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Assembly President hails new momentum for global anti-poverty goals



General Assembly President Joseph Deiss

23 December 2010 – As the General Assembly wraps up the main part of its 65th session, its President today hailed the summit with which it opened for galvanizing momentum towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) to reverse a global legacy of poverty and attendant ills.

“I think we are well underway and the most important for me was to know whether we have the potential to do it or not and we got the right answer, I think: we have,” Joseph Deiss told [UN Radio](#) of September’s MDG summit attended by more than 100 heads of State and government.

Noting that they reaffirmed the 2015 deadline for achieving the “very challenging” goals, which seek to slash extreme poverty and hunger, maternal and infant mortality, a host of diseases, and lack of access to education and medical care, he said: “I hope that the whole world has been listening to this promise, and now we will have to deliver.

“The second question was to know: are we willing to do it? Is there the engagement of all the countries? And we got this promise. Now the third dimension is: we want to see how it will be delivered... We have been able to give a message of hope of course, but also a message of encouragement, a message that can create a momentum.”

Mr. Deiss said an important issue for him was that the message be constructive and positive, noting there had been a lot of talk in the run-up to the summit about pessimism and “not being in line” with the goals.

“It’s true there are several domains where we are not well or totally in shape. This should not make us forget all the important work that has already been done,” he said, citing UN humanitarian reports showing that “even if there are many problems, globally people are better off, have more food, better education, better health than 10, 20 or 30 years ago...”

“Clearly we have to attack the most sensitive or weakest points of the action taken so far but I think that was indeed the aim of such a summit – to uncover the weakness of the moment to ensure that we get there in 2015.”

Looking back at the first four months of his presidency of the 65th General Assembly, which ends next September, Mr. Deiss picked out global governance as a second focal point.

He noted the need to reconcile the fact that more and more problems cannot be solved by individual nations – such as global warming, the core UN objective of peace, migration and terrorism – with the desire of States to be sovereign: “how are we going to bring all these countries together?” he asked.

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