

**Introduction: a historic opportunity in 2005**

1. Five years into the new millennium, we have it in our power to pass on to our children a brighter inheritance than that bequeathed to any previous generation. We can halve global poverty and halt the spread of major known diseases in the next 10 years. We can reduce the prevalence of violent conflict and terrorism. We can increase respect for human dignity in every land. And we can forge a set of updated international institutions to help humanity achieve these noble goals. If we act boldly — and if we act together — we can make people everywhere more secure, more prosperous and better able to enjoy their fundamental human rights.

2. All the conditions are in place for us to do so. In an era of global interdependence, the glue of common interest, if properly perceived, should bind all States together in this cause, as should the impulses of our common humanity. In an era of global abundance, our world has the resources to reduce dramatically the massive divides that persist between rich and poor, if only those resources can be unleashed in the service of all peoples. After a period of difficulty in international affairs, in the face of both new threats and old ones in new guises, there is a yearning in many quarters for a new consensus on which to base collective action. And a desire exists to make the most far-reaching reforms in the history of the United Nations so as to equip and resource it to help advance this twenty-first century agenda.

3. The year 2005 presents an opportunity to move decisively in this direction. In September, world leaders will come together in New York to review progress made since the United Nations Millennium Declaration [\[1\]](#) adopted by all Member States in 2000. In preparation for that summit, Member States have asked me to report comprehensively on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. I respectfully submit that report today. I annex to it a proposed agenda to be taken up, and acted upon, at the summit.

4. In preparing the present report, I have drawn on my eight years' experience as Secretary-General, on my own conscience and convictions, and on my understanding of the Charter of the United Nations whose principles and purposes it is my duty to promote. I have also drawn inspiration from two wide-ranging reviews of our global challenges — one from the 16-member High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, whom I asked to make proposals to strengthen our collective security system (see A/59/565); the other from the 250 experts who undertook the Millennium Project, which required them to produce a plan of action to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

5. In the present report, I have resisted the temptation to include all areas in which progress is important or desirable. I have limited myself to items on which I believe action is both vital and achievable in the coming months. These are reforms that are within reach — reforms that are actionable if we can garner the necessary political will. With very few exceptions, this is an agenda of highest priorities for September. Many other issues will need to be advanced in other forums and on other occasions. And, of course, none of the proposals advanced here obviate the need for urgent action this year to make progress in resolving protracted conflicts that threaten regional and global stability.

**A. The challenges of a changing world**

6. In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders were confident that humanity could, in the years ahead, make measurable progress towards peace, security, disarmament, human rights, democracy and good governance. They called for a global partnership for development to achieve agreed goals by 2015. They vowed to protect the vulnerable and meet the special needs of Africa. And they agreed that the United Nations needed to become more, not less, actively engaged in shaping our common future.

7. Five years later, a point-by-point report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration would, I feel, miss the larger point, namely, that new circumstances demand that we revitalize consensus on key challenges and priorities and convert that consensus into collective action.

8. Much has happened since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration to compel such an approach. Small networks of non-State actors — terrorists — have, since the horrendous attacks of 11 September 2001, made even the most powerful States feel vulnerable. At the same time, many States have begun to feel that the sheer imbalance of power in the world is a source of instability. Divisions between major powers on key issues have revealed a lack of consensus about goals and methods. Meanwhile, over 40 countries have been scarred by violent conflict. Today, the number of internally displaced people stands at roughly 25 million, nearly one third of whom are beyond the reach of United Nations assistance, in addition to the global refugee population of 11 to 12 million, and some of them have been the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity.

9. Many countries have been torn apart and hollowed out by violence of a different sort. HIV/AIDS, the plague of the modern world, has killed over 20 million men, women and children and the number of people infected has surged to over 40 million. The promise of the Millennium Development Goals still remains distant for many. More than one billion people still live below the extreme poverty line of one dollar per day, and 20,000 die from poverty each day. Overall global wealth has grown but is less and less evenly distributed within countries, within regions and in the world as a whole. While there has been real progress towards some of the Goals in some countries, too few Governments — from both the developed and developing world — have taken sufficient action to reach the targets by 2015. And while important work has been done on issues as diverse as migration and climate change, the scale of such long-term challenges is far greater than our collective action to date to meet them.

10. Events in recent years have also led to declining public confidence in the United Nations itself, even if for opposite reasons. For instance, both sides of the debate on the Iraq war feel let down by the Organization — for failing, as one side saw it, to enforce its own resolutions, or as the other side saw it, for not being able to prevent a premature or unnecessary war. Yet most people who criticize the United Nations do so precisely because they think the Organization is vitally important to our world. Declining confidence in the institution is matched by a growing belief in the importance of effective multilateralism.

11. I do not suggest that there has been no good news in the last five years. On the contrary, there is plenty we can point to which demonstrates that collective action can produce real results, from the impressive unity of the world after 11 September 2001 to the resolution of a number of civil conflicts, and from the appreciable increase of resources for development to the steady progress achieved in building peace and democracy in some war-torn lands. We should never despair. Our problems are not beyond our power to meet them. But we cannot be content with incomplete successes and we cannot make do with incremental responses to the shortcomings that have been revealed. Instead, we must come together to bring about far-reaching change.

## **B. Larger freedom: development, security and human rights**

12. Our guiding light must be the needs and hopes of peoples everywhere. In my Millennium Report, “We the peoples” (A/54/2000), I drew on the opening words of the Charter of the United Nations to point out that the United Nations, while it is an organization of sovereign States, exists for and must ultimately serve those needs. To do so, we must aim, as I said when first elected eight years ago, “to perfect the triangle of development, freedom and peace”.

13. The framers of the Charter saw this very clearly. In setting out to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, they understood that this enterprise could not succeed if it was narrowly based. They therefore decided to create an organization to ensure respect for fundamental human rights, establish conditions under which justice and the rule of law could be maintained, and “promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom”.

14. I have named the present report “In larger freedom” to stress the enduring relevance of the Charter of the United Nations and to emphasize that its purposes must be advanced in the lives of individual men and women. The notion of larger freedom also encapsulates the idea that development, security and human rights go hand in hand.

15. Even if he can vote to choose his rulers, a young man with AIDS who cannot read or write and lives on the brink of starvation is not truly free. Equally, even if she earns enough to live, a woman who lives in the shadow of daily violence and has no say in how her country is run is not truly free. Larger freedom implies that men and women everywhere have the right to be governed by their own consent, under law, in a society where all individuals can, without discrimination or retribution, speak, worship and associate freely. They must also be free from want — so that the death sentences of extreme poverty and infectious disease are lifted from their lives — and free from fear — so that their lives and livelihoods are not ripped apart by violence and war. Indeed, all people have the right to security and to development.

16. Not only are development, security and human rights all imperative; they also reinforce each other. This relationship has only been strengthened in our era of rapid technological advances, increasing economic interdependence, globalization and dramatic geopolitical change. While poverty and denial of human rights may not be said to “cause” civil war, terrorism or organized crime, they all greatly increase the risk of instability and violence. Similarly, war and atrocities are far from the only reasons that countries are trapped in poverty, but they undoubtedly set back development. Again, catastrophic terrorism on one side of the globe, for example an attack against a major financial centre in a rich country, could affect the development prospects of millions on the other by causing a major economic downturn and plunging millions into poverty. And countries which are well governed and respect the human rights of their citizens are better placed to avoid the horrors of conflict and to overcome obstacles to development.

17. Accordingly, we will not enjoy development without security, we will not enjoy security without development, and we will not enjoy either without respect for human rights. Unless all these causes are advanced, none will succeed. In this new millennium, the work of the United Nations must move our world closer to the day when all people have the freedom to choose the kind of lives they would like to live, the access to the resources that would make those choices meaningful and the security to ensure that they can be enjoyed in peace.

### **C. The imperative of collective action**

18. In a world of interconnected threats and challenges, it is in each country's self-interest that all of them are addressed effectively. Hence, the cause of larger freedom can only be advanced by broad, deep and sustained global cooperation among States. Such cooperation is possible if every country's policies take into account not only the needs of its own citizens but also the needs of others. This kind of cooperation not only advances everyone's interests but also recognizes our common humanity.

19. The proposals contained in the present report are designed to strengthen States and enable them to serve their peoples better by working together on the basis of shared principles and priorities — which is, after all, the very reason the United Nations exists. Sovereign States are the basic and indispensable building blocks of the international system. It is their job to guarantee the rights of their citizens, to protect them from crime, violence and aggression, and to provide the framework of freedom under law in which individuals can prosper and society develop. If States are fragile, the peoples of the world will not enjoy the security, development and justice that are their right. Therefore, one of the great challenges of the new millennium is to ensure that all States are strong enough to meet the many challenges they face.

20. States, however, cannot do the job alone. We need an active civil society and a dynamic private sector. Both occupy an increasingly large and important share of the space formerly reserved for States alone, and it is plain that the goals outlined here will not be achieved without

their full engagement.

21. We also need agile and effective regional and global intergovernmental institutions to mobilize and coordinate collective action. As the world's only universal body with a mandate to address security, development and human rights issues, the United Nations bears a special burden. As globalization shrinks distances around the globe and these issues become increasingly interconnected, the comparative advantages of the United Nations become ever more evident. So too, however, do some of its real weaknesses. From overhauling basic management practices and building a more transparent, efficient and effective United Nations system to revamping our major intergovernmental institutions so that they reflect today's world and advance the priorities set forth in the present report, we must reshape the Organization in ways not previously imagined and with a boldness and speed not previously shown.

22. In our efforts to strengthen the contributions of States, civil society, the private sector and international institutions to advancing a vision of larger freedom, we must ensure that all involved assume their responsibilities to turn good words into good deeds. We therefore need new mechanisms to ensure accountability — the accountability of States to their citizens, of States to each other, of international institutions to their members and of the present generation to future generations. Where there is accountability we will progress; where there is none we will underperform. The business of the summit to be held in September 2005 must be to ensure that, from now on, promises made are promises kept.

#### **D. Time to decide**

23. At this defining moment in history, we must be ambitious. Our action must be as urgent as the need, and on the same scale. We must face immediate threats immediately. We must take advantage of an unprecedented consensus on how to promote global economic and social development, and we must forge a new consensus on how to confront new threats. Only by acting decisively now can we both confront the pressing security challenges and win a decisive victory in the global battle against poverty by 2015.

24. In today's world, no State, however powerful, can protect itself on its own. Likewise, no country, weak or strong, can realize prosperity in a vacuum. We can and must act together. We owe it to each other to do so, and we owe each other an account of how we do so. If we live up to those mutual commitments, we can make the new millennium worthy of its name.

#### **I. Freedom from want**

The last 25 years have seen the most dramatic reduction in extreme poverty the world has ever experienced. Yet dozens of countries have become poorer. More than a billion people still live on less than a dollar a day. Each year, 3 million people die from HIV/AIDS and 11 million children die before reaching their fifth birthday.

Today's is the first generation with the resources and technology to make the right to development a reality for everyone and to free the entire human race from want.

There is a shared vision of development. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which range from halving extreme poverty to putting all children into primary school and stemming the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, all by 2015, have become globally accepted benchmarks of broader progress, embraced by donors, developing countries, civil society and major development institutions alike.

The MDGs can be met by 2015 - but only if all involved break with business as usual and dramatically accelerate and scale up action now.

In 2005, a "global partnership for development" -- one of the MDGs reaffirmed in 2002 at the International Conference on Financing for Development at Monterrey, Mexico and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa -- needs to be fully

implemented. That partnership is grounded in mutual responsibility and accountability - developing countries must strengthen governance, combat corruption, promote private sector-led growth and maximize domestic resources to fund national development strategies, while developed countries must support these efforts through increased development assistance, a new development-oriented trade round and wider and deeper debt relief.

The following are priority areas for action in 2005:

**National strategies:** Each developing country with extreme poverty should by 2006 adopt and begin to implement a national development strategy bold enough to meet the MDG targets for 2015. Each strategy needs to take into account seven broad “clusters” of public investments and policies: gender equality, the environment, rural development, urban development, health systems, education, and science, technology and innovation.

• **Financing for development:** Global development assistance must be more than doubled over the next few years. This does not require new pledges from donor countries, but meeting pledges already made. Each developed country that has not already done so should establish a timetable to achieve the 0.7% target of gross national income for official development assistance no later than 2015, starting with significant increases no later than 2006, and reaching 0.5% by 2009. The increase should be front-loaded through an International Finance Facility, and other innovative sources of financing should be considered for the longer term. The Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria must be fully funded and the resources provided for an expanded comprehensive strategy of prevention and treatment to fight HIV/AIDS. These steps should be supplemented by immediate action to support a series of “Quick Wins” - relatively inexpensive, high-impact initiatives with the potential to generate major shortterm gains and save millions of lives, such as free distribution of anti-malarial bednets.

• **Trade:** The Doha round of trade negotiations should fulfil its development promise and be completed no later than 2006. As a first step, Member States should provide duty-free and quota-free market access for all exports from the Least Developed Countries.

• **Debt relief:** Debt sustainability should be redefined as the level of debt that allows a country to achieve the MDGs and to reach 2015 without an increase in debt ratios.

New action is also needed to ensure **environmental sustainability**. Scientific advances and technological innovation must be mobilized now to develop tools for mitigating **climate change**, and a more inclusive international framework must be developed for stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions beyond the expiry of the Kyoto Protocol in 2012, with broader participation by all major emitters and both developed and developing countries. Concrete steps are also required on **desertification** and **biodiversity**.

Other priorities for global action include stronger mechanisms for **infectious disease** surveillance and monitoring, a world-wide early warning system on **natural disasters**, support for **science and technology** for development, support for **regional infrastructure** and institutions, reform of **international financial institutions**, and more effective cooperation to manage **migration** for the benefit of all.

## II. Freedom from fear

While progress on development is hampered by weak implementation, on the security side, despite a heightened sense of threat among many, the world lacks even a basic consensus - and implementation, where it occurs, is all too often contested.

The Secretary-General fully embraces a broad vision of collective security. The threats to peace and security in the 21st century include not just international war and conflict, but terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, organized crime and civil violence. They also include poverty, deadly infectious disease and environmental degradation, since these can have equally

catastrophic consequences. All of these threats can cause death or lessen life chances on a large scale. All of them can undermine States as the basic unit of the international system.

Collective security today depends on accepting that the threats each region of the world perceives as most urgent are in fact equally so for all. These are not theoretical issues, but ones of deadly urgency.

The United Nations must be transformed into the effective instrument for preventing conflict that it was always meant to be, by acting on several key policy and institutional priorities:

- **Preventing catastrophic terrorism:** States should commit to a comprehensive anti-terrorism strategy based on five pillars: dissuading people from resorting to terrorism or supporting it; denying terrorists access to funds and materials; deterring States from sponsoring terrorism; developing State capacity to defeat terrorism; and defending human rights. They should conclude a comprehensive convention on terrorism, based on a clear and agreed definition. They should also complete, without delay, the convention for the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism.
- **Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons:** Progress on both disarmament and non-proliferation are essential. On disarmament, nuclear-weapon States should further reduce their arsenals of non-strategic nuclear weapons and pursue arms control agreements that entail not just dismantlement but irreversibility, reaffirm their commitment to negative security assurances, and uphold the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. On non-proliferation, the International Atomic Energy Agency's verification authority must be strengthened through universal adoption of the Model Additional Protocol, and States should commit themselves to complete, sign and implement a fissile material cut-off treaty.
- **Reducing the prevalence and risk of war:** Currently, half the countries emerging from violent conflict revert to conflict within five years. Member States should create an inter-governmental Peacebuilding Commission, as well as a Peacebuilding Support Office within the UN Secretariat, so that the UN system can better meet the challenge of helping countries successfully complete the transition from war to peace. They should also take steps to strengthen collective capacity to employ the tools of mediation, sanctions and peacekeeping (including a "zero tolerance" policy on sexual exploitation of minors and other vulnerable people by members of peacekeeping contingents, to match the policy enacted by the Secretary-General).
- **Use of force:** The Security Council should adopt a resolution setting out the principles to be applied in decisions relating to the use of force and express its intention to be guided by them when deciding whether to authorize or mandate the use of force.

Other priorities for global action include more effective cooperation to combat **organized crime**, to prevent illicit trade in **small arms and light weapons**, and to remove the scourge of **landmines** which still kill and maim innocent people and hold back development in nearly half the world's countries.

### III. Freedom to live in dignity

In the Millennium Declaration, Member States said they would spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms. And over the last six decades, an impressive treaty-based normative framework has been advanced.

But without implementation, these declarations ring hollow. Without action, promises are meaningless. People who face war crimes find no solace in the unimplemented words of the Geneva Conventions. Treaties prohibiting torture are cold comfort to prisoners abused by their captors, particularly if the international human rights machinery enables those responsible to hide behind friends in high places. War-weary populations despair when, even though a peace agreement has been signed, there is little progress towards government under the rule of law.

Solemn commitments to strengthen democracy remain empty words to those who have never voted for their rulers, and who see no sign that things are changing.

Therefore, the normative framework that has been so impressively advanced over the last six decades must be strengthened. Even more important, concrete steps are required to reduce selective application, arbitrary enforcement and breach without consequence. The world must move from an era of legislation to implementation.

Action is called for in the following priority areas:

- **Rule of law:** The international community should embrace the “responsibility to protect”, as a basis for collective action against genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. All treaties relating to the protection of civilians should be ratified and implemented. Steps should be taken to strengthen cooperation with the International Criminal Court and other international or mixed war crimes tribunals, and to strengthen the International Court of Justice. The Secretary-General also intends to strengthen the Secretariat’s capacity to assist national efforts to re-establish the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict societies.
- **Human rights:** The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights should be strengthened with more resources and staff, and should play a more active role in the deliberations of the Security Council and of the proposed Peacebuilding Commission. The human rights treaty bodies of the UN system should also be rendered more effective and responsive.
- **Democracy:** A Democracy Fund should be created at the UN to provide assistance to countries seeking to establish or strengthen their democracy.

#### **IV. Strengthening the United Nations**

While purposes should be firm and constant, practice and organization need to move with the times. If the UN is to be a useful instrument for its Member States, and for the world’s peoples, in responding to the challenges laid out in the previous three parts, it must be fully adapted to the needs and circumstances of the 21st century.

A great deal has been achieved since 1997 in reforming the internal structures and culture of the United Nations. But many more changes are needed, both in the executive branch - the Secretariat and the wider UN system - and in the UN’s intergovernmental organs:

- **General Assembly:** The General Assembly should take bold measures to streamline its agenda and speed up the deliberative process. It should concentrate on the major substantive issues of the day, and establish mechanisms to engage fully and systematically with civil society.
- **Security Council:** The Security Council should be broadly representative of the realities of power in today’s world. The Secretary-General supports the principles for reform set out in the report of the High-level Panel, and urges Member States to consider the two options, Models A and B, presented in that report, or any other viable proposals in terms of size and balance that have emerged on the basis of either Model. Member States should agree to take a decision on this important issue before the Summit in September 2005.
- **Economic and Social Council:** The Economic and Social Council should be reformed so that it can effectively assess progress in the UN’s development agenda, serve as a high-level development cooperation forum, and provide direction for the efforts of the various intergovernmental bodies in the economic and social area throughout the UN system.
- **Proposed Human Rights Council:** The Commission on Human Rights suffers from declining credibility and professionalism, and is in need of major reform. It should be replaced by a smaller standing Human Rights Council, as a principal organ of the United Nations or subsidiary of the General Assembly, whose members would be elected directly by the General Assembly, by a two-thirds majority of members present and voting.

• **The Secretariat:** The Secretary-General will take steps to re-align the Secretariat's structure to match the priorities outlined in the report, and will create a cabinet-style decision-making mechanism. He requests Member States to give him the authority and resources to pursue a one-time staff buy-out to refresh and re-align staff to meet current needs, to cooperate in a comprehensive review of budget and human resources rules, and to commission a comprehensive review of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to strengthen its independence and authority.

Other priorities include creating better system coherence by strengthening the role of **Resident Coordinators**, giving the **humanitarian response system** more effective stand-by arrangements, and ensuring better protection of **internally displaced people**. **Regional organizations**, particularly the African Union, should be given greater support. The Charter itself should also be updated to abolish the "**enemy clauses**", the **Trusteeship Council** and the **Military Staff Committee**, all of which are outdated.

### **Conclusion: our opportunity and our challenge**

220. At no time in human history have the fates of every woman, man and child been so intertwined across the globe. We are united both by moral imperatives and by objective interests. We can build a world in larger freedom — but to do it we must find common ground and sustain collective action. This task can seem daunting, and it is easy to descend into generalities or stray into areas of such deep disagreement that differences are reinforced not overcome.

221. Yet it is for us to decide whether this moment of uncertainty presages wider conflict, deepening inequality and the erosion of the rule of law, or is used to renew our common institutions for peace, prosperity and human rights. Now is the time to act. Enough words and good intentions: in the present report I have largely limited myself to the decisions that I believe are both needed and achievable in 2005. In the annex, I have listed a number of specific items for consideration by Heads of State and Government.

222. To make the right choice, leaders will need what United States President Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose vision was so central to the founding of the United Nations, called "the courage to fulfil [their] responsibilities in an admittedly imperfect world". They will also need the wisdom to transcend their differences. Given firm, clear-sighted leadership, both within States and among them, I am confident that they can. I am also certain that they must. What I have called for here is possible. It is within reach. From pragmatic beginnings could emerge a visionary change of direction in our world. That is our opportunity and our challenge.