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Secretary-General

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**'AFRICA NEEDS ITS YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET TO WORK ON ITS BEHALF.' SECRETARY-GENERAL
SAYS. HAILING YOUTH-FOCUSED REPORT OF PANEL ON AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT
COOPERATION**

Following are the remarks by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the presentation of the report of the Commission on Effective Development Cooperation with Africa, in New York today, 23 November:

Prime Minister [Lars Løkke] Rasmussen, we have been working very closely together on climate change. I commend your Government's engagement and your own personal involvement in another vital area of concerted international action: development cooperation with Africa.

Of course, the two are connected. African development could suffer severely, indeed is already feeling, the negative impact of climate change.

The gains made by African countries over the past decade are also being threatened by armed conflict, political upheaval and crises involving food, fuel and the global economy.

Investments are declining, businesses are struggling to survive and jobs are being lost.

Africa and its development partners must act urgently to promote stability, prosperity and peace.

I, therefore, congratulate the members of the Africa Commission, under the Chairmanship of Prime Minister Rasmussen, on their excellent work.

The report's recommendations are far-reaching. They include creating an African Guarantee Fund in partnership with the African Development Bank; ensuring access to energy; and unleashing the power of African entrepreneurship.

If they are implemented conscientiously, such steps will help mitigate the effects of the economic crisis. They could help to lift millions of people out of poverty.

I also welcome the report's emphasis on youth employment and opportunities for young people. Recent figures show that more than 60 per cent of those unemployed in sub-Saharan Africa are under 24 years old.

This terrible waste of human resources is visible on the streets of the continent's cities. Africa needs its young people to get to work on its behalf.

Since assuming office, the quest for durable peace and sustainable development in Africa has been among my top priorities. Whenever I visit the continent, I am always struck by the energy, creativity and resilience of the people.

We in the international community must strengthen our solidarity with those men, women and children as they strive to build a better future.

I call on Africa's leaders to show the bold leadership required to intensify the fight against poverty.

And I urge the donor community to help implement the report's recommendations, including through financial and technical aid.

The United Nations will continue to be Africa's close and enduring partner in this important effort.

Thank you again to all involved in making this report possible, and I would like to particularly commend and acknowledge the hard work and initiative of Minister [Ulla] Tørnæs.