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Ban heads to Madrid for meeting on global anti-poverty targets



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (right) holds talks with José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Prime Minister of Spain

12 July 2010 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will travel to the Spanish capital, Madrid, on Friday to attend the first meeting of the group set up to help spur action towards achieving the global anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)).

Established last month, the MDG Advocacy Group is co-chaired by Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero and Rwandan President Paul Kagame.

Each of the group's members has been asked to focus their advocacy efforts on specific Goals such as slashing poverty, boosting school enrolment rates, improving maternal health and increasing access to clean water and decent sanitation, all of which are to be achieved by 2015.

Among those in the "collection of superheroes in defeating poverty," as the Secretary-General described the group, are two Nobel Peace Prize laureates – the Bangladeshi pioneer of microcredit Muhammad Yunus and the Kenyan environmental activist Wangari Maathai – as well as former Chilean president Michelle Bachelet and businessmen and philanthropist Bill Gates.

The meeting in Madrid comes ahead of the high-level MDG Summit that will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York in September.

Mr. Ban will also travel to Geneva to attend the Third World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, which will be held from 19 to 21 July and focus on democracy, the role of legislative institutions and their relationship with the UN.

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Ban unveils 'collection of superheroes' to help eradicate poverty