

**Statement by Dr. Asad M. Khan, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations, under agenda item 73(b): “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations including special economic assistance” (October 11, 2005)**

**Mr. Chairman,** On behalf of the people, Government and delegation of Pakistan, I wish to thank you and all other colleagues for their words of support and sympathy on the loss of life and property that caused widespread destruction in Pakistan.

2. We are greatly touched by the outpouring compassion and pledges of support as well as provisions of immediate relief assistance by the international community. Let me express our deepest gratitude to all those who have pledged or provided immediate relief assistance to the affected areas in Pakistan.

**Mr. Chairman,**

3. The world is witnessing unprecedented cycle of natural disasters within countries and across Continents. Disasters, either natural or man-made can seriously undermine the economic growth and development potential of the affected countries. Besides, causing adverse effects to the social aspects of human life.

4. The challenge of mobilizing effective, timely and adequate humanitarian response commensurate with the nature and scale of disasters although formidable is absolutely essential. Not just from the short term humanitarian perspective but also from the long term reconstruction and development perspective. A single major disaster can undo in a matter of minutes and hours, years of good work and economic accomplishments – in some cases destroying almost the entire national GDP. This requires concerted action at all levels, from local to national to international levels.

5. The United Nations system should play a central role in coordinating and strengthening the humanitarian and disaster relief assistance. The limitations and deficiencies of the current humanitarian system offers important insight and lessons for improving its performance. In this context we would like to support the recommendations of the Secretary General to strengthen regional, national and community risk reduction, disaster preparedness and response mechanisms.

6. The Outcome Declaration of World Summit 2005 has also provided a good basis to develop and improve mechanisms for the use of emergency standby capacities for a timely response to humanitarian emergencies.

7. My delegation supports the decision made in the Summit Declaration to “strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations humanitarian response, inter alia, by improving the timeliness and predictability of humanitarian funding”. This would go a long way in supporting the efforts of countries, in particular developing countries, to strengthen their capabilities at all levels in order to prepare for and respond rapidly to natural disasters and mitigate their impact.

8. It is our belief that humanitarian assistance must take into account early consideration of recovery and the longer-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and development needs. International cooperation through humanitarian assistance should complement the efforts of countries and regions recovering from effects of disasters to build the institutional capacity and effectiveness of the countries to withstand the impact of humanitarian situations.

**I thank you.**