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Ban urges leaders to respond to people's calls for right to development



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

2 December 2011 –

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today urged leaders to respond to people's calls for the right to build a better future for themselves, stressing that women and youth, in particular, must be helped to enjoy lives of dignity, equality and opportunity.

“Today we are at a decisive moment in history,” said the Secretary-General in a [statement](#) to mark the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development. “As calls for change echo across the world, we cannot take refuge in silence.”

The UN Declaration on the Right to Development unequivocally establishes development as a right and seeks to put people at the centre of the development process.

The landmark document, adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 1986, first proclaimed the inalienable right, declaring that everyone is “entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.”

Mr. Ban said the anniversary is “an occasion to celebrate its visionary promise of people-centred development and to recommit to making this a reality.”

Global challenges and crises are interconnected, he said, noting that economic, social and environmental concerns are inseparable, while human rights are integral to them all.

“That is why we are placing sustainable development at the top of the international agenda. Next year’s United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development [Rio+20] will offer a critical opportunity to chart a course to the future we want,” the Secretary-General added.

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