IBSA Working Group on Social Development
from 12-15 October 2007

The IBSA Social Affairs Working met in Sandton, South Africa from 12-15 October 2007, in preparation for the IBSA Presidential Summit. The purpose of the meeting was to start the process for the formulation of IBSA Poverty Eradication Strategy. The objective of the strategy as outlined during the New Delhi meeting is to eradicate poverty and hunger and to promote people-people interaction amongst the IBSA countries.

During these meeting, The Social Development Working Group agreed that the development of an IBSA Poverty Eradication Strategy would be strengthened by the development of a website. The website would be managed by Social Development Working Group members and that access to such a website would be managed through the password to be provided by the Social Development Working Group. The website would be linked to IBSA website that is currently in operation. It was agreed that website would promote sharing of best practice models amongst the IBSA members. It will also assist in building social networks between Civil Society Organisations of the three countries. The Working Group agreed that the creation of linkages between Civil Society Organisations would be intensified by the website. The view is that, the website would be utilised to profile programmes that are implemented by civil society organisations operating in different sectors of the three countries.

The Working Group further agreed that there is a need to place officials for learning purposes with a view to facilitate knowledge sharing and exchange of experiences. The use of IBSA Fund would be explored to support these initiatives. The following areas were identified for best-practice models:

- Globalisation and Trade promotion with skills development leading to social development.
- Poverty Measurement-which is about sharing experience amongst the three countries and in particular from Brazil and India, as it was mentioned that their poverty measurements is a success.
- Institutionalisation of Civil Society Organisations inorder to have homogeneous guidelines. In these regard, the three countries agreed to facilitate a Seminar on Civil Society and Micro-Finance- to share lessons learnt and exchange of best practices amongst Civil Society Organisations.
- Civil Society and Micro-Finance in the context to India.
- Social Inclusion- which is about drawing of lessons from the experience of three countries in terms of overcoming exclusion and inclusion.
- Institutional Capacity Building- which includes sharing of best practices, in relation to co-operative governance in support of social development activities and programmes.
The Working Group also deliberated on the use of the IBSA Fund. It was agreed that Brazil would provide guidelines and clarity on the utilisation and accessibility of IBSA Fund. It was further mentioned that in case where guidelines are inexistence, Brazil should circulate such guidelines to other members for review. In instances where such guidelines are not in existence, it was agreed that the guidelines should be developed by the three countries by the end of December 2007.

The Meeting also discussed the importance of Social Policy, and concluded that instrumentation of Social Policy would assist in achieving the following:

- Uphold the dignity of the poor and avoid patronization.
- Promote spaces for community engagement at the smallest neighbourhood unit of community.
- Provide capacity for the poor to access the essentials of life and ultimately gain requisite wealth.
- Seek to add value to their primary asset and capital base, including human capital though development of productive skills.
- Aim at improvement of life from one generation to the next generation.