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UN chief outlines five-year action plan to build ‘the future we want’



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlines his vision for the next five years to the General Assembly. UN Photo/Mark Garten

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Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today outlined a series of actions he believes the global community must take over the next five years to build “the future we want.”

In a speech to the General Assembly last September Mr. Ban presented five imperatives – or generational opportunities – that must be addressed to ensure a better future for the world’s people.

These are sustainable development; preventing and mitigating conflicts, human rights abuses and the impacts of natural disasters; building a safer and more secure world; supporting countries in transition; and working to engage the talents of women and young people.

“Today I want to share with you an action agenda for the coming five years,” he told the Assembly as he returned to the rostrum to brief Member States on his vision for his second term.

A plan to help create a safer, more secure, more sustainable, more equitable future. A plan to build the future we want.

“A plan to make the most of the opportunities before us. A plan to help create a safer, more secure, more sustainable, more equitable future. A plan to build the future we want,” he said.

The “action agenda” presented today describes specific measures regarding each of the five imperatives, including an unprecedented campaign to wipe out five of the world’s major killers – malaria, polio, paediatric HIV infections, maternal and neonatal tetanus, and measles.

Mr. Ban also announced that the UN will work with Member States to make Antarctica a World Nature Preserve and that he will appoint a new special representative for youth.

Among his other proposals is the convening of a first-of-its-kind World Humanitarian Summit to help share knowledge and establish common best practices, and the creation of a New UN Partnerships Facility to harness the full power of transformative partnerships across the world body.

“Waves of change are surging around us,” he told the Assembly. “If we navigate wisely, we can create a more secure and sustainable future for all. The United Nations is the ship to navigate these waters...”

“We are the venue for partnerships and action. Now is our moment. Now is the time to create the future we want,” he stated.

Speaking later to reporters, Mr. Ban said that in addition to the core business of the UN, he wanted his team to look deeply at the world and the UN’s work today.

“I wanted to identify areas where opportunity and need come together like never before,” he said. “These are times of austerity. Yet... these are also times of promise. More people are becoming engaged; more people are empowered to make a real difference.

“If we dedicate our energies and mobilize the UN system, we can move the needle for generations to come.”

General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser commended the Secretary-General for his “bold, focused and forward-looking” action agenda, adding that the content, depth and breadth of his envisaged actions are truly relevant for the effectiveness, efficiency and smooth functioning of the UN.

“As this universal global body is experiencing the unfolding of a world with all its complexities and challenges, prospects and potentials, I believe the Secretary-General has courageously articulated a set of action points that addresses the way our Organization, and in particular this Assembly, needs to respond to an ever-evolving global scene,” he told the 193-member body.

Also today, in keeping with the announcement last month that he intends to roll out changes to his senior team as he embarks on his second term, Mr. Ban said that Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro and Chef de Cabinet Vijay Nambiar will step down from their posts.

Ms. Migiro will stay in office until the end of June to ensure continuity in the preparations for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) that will take place in Brazil that month. Mr. Nambiar will serve as the Secretary-General’s Special Advisor on Myanmar, following the transition in the Secretary-General’s Executive Office.

In addition, the Under-Secretary-General for Management, Angela Kane; the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy; and the Special Adviser for Prevention of Genocide, Francis Deng, will all be relinquishing their duties during the course of this year.

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