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‘Group of 77’ developing nations have crucial role in banishing poverty, says Ban



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

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From achieving current development goals to securing even more ambitious targets, the bloc of developing nations known as the Group of 77 and China has a pivotal role to play in achieving the ultimate goal of a world free from poverty, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon said today.

“In all of our efforts, let us be guided by the shared resolve to create a world where people live free from want and fear,” he [told](#) the annual ministerial meeting of the so-called G-77, held on the sidelines of the General Assembly’s General Debate.

“Today, I am counting on the G-77 and China to help us move on two tracks: first, honouring, as fast as we possibly can, our existing commitments and agreements; and second, looking ahead to the period after 2015, when we need to set new targets and aim for fresh goals,” he said of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that seek to slash hunger and poverty, maternal and infant mortality, a host of diseases and lack of access to education and health care, all by 2015.

The Group, established in 1964 by 77 States, now counts more than 130 countries, some two thirds of the UN membership and over 60 per cent of the world’s population.

Mr. Ban noted that a year ago, a UN summit on the MDGs reaffirmed the world’s commitment to collective action that works. “But we still need to do more to boost official development assistance (ODA), facilitate technical assistance, and share best practices,” he said, warning that despite great progress “we are lagging.

“The wealth gap is growing. More and more people find their jobs at risk. Fewer people can find decent work. It is especially tough for young people,” he added, stressing the urgent need to lay out a path for even greater advances to succeed the MDGs after 2015.

“Even as we try to accelerate progress towards the MDGs, we have to begin planning a new generation of sustainable development goals to build on the success of the MDGs. The MDGs were visionary and ambitious when they were adopted [in 2000], but even then we knew they went only half-way towards our ultimate goal of a world free of poverty.”

Listing the many challenges facing the world, including uncertainties in the global economy, increased volatility in international financial markets, rising food prices worldwide, famine in the Horn of Africa, and natural disasters threatening security and development, Mr. Ban paid particular attention to the problems confronting young people.

“Youth across the world lack the opportunities they deserve. Many are understandably frustrated,” he said. “Their anxiety can lead to unrest, but with help and support, it can also be channelled into a force for positive change. We have to respond to the aspirations of the world’s youth, and all people who are seeking better economic, social, environmental and political conditions.”

General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser noted the G-77 included emerging nations whose resilient growth during the current global financial crisis had kept the world’s economy from slumping into recession, while a large number of members are also considered the most vulnerable countries.

“And you continue to remind us of something fundamental: that there can be no sustainable peace without sustainable development and global prosperity,” he told the meeting.

“This year, we come together at a critical juncture in the world’s history. World leaders are faced with never-before-seen challenges: extraordinary events in the Arab world, a worsening global economic and financial crisis, increasingly frequent and severe natural disasters and the adverse impacts of climate change, and extreme famine in the Horn of Africa,” he added, pledging to working with every Member State, to build bridges for a united global partnership.

“We will need strong collaboration and consensus-building to move forward the Assembly’s heavy agenda this session, in particular on economic and financial issues.”

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