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UN calls on Europeans to unleash their creativity against poverty



6 May 2010 – The United Nations is hoping to tap into the creativity of Europeans to boost awareness in the region of the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)), eight globally agreed anti-poverty targets with a 2015 deadline.

The world body has kicked off an advertising competition, inviting all citizens of 48 European countries – even advertising professionals – to submit one-page print entries in the form of drawings, designs, cartoons, photographs or slogans.

Afsane Bassir-Pour, Director of the UN Regional Information Centre in Brussels ([UNRIC](#)), which launched the web-based campaign, said that one of the contest's aims is to "forge a lasting partnership with top European newspapers."

The winner of the competition will receive a cash prize of €5,000 from the Government of Spain at an award ceremony in Madrid just before the start of a high-level summit on the MDGs at UN Headquarters in New York in September.

Although the contest is only open to European citizens and residents, people across the globe can cast a vote for the finalists.

Entries will be accepted until the end of June, followed by a selection process in which online voters will select 15 finalists and another 15 will be chosen by the campaign's organizers.

Winners will be selected by a jury of prominent European advertising and marketing experts, as well as artists, designers and UN staff.

"It is not enough to consider the poor with empathy; we have to take practical steps to do something useful to help," said Gary Knight, a jury member and photographer who has captured images of poverty in many parts of the world.

"If this initiative changes the situation of only one person living on the razor's edge of poverty it is worth doing," he added.

In March, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched a [report](#) in which he said progress has been uneven in reaching the MDGs, cautioning that without an accelerated action plan, several Goals are likely to be missed in many countries.

Entitled *Keeping the Promise*, it contains a new action plan aimed at getting governments, civil society actors, private businesses, philanthropy and the multilateral system to act "efficiently, effectively and collectively."

Mr. Ban said that with a decade of efforts towards achieving the MDGs already under the world's belt, "we know what works and what doesn't," with lessons learned on how to best utilize new technologies, national development policies and better governance.

The MDG summit in September, the Secretary-General said, must produce a "concrete, comprehensive, result-based plan" to chart the course for the coming years. "And that is what I am determined to get."

Falling short of the MDGs would be an "unacceptable failure, moral and practical," multiplying dangers such as instability, violence, diseases and environmental degradation, he wrote in the new publication.

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