

## Ban urges world leaders to invest in global project to overcome poverty



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon addresses UN summit on the MDGs

20 September 2010 – As scores of heads of State and government attend today’s opening of a three-day summit at United Nations Headquarters in New York on the Millennium Development Goals (**MDGs**), Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged them to provide the necessary investment, aid and political will to end extreme poverty.

“There is no global project more worthwhile,” Mr. Ban **said**. “Let us send a strong message of hope. Let us keep the promise.”

The high-level meeting of the General Assembly is being held to take stock of the progress so far towards the MDGs – which include slashing poverty, combating disease, fighting hunger, protecting the environment and boosting education – and to determine what else needs to be done to reach the Goals by their target date of 2015.

“Real results” have been made since the MDGs were devised in 2000, Mr. Ban noted, including a dramatic increase in school enrolment rates, expanded access to clean water and greater control of diseases.

“We have more development success stories than ever before. The transformative impact of the MDGs is undeniable. This is an achievement we can proud of. But we must protect these advances, many of which are still fragile. And the clock is ticking, with much more to do.”

Mr. Ban urged world leaders to “stay true” to ensure that the Goals are met on time.

“True to our identity as an international community built on a foundation of solidarity. True to your commitment to end the dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty.”

He called on wealthy countries not to pull back from their previous commitments on official development assistance to poorer nations, which he described as “a lifeline of billions, for billions.”

He also stressed that “being true means addressing inequality, both among and within countries. Even in countries that have registered impressive gains, inequality eats away at social cohesion.

“And it means reconsidering conventional wisdom. Recovery from the economic crisis should not mean a return to the flawed and unjust path that got us into trouble in the first place.”

The Secretary-General said one of the keys to success was “making the smart investments in infrastructure, small farmers, social services... and above all in women and girls.”

On Wednesday he is expected to unveil a global strategy for improving women’s and children’s health, with study after study indicating that a boost in this area will have an enormous multiplier effect across all the MDGs.

“There is more to do for the mother who watches her children go to bed hungry – a scandal played out a billion times each and every night. There is more to do for the young girl weighed down with wood or water when instead she should be in school. And more to do for the worker far from home in a city slum, watching jobs and remittances disappear amid global recession.”

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