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## **From fighting poverty to building a safer world, UN chief outlines priorities for 2011**



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon gives his first press conference in 2011

14 January 2011 – From promoting sustainable development and mitigating climate change to empowering women to keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of terrorists, [Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon](#) today laid out the United Nations agenda for the coming year.

“Success in rising to the challenge does not belong to any one of us,” he told the 192-member General Assembly, listing eight priorities for 2011.

“It depends on all of us, together. You were crucial to generating the progress that we have achieved in recent years. And your continued engagement, initiative and leadership are essential as we take on this ambitious agenda.”

Speaking at a [news conference](#) after the meeting, he cautioned: “If 2010 was a challenging year for the United Nations, 2011 will be even more so.”

Mr. Ban listed as the first goal action on inclusive and sustainable development in the face of a global recession that is still being felt in every corner of the world. “People are worried about their jobs, their security, their children's future,” he said, citing a UN Conference in Istanbul in May aimed at promoting a 10-year Programme of Action to provide food security, decent work, disaster risk reduction, climate-resilience and clean energy growth in the world's least developed countries.

Turning to climate change, he noted advances made at a meeting in Cancún, Mexico, last month on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, forest protection, climate finance, adaptation and technology. “Once again, there is much to build upon,” he said. “Let us lead with action.”

On the third strategic priority – empowering women – he pledged to promote full participation and gender equality, combat violence against women and increase their number in senior UN leadership posts. “Take any issue – climate change, development, peace and security: when women are part of the vision, the world sees better results,” he stressed.

Focusing on promoting a safer and more secure world, the fourth priority, Mr. Ban cited ongoing UN efforts to ensure democracy in Côte d'Ivoire, where the defeated outgoing president is refusing to leave office, and its peacekeeping operations in Sudan, where the South is currently voting in an independence referendum while the world body tries to bring stability to the war-torn western region of Darfur.

The fifth and sixth priorities concern advancing human rights and improving the response to major humanitarian crises by learning lessons from the devastating Haitian earthquake and the Pakistani floods of 2010. “We continue to hone our capacities and better coordinate our efforts,” Mr. Ban said. “We must do more to ensure the most effective use of resources and the most efficient management of a truly global response to crises.”

Maintaining the momentum achieved in disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation constitutes the seventh priority following last year's review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the new nuclear arms reduction treaty between Russia and the United States.

“We will endeavour to ensure ratification of the treaty completely banning nuclear tests,” Mr. Ban declared. “And we will redouble our efforts to settle issues concerning nuclear security and nuclear terrorism.”

Finally, the Secretary-General pledged to strengthen the UN from within by building a more modern, flexible Organization, better able to meet the challenges of the 21st century. “All of us will benefit from a United Nations that is ever more transparent, more accountable, more efficient, effective, and mobile,” he said.

“As I have often said, in today's complicated and complex world, progress does not always come overnight. It comes in steps – some may be bigger than others. But the key is to keep moving forward – with unrelenting determination, with dogged diplomacy. You can count on me. There is no doubt that the world needs an ever stronger UN.”

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[Looking back, Ban calls 2010 ‘a big year for the United Nations’](#)

