Statement by Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations on Agenda Item 66: (a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support; b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (October 13, 2005)

Mr. President,

For the third year in running this Assembly is considering jointly the progress in implementation and international support for the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD); and the recommendations of the Secretary General in his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. We welcome this practice. It is in line with the long-held view, also recognized recently by the 2005 September Summit, that development and peace and security are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

2. Durable peace can only be achieved through a comprehensive strategy comprising conflict prevention, addressing the root causes of conflict, strengthening long-term capacities for peaceful settlement of disputes, peacemaking and peacekeeping; and a coherent system wide response to post-conflict peace-building, reconstruction and development.

3. The two complementary reports of the Secretary General under the agenda item present a comprehensive picture of the progress made in promoting sustainable development and peace and security in Africa over the past one year. The reports also list the formidable challenges that must be surmounted to consolidate the gains and positive trends and to make the progress irreversible.

4. Economic and social threats, including poverty, infectious disease and environmental degradation; and internal conflicts continue to afflict the continent. The Secretary General has noted that while the attention of the international community has been forcefully directed to the importance of these threats, there is concern that the financial and human resources required to solve the multidimensional interlinked problems will fall well short of what is needed.

Mr. President,

5. Africa is the only continent not on track to meet any of the goals of the Millennium Declaration by 2015. Many of the challenges and special needs of Africa were addressed as part of the September Summit. The Summit outcome welcomed the progress made by the African countries in implementing their commitments with regard to NEPAD. It resolved to strengthen cooperation with the NEPAD by mobilizing internal and external financial resources to support Africa.

6. The 2005 Summit also reaffirmed that development is a central goal by itself. Pakistan strongly believes that development should be used as the best means for preventing conflict in the first place, not just to prevent the relapse of conflict.

Mr. President,

7. We commend the African leadership for their vision in launching NEPAD -- an Africa-led, Africa-owned, and Africa-driven initiative providing integrated and comprehensive framework for Africa’s sustainable growth and development. NEPAD sets out a broad vision for Africa’s future, outlines a strategy for achieving that vision, and spells out a programme of action focused on a number of key priority areas.
8. The Secretary General’s report (A/60/178) on progress in implementation and international support on NEPAD rightly calls attention to the challenges and constraints in the implementation of NEPAD. Secretary General has made several important recommendations in this report. We support those recommendations calling for:

Firstly, building the capacity of the national and regional institutions that are entrusted with the tasks of implementation of NEPAD.
Secondly, ensuring greater coherence and coordination between national development plans and NEPAD priorities.
Thirdly, promoting greater involvement of the private sector in the implementation of NEPAD programmes and projects.
Fourthly, international community to honour commitments made, and deliver the pledged support.
Fifthly, African countries to show their commitment to social and economic reforms through sound economic management and implementation of NEPAD priorities.

9. We welcome the World Bank’s initiative to develop the Africa Action Plan. Funded with adequate resources, this plan offers considerable promise and potential, and a real opportunity to improve the lives of people in the world’s most underdeveloped region. We wish the African people and governments, the Bank and the donors every success in its implementation.

Mr. President,

10. The Secretary General’s report (A/60/182) highlighted in particular the need for special attention to post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building, which is of significant relevance to Africa. Resolution 255 adopted by the General Assembly last year emphasized the need for continued collaboration between the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council in generating a coherent approach to the challenges of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa.

11. In the context of peace and security, a major achievement of the September Summit was the decision to establish the Peace-building Commission. The Assembly has already begun its work under your guidance, Mr. President, to formalize and operationalize the Peace-building Commission by the end of this year.

12. Africa also stands to gain immensely from the Summit’s decisions on pacific settlement of disputes, conflict prevention, peacekeeping, rule of law, IDPs, refugee protection and assistance, protection from genocide, system-wide coherence in particular for humanitarian assistance, and cooperation with regional organizations.

13. The challenge ahead is to implement all those decisions and commitments in development, peace and security and socio-economic fields. That requires continued and sustained support of the international community. We welcome in that context the commitment for long-term support to Africa from the European Union and the G-8.

Mr. President,

14. On its part, Pakistan has consistently backed the political and economic aspirations of Africa. Pakistan has always actively supported efforts to address the problems and crises faced by the countries of Africa. We strongly support effective and speedy implementation of NEPAD’s objectives. In the field of peace and security, Pakistan is proud of its contribution to the UN peacekeeping operations in Africa. Our military and civilian personnel have been part of UN operations in Burundi, Cote d’Ivoire, DRC, Liberia, Namibia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Western Sahara.
15. In the context of South-South Cooperation, Pakistan has been providing assistance to the African countries in various fields. Under the Government’s special technical assistance programme for Africa, hundreds of young African professionals have received training in Pakistan in various fields including banking, public administration, diplomacy and civil aviation. Pakistan also offers military training to officers from a number of African countries. We are in the process of further expanding the scope and scale of our assistance and cooperation programmes for Africa.

Mr. President,

16. I wish to conclude by saying that the challenges faced by Africa are colossal. But the opportunities, means and resources to address those challenges are also immense. NEPAD presents a realistic framework for action. The African Union is emerging as a dynamic factor promoting African ownership in tackling Africa’s problems. The sub-regional organizations in Africa are also playing an important role. We are hopeful that these regional and sub-regional mechanisms will be able to devote more attention and resources to social and economic development in the future as conflicts and crises that sap most of their energy at present are brought under control. Important and far reaching international commitments are there to assist Africa. With commensurate political will on part of the international community in particular the developed world, to faithfully implement those commitments, Africa can hope to realize its full political and economic potential thus contributing to international peace and security.

I thank you.