



**UN NEWS CENTRE**

With breaking stories and  
newswire products from



## **Ban sees Switzerland's decreasing glaciers from helicopter over Bern**



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

16 October 2011 –

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today took a helicopter flight over the Swiss city of Bern to observe the decreasing volume of the country's glaciers and later exchanged views with President Micheline Calmy-Rey on sustainable development and the forthcoming United Nations conference on climate change in South Africa.

They also discussed various regional situations and issues related to immigration and globalization.

Mr. Ban, who is in Bern to attend the 125th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), also met with several members of the Australian parliament, including the Speaker, Harry Jenkins.

They discussed the value of preventive diplomacy efforts by regional organizations, and Australia's support for such initiatives. They also reviewed progress towards the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) and the strengthening of the UN-Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) partnership following its recent summit in Auckland.

The Secretary-General also conferred with Tibor Toth, the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Preparatory Commission, with their discussions focusing on the importance of achieving progress towards the entry into force

of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and its practical value for Member States.

Mr. Ban also met with five young people from Egypt, Libya, Syria, Tunisia and Yemen who have been playing important roles in the so-called “Arab Spring” pro-democracy movement.

They discussed the need to transform aspirations for change into sustainable and inclusive democratic governance, as well as the role the UN can play to assist countries in that process.

The Secretary-General commended the young people for their commitment and vision and encouraged them to pursue political engagement.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[UN chief to address world's parliamentarians at meeting in Switzerland](#)