

## At annual prayer service, Ban urges hope amid global hardships and uncertainty



Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon speaks to the service at the Church of the Holy Family in New York City. UN Photo/R. Bajornas

18 September 2012 – The values that unite humanity are coming under increasing strain, the [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon has warned, while arguing that a better world was within reach if people are willing to work, dream and pray for it together.

In his [remarks](#) last night to the service held at the Church of the Holy Family in New York City to mark the opening of the sixty-seventh General Assembly, Mr. Ban conceded that the tenets of peace, human rights and development are being tested by ongoing worldwide political and social tumult.

“Conflict continues to claim the lives of innocents from Syria to Central Africa to Afghanistan. In all regions, communities are facing economic hardship and political uncertainty,” he said, noting that both global unemployment and intolerance are also on the rise.

I believe it is out there for all the people of this Earth to grasp if we labour and dream and pray for it together.

“Perhaps it is easy for some to despair at these tests,” he continued. “But I am a believer. I believe we can rise to the challenge. And I know you believe that, too.”

Mr. Ban told those gathered about a recent day trip which took him first to the mass graves of Srebrenica and then on to London for the opening ceremony of the Olympics – a startling juxtaposition which, he said, showed him “the world as it was, and too often still is and the world as we know it can be.”

“I resolved that the road from Srebrenica must take us to a world that is more civilized, more accountable, and more humane,” Mr. Ban added, stating that despite current events and widespread conflict, a better world was nonetheless attainable.

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The Assembly’s sixty-seventh session opens today and will be presided over by the incoming President, Vuk Jeremić of Serbia.

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