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With new blueprint in hand, Ban calls for action to chart more sustainable future



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speaks in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the launch of report by his High-Level Panel on Global Sustainability. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

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[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today called for action on a new blueprint for creating a sustainable planet, a just society and a growing economy, stressing that the current path will not lead to a fair and resilient future for the world's people.

“We need to chart a new, more sustainable course for the future, one that strengthens equality and economic growth while protecting our planet,” he stated. “Sustainable development offers our best chance to change course.”

[Speaking](#) at the launch in Addis Ababa of the report prepared by his High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, Mr. Ban stressed that sustainable development is a top priority for his second term of office.

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“Sustainable development is a social, economic and environmental imperative,” he stated. “I call on all sectors of society to join in this effort. We need everyone – government ministers and policymakers, business and civil society leaders, and young people – to work together to create a future worth choosing – a future we want.”

The 22-member panel, established by the Secretary-General in August 2010 to formulate a new blueprint for sustainable development and low-carbon prosperity, was co-chaired by Finnish President Tarja Halonen and South African President Jacob Zuma.

The group’s final report, [Resilient People, Resilient Planet: A Future Worth Choosing](#), contains 56 recommendations to put sustainable development into practice and to make it a part of mainstream economic policy as quickly as possible.

“Today our planet and our world are experiencing the best of times, and the worst of times,” states the report. “The world is experiencing unprecedented prosperity, while the planet is under unprecedented stress.”

It adds that because of the array of overlapping challenges the world faces, it is more urgent than ever to take action to embrace the principles of the sustainable development agenda. “It is time that genuine global action is taken to enable people, markets and governments to make sustainable choices.”

The report calls for integrating social and environmental costs in how the world prices and measures economic activities. It also calls for a set of sustainable development indicators that go beyond the traditional approach of gross domestic product (GDP) and recommends that governments develop and apply a set of “Sustainable Development Goals” that can mobilize global action and help monitor progress.

It underscores the importance of science as an essential guide for decision-making on sustainability issues. It calls on the Secretary-General to lead efforts to produce a regular Global Sustainable Development Outlook report that integrates knowledge across sectors and institutions, and to consider creating a science advisory board or scientific adviser.

“The need to integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development so as to achieve sustainability was clearly defined a quarter of a century ago. It is time to make it happen,” states the report.

“The opportunities for change are vast. We are not passive, helpless victims of the impersonal, determinist forces of history. And the exciting thing is that we can choose our future.”

The report serves as an important contribution to the UN’s work on sustainable development, particularly in preparation for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Brazil this June.

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