



UN NEWS CENTRE



UN News
service

With breaking stories and
newswire products from

- [Home](#)
- [Press Room](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Tools & Services](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [News Focus](#)
- [What, When at UN](#)



[Print this article](#)



[Email this article](#)

Ban says engagement of Non-Aligned Movement vital in tackling today's challenges



15 July 2009 – The engagement of the international grouping of over 100 countries known as the Non-Aligned Movement is vital to solving today's common problems, from climate change and the economic crisis to ensuring a world free of nuclear weapons, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said today.

“It is abundantly clear that no country – regardless of size or resources – can solve problems alone,” Mr. Ban said in his [address](#) to the high-level segment of the 15th NAM Summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

“That raises the stakes and the space for the Non-Aligned Movement to shape a better world,” he added. “Now more than ever, your engagement is very vital to achieving global solutions to our common problems.”

The Secretary-General noted that the Movement's commitment to peace naturally led it to place high value on a world free of weapons of mass destruction. “All countries should recognize that disarmament contributes to development – and that both are critical to peace,” he said.

Among recent progress, he said that, with the support of many Non-Aligned countries, the Conference on Disarmament broke its 12-year impasse and preparations for the review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) are gaining momentum.

In addition, he welcomed the recently announced pledge by the leaders of the United States and Russia to reducing their nuclear arsenals.

“But the challenges remain immense if we are ever to achieve a world without nuclear weapons,” Mr. Ban stated, adding that it is not only weapons of mass destruction that demand a concerted

international response. Conventional arms continue to destabilize the world, and small arms and light weapons are overwhelmingly the weapon of choice in violent conflicts, he noted.

The Secretary-General added that NAM's longstanding commitment to development and social justice also resonates today as the world faces a severe economic and financial crisis.

"All countries are feeling the effects, but some developing countries are suffering most, including millions of people living in the NAM States, particularly those emerging from conflict. The impact will likely be even graver in the future," he said.

The UN chief also pointed out that efforts to move the global economy in a greener, more sustainable direction and improve food security and energy access for the poor can also contribute to creating the more equitable world that NAM has always envisioned.

In addition, he highlighted the effort to "seal the deal" at Copenhagen later this year on an ambitious new climate change pact aimed at curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

"We need to mobilize the political momentum for an equitable and effective deal," said Mr. Ban.

"Your participation is vital – I count on you to attend."

On his arrival in Egypt yesterday, Mr. Ban met with Libyan leader Muammar Al-Qadhafi, with whom he discussed major challenges in Africa, including Sudan, Chad, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

He met today with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, and they discussed the way forward in the Middle East, climate change, Sudan, and Somalia.

The Secretary-General also met with President Mahinda Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka, with whom he raised the issue of conditions in the camps housing internally displaced persons (IDPs), as well as the arrests of UN staff.

Meanwhile, his meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani focused on the fact-finding probe into the killing of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto which is visiting Pakistan this week, and upcoming meetings of the Group of Friends of Democratic Pakistan.

Also in Sharm el-Sheikh today, the Secretary-General [addressed](#) the First Ladies Summit on women in crisis management. "We need to view women as agents of change. This is what we are doing at the United Nations. We advocate for women, but more than that, we involve women," he stated.

Mr. Ban noted that under his tenure as Secretary-General, more women have been appointed to senior positions than ever before, nearly tripling their number in top managerial roles.

The Secretary-General's wife, Mrs. Ban Soon-taek, also participated in the First Ladies Summit, convened by Egypt's First Lady, Suzanne Mubarak.

In her remarks, Mrs. Ban stressed that when women have social equality and assurance to be able to make their own decisions, they can help solve the world's many problems. Women hold the key to tackling the financial crisis and the problem of hunger, but the question is how to turn that key and unlock the solution, she added.

Mrs. Ban urged all the First Ladies of the NAM States to take their influence and combine strengths to help the world's women, so as to benefit their children as well as change the entire world for the better.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[Ban welcomes Russian-United States agreement to cut nuclear arsenals](#)