12]		17.4	17.5	15.5	15.1	15.0
Vdekshmeria amtare per 100,000 lindje te gjalla [13]		22.7	25.9	21.3	12.0	15.0
Semundjet diarrike per 100,000 banore		1509	1623	1612	1448	600
<b>Arsimi</b>						
Njerezit ne moshen 15-24 qe dine shkrim e kendim (%) [8]		98.4			98.8	100
<b>Raporti i burrave me grate e shkolluar te moshes 15-24</b>						
Zonat urbane (%) [10]		90				100
Zonat rurale (%) [10]		87				100
Niveli i kryerjes se arsimit baze (%) [8]		97	98	98	97	99
Niveli i regjistrimit ne arsimin e mesem (%)		38	42	50	55	50
Pjesa qe zënë regjistrimet në shkollat profesionale në arsimin e mesëm (%)		16	16	16	16	30
Numri mesatar i viteve të shkollimit [8]		9.5		10.5		10.8
<b>Qeverisja (0-100) [19]</b>						
Pjesmarrja dhe llogaridheniia			47.5		48.1	81
Stabiliteti politik			29.7		16.5	71
Efektiviteti i qeverisjes			37.3		40.9	76
Cilesia rregullatore			42.9		48.3	83
Shteti ligjor			17.9		25.1	74
Kontrolli i korrupsionit			23.5		29.1	73



# Objektivat e Zhvillimit të Mijevjecarit, treguesit e perzgjedhur; pasqyre pjese e SKZHES

Objektivi	Target	Objektivat e zhvillimit te mijevjecarit					
		Treguesit	2002	2003	2004	2006	2015*
1	1	Hendeku i varferise	5.7			5.0	3.0
	1	Pjesa e me te varferve 20% ne konsumin kombetar (%)	12.7			11.5	6.3
	2	Prevalenca e femijeve nenpeshe nen 5 vjec (%)	14.0			12.5	8.0
	3	Niveli i papunesise tek te rinjte (14-25 year olds) (%)	22.8	15.5 <sup>3</sup>		21.0	15.0
	4	Investimet e huaja direkte (\$ million) <sup>4</sup>	153	178	341	300	600
	5	Telefonat fiks per 100 inhabitants	5.5	6.1		8	58
	5	Numri i telefonave celulare per 100 banore <sup>5</sup>	27.1			—	78
	5	Perdorimi i kompiuterave personal per 100 banore <sup>6</sup>	2.4	4.5		—	35
	5	Perdoruesit e internetit per 100 banore <sup>5</sup>	0.2	2.4		—	35
	6	Energjia elektrike (GWh) <sup>7</sup>	5406	5819	5971	6765	9342
	6	Humbjet vjetore ne rrjetin elektrik (%)	41.7	39.2	36.7	31	
2	7	Nivenli i regjistrimit net one arsimin baze (%) <sup>8</sup>	92.5	94.0		98.5	100
	8	Niveli i perfundimit te arsimit baze (%) <sup>8</sup>	88			92	100
	8	Braktisja ne arsimin baze (%) <sup>8</sup>	2.0	2.0		1.7	0
	9	Pjesa e buxhetit te alokuar per arsimin baze (%)	23			—	—
	9	Relativisht me arsimin e mesem	0.40			—	—
	9	Relativisht me arsimin e larte	1.65			—	—
3	10	Raporti femra meshkuj ne arsimin baze		0.94	0.93	—	1
	10	Raporti femra meshkuj ne arsimin e mesem		0.92	0.94	—	1
	10	Raporti femra meshkuj ne arsimin e larte		1.65	1.67	—	1
	11	Pjesa e grave ne parlament <sup>9</sup>	6	6	6	—	30
	11	Pjesa e grave ne pozicionin e perfekteshs <sup>9</sup>	17	25	25	—	30
	11	Pjesa e grave ne punezenien jobujqesore (%)	25 <sup>2</sup>			—	50
4	12	Niveli i vdekshmerise se femijeve nen pese vjec per 1000 femije <sup>8</sup>	20.1	20.7		18	10
	12	Perqondja e femijeve te vaksinuar kunder fruthit (%)	95	94		95	95
5	13	Perqindja e vizitave te para prenatale per tremujor te barres (%) <sup>8</sup>	42	47		50	70
	13	Perqindja e lindjeve te pritura nga personeli mjeksor i kualifikuar (%) <sup>8</sup>	98	90		98	98
6	14	Perqindja e PJMHA qe kane nevoje per TARLS dhe e marrin ate. (%)		20		100	100

	14	Numri i personave qe kryejne vullnetarisht testin e HIV		250	350	10000	50000
	14	Rrethet qe kane VCT		4	1	6	15
	14	Numri i shperndare i prezervativeve (million)		3	3	4	7
	15	Norma e deklarimit te Tuberkulozits per 100,000		20	20	19	—
	15	Vdekshmeria nga turbekulozi (%)		4.5	3.5	4	—
	15	Mbulimi me DOTS (%)		30	40	60	—
7	16	Siperfaqja e tokes se mbrojtur per te ruajtur biodiversitetin (%)	3.6	5.8	6.3	—	—
	16	Siperfaqja e tokes me pyje (ne mije hektare)	991 <sup>1</sup>			—	—
	17	Popullsia me akses ne uje te pijshem (%) <sup>10</sup>	69.0	75.4		—	98
	17	Popullsia me akses ne sistemin e ujrave te zeza (%) <sup>10</sup>	63.8	68.3		—	95