

Honour billion-dollar aid pledges to world's poor, Ban tells G20 summit



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon converses with world leaders at the Group of 20 (G-20) Summit

25 September 2009 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called on the leaders of the Group of 20 (G20) major world economies to fulfil their pledges of tens of billions of dollars in aid to the developing and poorer nations.

“Today we must send a signal that we will not overlook the oft forgotten people of our world,” he said in prepared **remarks** for the G20 summit in Pittsburgh, citing a United Nations report that found that the global economic crisis continues to push millions of the world’s most vulnerable people into poverty, hunger and early death.

“The picture it paints should alarm us all: the crisis is having a dramatic and potentially enduring effect on many of the world’s poor and most vulnerable people. They are far from seeing any of the so-called green shoots of recovery,” he told the leaders of the countries representing 85 per cent of the world’s output.

Mr. Ban laid out three top priorities, calling first for concrete assistance, beginning with the \$50 billion for the poorest pledged by the G20 summit in London earlier this year. “A premature exit from stimulus efforts could put global recovery at risk,” he said. “I agree with your assessment that we are not yet out of crisis.”

Secondly the industrialized countries must honour their pledges to devote 0.7 per cent of their gross national income to official development assistance (ODA), including for Africa. “With 2010 around the corner, we are very far from meeting these targets,” he added.

Thirdly, recovery strategies should include investments in jobs, health, education, infrastructure and food security, in particular the speedy disbursement of the \$20 billion promised by the G8 group of industrialized countries at their summit in L’Aquila, Italy, earlier this year.

He also stressed the urgency of addressing climate change, warning: “Recovery and sustainable development are, and will continue to be, undermined by accelerating climate change. Climate change is an integral part of the picture...”

“As we have been sharply reminded by the ongoing economic crisis, the global economy today ties the fates of all the world’s people closely together,” he added.

UN International Labour Organization (**ILO**) Director-General Juan Somavia also attended the summit, where he presented a report on policies and prospects for jobs and social protection, which he said the leaders welcomed.

"I welcome the significant commitment of the leaders to implementing recovery plans that support decent work, help preserve employment and prioritize job growth," he added, urging them to show "the same determination and willingness to foster job creation as they have for saving banks.

"The Pittsburgh Summit was a big step in this direction," he said. "For sustainable growth beyond the recovery we need to correct the imbalances which contributed to the crisis. Wages have lagged behind productivity in many countries contributing to imbalances between consumption and savings. We have over-emphasized the economy, especially the finance sector, and undervalued the social and environmental dimensions of sustainability."

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