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**MESSAGE FROM MS. MARY ROBINSON,
UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

1. The theme of the tenth UNCTAD Conference – making globalization an instrument for the development of all countries and all people – is important and timely. Clearly there is a wide and growing gap which must be bridged because the benefits of globalization have been distributed unevenly. UNCTAD's own reports testify to the growing inequalities within and between nations. Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups have been further marginalized. This can have political as well as economic consequences. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, has remarked:

“Global market forces can generate wealth and spread prosperity, but where development is uneven the result can be increased political tensions and risks of instability.”

2. The effects of globalization have major implications for human rights, particularly in developing countries. That is why the Commission on Human Rights has requested the treaty bodies, special rapporteurs, independent experts and working groups to address the impact of globalization on human rights within their respective mandates. Issues including the right to development, extreme poverty, structural adjustment programmes, foreign debt and the right to education are being considered. The Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights has also been asked to submit a comprehensive report on the issue of globalization to the Commission on Human Rights.

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3. It should be recognized that human rights norms and standards are as relevant to the fields of international trade, finance and investment as to any other area of human activity. The pursuit of equitable development and fair trade are legitimate human rights concerns. Poverty and exclusion are denials of human rights and the right to development. The 1986 United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development proclaims that the human person is the central subject of development and that development policy should therefore make the human being the main participant in and beneficiary of development. It further spells out the duty of States to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the entire population and of all individuals on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting therefrom.

4. The human rights vision of the United Nations is that all spheres of activity, international, regional, national and local, shall be inspired and influenced by the human rights norms elaborated at the United Nations. Development, as well as peace, should have in view the dignity of the individual and his or her rights. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights requires States to pursue policies and strategies aimed at the realization, for every person on the planet, of the right to food, health, shelter, education, work and social security. A globalizing world must never lose sight of these imperatives. A globalizing world that results in any departure from these human rights precepts is a world that is anti-people. We must never tolerate this.

5. The challenge before this Conference is to find ways to incorporate the reality of globalization into efforts to achieve a fairer international economic order. I urge delegates to UNCTAD X to work towards a new, constructive partnership between Governments, development agencies, civil societies and the business community which will ensure that the benefits which can accrue from globalization are not restricted to a few but are enjoyed by all the peoples of the world.
