

**Intervention by H.E. Osman Saleh Mohammed  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea**

At the thematic debate on Maternal, Infant and Child Health and Development in Africa  
Fifteenth Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly  
25-27 July 2010 Kampala, Uganda

Mr. Chairman,  
Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,  
Your Excellencies Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of President Isaias Afwerki and the Government and people of Eritrea, let me express our thanks to our gracious hosts, the Government and people of Uganda, and also our heartfelt condolences to them for the horrendous attacks in Kampala, which claimed the lives of tens of innocent Ugandans and other nationals, including several Eritreans.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me make a brief contribution on this important theme of our Kampala Summit, the promotion of maternal, infant and child health and development in Africa. For reasons that do not require elaboration, the health of mothers and children is at the heart of our existence as peoples, nations and states.

Eritrea, Mr. Chairman, has given top priority to health, education, food security and the provision of services that ensure the minimum requirements for a dignified life to its citizens. We have registered real progress in maternal, infant and child health, in significantly rolling back malaria, TB, HIV-Aids and other killer diseases, in the provision of clean water, in education as well as other areas. We are on track and we are confident that we will meet the Millennium Development Goals and even surpass some of them. We have done so with limited external inputs, by mainly relying on our resources.

While the progress we have registered is encouraging, we are painfully aware that it is very modest in relation to our aspirations and to what our people expect and deserve. The fact that in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Africa is talking about MDGs, and agonizing whether we can even meet these low standards, is a reminder of how far we have lagged behind. Let us then redouble our efforts, dig deep into the resources we have and that we can make better use of, and cooperate at regional and continental levels to bury poverty and create the socio-economic conditions that would allow our peoples to fulfill their material, intellectual and spiritual aspirations. Eritrea, Mr. Chairman, is focused on development and will do its part.

I thank you.