



Roundup

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS)
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Keeping the Promise: Outcome of the 2010 MDG Summit

INTRODUCTION

From 20-22 September, close to 140 Heads of State and Government gathered at UN Headquarters for the three-day High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), also known as the “MDG Summit.” Ten years ago, all UN Member States – 189 at that time – adopted the Millennium Declaration, which provided the basis for elaborating the eight MDG Goals, most of them with [time-bound targets](#), ranging from halving hunger and poverty by 2015 to dealing comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries.

The summit sought to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015 and to undertake a comprehensive review of successes, best practices and lessons learnt, obstacles and gaps, challenges and opportunities that could lead to concrete strategies for action. In advance of the summit, the UN Secretary-General released his report [Keeping the Promise \(A/64/665\)](#), which calls for a new pact to accelerate progress in achieving the Goals in the coming years. The report provided a basis for negotiations in the run up to the summit.

On the final day of the summit, Member States adopted an outcome document – “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals” ([document A/65/L.1](#)) – in which Member States set out an action agenda in order to reach the Goals by 2015.

The first section of this *NGLS Roundup* analyzes the outcome of the negotiations in light of civil society contributions to the summit process. The second section reviews the various plenary sessions, roundtables, side events, partnerships and other initiatives that took place during the three-day summit.

I. OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS

The outcome document – “Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals” – is principally divided into two parts. The first identifies the lessons learned over the past 10 years, including the barriers to implementation and points to opportunities for further progress. The second section is identified as an “action agenda to achieve the MDGs by 2015,” which reviews each of the eight MDGs individually and makes recommendations to advance progress on each of the Goals. It also contains a section on “the way forward,” which provides guidance on the ongoing review of implementation.

Negotiations process

In advance of the summit, the President of the General Assembly appointed two Co-facilitators – Ambassador Staur of Denmark and Ambassador Badji of Senegal – to lead the inter-governmental negotiations on the outcome document. Negotiations on the draft outcome document began in early June, with the release of the [zero draft outcome document](#). Negotiations proceeded over three months until the text was finalized on 9 September and formally adopted by Heads of State and Government at the summit itself.

Civil society inputs to the negotiations

Formal opportunities for civil society to influence the negotiations included the “[Informal Interactive Hearings of the General Assembly with Non-governmental organizations, Civil society organizations and the Private sector](#)” organized by the General Assembly President and based on the report of the Secretary-General, which took place from 14-15 June 2010 at UN Headquarters in New York. Given the limited number of civil society representatives who could speak at the hearings, NGLS also organized, in cooperation with the UN

Millennium Campaign, a global online civil society consultation which fed into the hearings process.

As reflected in the GA President's [summary of the hearings](#) and the [report of the global consultation](#), many civil society organizations and networks were calling for the summit to adopt a "Global MDG Break-through Plan" that would address some of the shortcomings of current approaches, notably by:

- taking a more holistic approach to the MDGs;
- strengthening participatory human rights-based accountability frameworks for MDG implementation at national and international levels;
- fostering new development paths more consistent with full and productive employment, food security, social inclusion and environmental sustainability;
- initiating major reforms in international economic and development cooperation pertaining to Goal 8 (a global partnership for development) – made all the more imperative in light of the major MDG setbacks caused by the global economic crisis.

After the final outcome document was released on 9 September, many initial reactions of NGOs were of disappointment with the "lack of specifics." Oxfam representative Louis Beranger, for example, said: "There's little of the 'how' these commitments will be achieved."

Following the summit, Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director of Greenpeace International said, "This is not the breakthrough plan that we need to achieve the MDGs by 2015. There are some baby steps in the right direction – particularly for workers and for education and health for all – but there's not the re-doubling of efforts that we needed to see in order for world leaders to keep the promises they made to the world's poor."

In response to such comments relayed by Reuters, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said: "You need to be realistic. This outcome document is the maximum and best we could expect at this time..." and added that it provided a "very concrete, detailed and deliverable plan of action."

Against these contrasting views, below is a summary of some of the cross-cutting issues and commitments contained in the outcome document, analyzed in relation to civil society inputs to negotiations.

Some progress, major setbacks and firm resolve to meet the Goals in time

The outcome document welcomes progress made since the last review summit in 2005, noting "major successes" in realizing some of the MDG targets. These include successes in some countries in "combating extreme poverty, improving school enrolment and child health, reducing child deaths,

expanding access to clean water, improving prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, expanding access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care, and controlling malaria, tuberculosis and neglected tropical diseases." [Para. 19]

However, it also acknowledges slow or uneven progress within and between countries and also regressions in some areas. "Hunger and malnutrition rose again from 2007 through 2009," the text says. It acknowledges "slow progress" in reaching full and productive employment and decent work for all, advancing gender equality and women's empowerment, achieving environmental sustainability and providing basic sanitation, noting also that "new HIV infections still outpace the number of people starting treatment." The text expresses "grave concern" over the slow progress in reducing maternal mortality and improving maternal and reproductive health. [Para. 20]

The text reiterates "deep concern at multiple and interrelated crises, including the financial and economic crisis, volatile energy and food prices and the increasing challenges posed by climate change and biodiversity loss." All have "increased vulnerabilities and inequalities and adversely affected development gains." [Para. 6] In this regard, the document expresses deep concern that the impact of the financial and economic crisis, "the worst since the Great Depression" threatens to seriously undermine achievement of the MDGs by 2015. [Para. 22]

But these setbacks "will not deter us in our efforts to make the Millennium Development Goals a reality for all," the text insists. [Para. 6]

The outcome document makes pledges for decisive progress on the most lagging MDG targets, most notably by welcoming the effort to reduce significantly the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths through a broad coalition of partners assembled under the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health (see section II; [Para. 73 p]).

However, the text also echoes calls by the UN Secretary-General and civil society organizations to avoid a fragmented approach to the MDGs which could lead to dysfunctional outcomes: it recognizes that "all the Millennium Development Goals are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. We therefore underline the need to pursue these Goals through a holistic and comprehensive approach."

National ownership, Goal 8 and policy space

The document reaffirms the importance of "national ownership and leadership," reiterating that "each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies, domestic resources and development

strategies cannot be overemphasized.” [Para. 10]

But conversely the text underlines “the central role” of Goal 8: “We recognize that without substantial international support, several of the Goals are likely to be missed in many developing countries by 2015.” [Para. 21]

This familiar tension between national and international responsibilities was also reflected in civil society inputs to the summit process. Many groups insisted that lack of progress under Goal 8 should not be used as an excuse by developing country governments for not better using their existing policy space to better mobilize and direct domestic resources to meet the Goals. But at the same time – quite aside from ODA obligations that are far lagging behind – they said the international community has a responsibility under Goal 8 to address systemic deficiencies and unfair rules in the global economic system to increase the policy space for countries to meet their domestic obligations.

On this count, the text does not go further than reiterating the multilateral consensus on policy space arrived at during the 2004 11th UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XI) which states that: “It is for each Government to evaluate the trade-off between the benefits of accepting international rules and commitments and constraints posed by loss of policy space.” [Para. 37]

The well-known limitations of this consensus is that it fails to address: (a) the need to integrate greater policy space for developing countries in existing global rules to make them fair; (b) inappropriate external conditionalities imposed by donors and international financial institutions; and (c) lack of policy space resulting from dictates of international market forces on national policy choices. On all these counts, raised many times by civil society in the preparatory process, the summit outcome document remains silent.

Weak commitments on human rights and accountability

In order to make decisive progress in the final countdown to 2015, many civil society coalitions echoed the UN Secretary-General’s insistence that the summit should focus heavily on setting up much stronger participatory mechanisms to hold governments accountable to their MDG commitments at national and international levels. According to many groups, a key missing dimension in MDG implementation to date is the need to firmly anchor the MDGs in a human rights framework. This would mean notably reporting MDG progress to national and international human rights oversight bodies (including the treaty monitoring bodies and the UN Human Rights Council’s Universal Periodic Review), and much more disaggregated and human rights-adjusted MDG reporting to ensure that averages do not mask major disparities between

groups, especially among women and girls, migrant workers, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples.

The outcome document makes several references to human rights – many more in number than in the “zero draft” document which was strongly criticized on this count by NGOs during the June hearings. The final text notably states that: “We recognize that the respect for and promotion and protection of human rights is an integral part of effective work towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.” [Para. 53]

There are explicit references to the substantive human rights to education [Para. 71 a], food [Para. 70 u] and health [Para. 75 a]. The strongest human rights language is related to gender equality and women’s empowerment [Para. 72], which is the only instance where reference is made to the corresponding human rights treaties and explicit commitment made to “strengthening comprehensive laws and policies and programmes to enhance accountability...” [Para. 72. g]

The human rights and special needs of indigenous peoples also receive attention: “We reaffirm that States should, in accordance with international law, take concerted, positive steps to ensure respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, on the basis of equality and non-discrimination and recognizing the value and diversity of their distinctive identities, cultures and social organization.” [Para. 55] The text later commits to “[a]ccelerating progress on the challenges faced by indigenous peoples in the context of food security, and in this regard taking special actions to combat the root causes of the disproportionately high level of hunger and malnutrition among indigenous peoples.” [Para.70 w]

In terms of the need for more disaggregated MDG monitoring, the outcome document recognizes that “all countries require adequate, timely, reliable and disaggregated data, including demographic data, in order to design better programmes and policies for sustainable development. We commit to strengthening our national statistical systems, including for effectively monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. We also reiterate the need to increase efforts in support of statistical capacity-building in developing countries.” [Para. 68] The document further refers to the UN’s “[Global Pulse Initiative](#)” which aims to build a bottom-up system of more up-to-date actionable data-collection and rapid impact and vulnerability analysis. It remains to be seen whether such data collection efforts can be adjusted to meaningfully monitor MDG progress in relation to existing human rights obligations.

Several references to the right to development are

made in the final text, which were missing in the “zero draft” version.

Amnesty International has already voiced its strong disappointment with the weakness of the final text on human rights and accountability. “Despite much rhetoric on the importance of accountability, the summit failed to identify an effective way to hold governments to account for achieving their MDG commitments or for ensuring that their MDG efforts are consistent with their human rights obligations,” said Salil Shetty, Amnesty International’s new Secretary-General and former Director of the UN Millennium Campaign. “Governments are bound by international human rights law to uphold everyone’s rights to food, health, housing and water. Yet they spent precious time in negotiations fighting over whether human rights obligations they signed up to more than 40 years ago should even be referenced in the plan of action,” he said.

In terms of accountability frameworks, the text makes only fairly general references. It calls on increased political commitment in working towards (a) “transparent and accountable systems of governance at national and international levels;” [Para. 23 n] and (b) “greater transparency and accountability in international development cooperation, in both donor and developing countries, focusing on adequate and predictable financial resources as well as their improved quality and targeting.” [Para. 23 o]

“Mutual accountability” on ODA and democratic governance

The concept of “mutual accountability” between developed and developing countries is captured in Para. 78 c. What this may mean in practice is expressed in Para. 78 f, which links fulfilment of all ODA commitments (“including the commitments by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) for ODA to developing countries by 2015...”) to “the importance of democratic governance, improved transparency and accountability, and managing for results.” All donors are strongly encouraged “to establish, as soon as possible, rolling indicative timetables that illustrate how they aim to reach their goals, in accordance with their respective budget allocation process.”

According to the [2010 MDG Gap Task Force Report](#) released just before the summit, if the 0.7% ODA target was met by all donors by 2015, it would raise over US\$300 billion per annum for development.

On how the evolution of the quality and quantity of ODA should be reviewed after the summit, the outcome document emphasizes the role of the UN’s Development Cooperation Forum “as the focal point within the United Nations system, to carry out a holistic

consideration of issues related to international development cooperation, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.” [Paras. 64 and 65]

New development strategies focused on full productive employment, agricultural restoration and building social protection floors

One distinct achievement of the summit outcome is a commitment to adopt macroeconomic and other supporting policies capable of creating much more inclusive and job-intensive patterns of growth and higher incomes, including through developing social infrastructure and productive capacities, agricultural and industrial development. [Paras. 23 b; 47]. “We stress the need to create full and productive employment and decent work for all and further resolve to promote the Global Jobs Pact as a general framework within which each country can formulate policy packages specific to its situation and national priorities in order to promote a job intensive recovery and sustainable development.” [Para. 48]



For more information on the reorientation of economic and social policies implied by the new MDG target on “full and productive employment and decent work for all” (added after the 2005 UN World Summit) see 2010 NGLS publication: *Decent Work and Fair Globalization: A Guide to Policy Dialogue* www.un-nrgs.org/decentwork

This includes ensuring that women benefit from such measures, especially by closing the wage gaps between men and women and recognizing women’s unpaid work, including care work. [Para 72. d] In fact, the text stresses that “investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth.” [Para. 54]

The outcome document emphasizes the need to strengthen support for small-holder farmers, including women, by a variety of means, including long-term investments in productivity, access to markets, credit and inputs and delivering on the commitments set out in the L’Aquila Initiative on Global Food Security, which would all contribute to increase farmers’ income earning opportunities while improving foods security. [Paras. 23 c; 70 o, p,q, r and s] The text refers also to “mitigating the impact of the high volatility of food prices on developing countries.” [Para. 70 n]

The document also commits to “promoting universal access to public and social services and providing social protection floors” which would include a wide range of measures including conditional cash transfers,

investing in basic services for health, education, water and sanitation. [Paras. 23 f; h] It mentions also “abolishing school fees” [Para. 71 c], and addressing the underlying causes for an insufficient number of qualified and adequately paid education and health care workers. [Paras. 71. e; 73. l]

“We are pleased that the draft outcome document before the Heads of State for adoption places employment, decent work and social protection at the heart of policies to achieve the MDGs, and commits governments to implementing the ILO Global Jobs Pact,” Sharan Burrow, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), said.

International tax cooperation and innovative finance

Many of the commitments in the outcome document would require a dramatic increase in national and international resources to meet the Goals by 2015. In the build up to the summit, much hope was placed on stepping up international tax cooperation to combat a “race-to-the-bottom” in progressive revenue, closing tax havens and loopholes and addressing the problem of “transfer pricing” by transnational corporations (declaring higher income where it is taxed least not where it is earned). The outcome document does refer to the need to combat tax evasion and capital flight and enhancing international cooperation on tax matters. But it falls short of the many calls for the UN to establish an intergovernmental committee on International tax matters (a proposal that featured in the “zero draft” version). The text limits itself to looking forward to the upcoming UN Secretary-General’s report on this issue. [Para. 78 i]

Much publicity was given in the week before the summit to a coalition of 60 Member States calling for the summit to adopt a financial transaction tax that could raise, depending on how broadly based, anywhere between dozens to hundreds of billion US dollars in additional funds to finance the MDGs and deal with climate change mitigation/adaptation. Given opposition by some other Member States, the consensus language captured in Para. 78 h commits to:

“Exploring new innovative finance mechanisms and strengthening and scaling up existing ones, *where appropriate*, given their potential to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Such *voluntary* mechanisms should be effective and should aim to mobilize resources that are stable and predictable, they should supplement and not be a substitute for traditional sources of finance and should be disbursed in accordance with the priorities of developing countries and not unduly burden them. We note the ongoing work in this regard, including by the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development as well as by the Task Force on International

Financial Transactions for Development and the Task Force on Innovative Financing for Education” [emphasis added].

Nothing new on debt

Despite the serious public debt problems caused by the global economic crisis in many developed and developing countries – a “new crisis” which could further cause setbacks in the realization of the MDGs – the summit did not make any substantive progress on improving the debt architecture, even though it is a key dimension of Goal 8.

Para. 78 q basically refers to the same language adopted at the June 2009 UN Conference on the financial crisis concerning debt restructuring and a temporary debt standstill “as a last resort” to help mitigate adverse impacts of the crisis and stabilize negative macroeconomic developments.

Para. 78 r on “considering enhanced approaches to sovereign debt restructuring mechanisms” stresses that it should be “based on existing frameworks and principles” rather than the new ones developed within the UN and civil society that would ensure a fair burden sharing between debtors and creditors, promote more sustainable lending practices and redefine “debt sustainability” in terms of resources required to meet the MDGs.

TRIPs and public health

Paragraph 78 t on trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPs) and public health reaffirms the right of countries to use fully the flexibilities under various WTO provisions aimed at lowering the cost of key pharmaceuticals, including through compulsory licensing. This includes provisions in a 2003 WTO General Council Decision aimed at addressing the problems of countries with insufficient or no manufacturing capacities in the pharmaceutical sector which could face difficulties in making effective use of compulsory licensing under the TRIPs Agreement. However, from the perspective of many NGOs, the procedural requirements in this decision remain mostly unworkable.

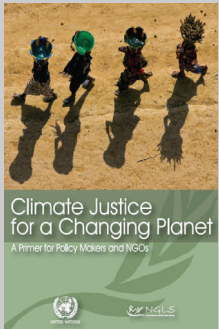
Biodiversity and climate change

The year 2010 was the deadline for reaching the MDG target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss, which clearly will not be met. The outcome document does not address this issue with any new commitments other than calling for “the successful outcome” of the tenth meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held from 18-29 October in Nagoya, Japan.

On climate change, the text reaffirms the role of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as “the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change” and calls upon States “to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and looking forward to a successful and ambitious outcome” of the forthcoming meeting in Cancun, Mexico this December. [Para. 77 g]

The text also stresses the need to work towards a “successful United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 [Rio +20].” [Para. 77 p]

Climate Justice for a Changing Planet: A Primer for Policy Makers and NGOs



The intersection between climate, sustainable development and human rights is an emerging concept but is central to the current discourse around climate change at local, national and international levels. This publication from NGLS lays out key principles to take the climate justice agenda forward and to ensure that equity is at the core of any response to climate change. The publication is intended as a starting point to begin re-framing the current climate change debate as part of a broader process of people claiming their rights to sustainable development and participation in decisions that affect their lives.

For more information and to download the publication, visit: www.un-ngls.org/climatejustice

Strengthening civil society participation in the countdown to 2015

The outcome document includes many references to civil society participation at all levels in the next phase of implementation of the MDGs. A strong statement for such inclusion is reflected in Para. 17: “We call on civil society, including non-governmental organizations, voluntary associations and foundations, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels, to enhance their role in national development efforts as well as their contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and *commit as national Governments to the inclusion of these stakeholders*” [emphasis added].

The outcome document notably views such broad consultations and participation as integral to promoting and strengthening “national ownership and leadership” in the design, implementation and monitoring of development

strategies tailored to country-specific situations. [Para. 36]

Staying engaged

As emphasized by many civil society organizations somewhat disappointed with the lack of specifics in the outcome document, much of the follow-up will have to take place at the national level. Salil Shetty stressed that “the way forward lies with individual governments setting national targets to realize economic, social and cultural rights. They must also act to end discrimination and ensure people living in poverty can participate in MDG efforts and hold governments to account through courts and regulatory bodies.”

In a similar vein, Lysa John, global Campaign Director for the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) said: “I think what we need to do from here is focus on the urgency for national action and that is the only thing that is going to solve this [disappointment with the outcome document]. In the last year, all the signals we have got is that people come here to the UN and go back scot-free on the MDG agenda because it is not binding and there is no legal compulsion to do anything. We have to ensure that our global dialogue is backed up with national action.”

However, there is still much international work that needs to go into meeting the “unfinished business” under Goal 8, which is the area in the outcome document that falls most short of [civil society proposals for the summit](#) and by its nature *requires* international cooperation and action.

The outcome document reaffirms “the role that the Charter of the United Nations and the General Assembly have vested in the Economic and Social Council [ECOSOC] as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals.” It emphasizes in this regard international follow-up action by ECOSOC’s Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum and looks forward to the upcoming review of the strengthening of ECOSOC during the current session of the General Assembly. [Para. 80]

In addition to calling on the General Assembly to continue to review the progress of implementation of the MDGs, the outcome document requests the President of the 68th session of the General Assembly to organize a “special event” in 2013 to follow up on efforts made towards achieving the MDGs. It also calls on the UN Secretary-General to make recommendations for further steps to advance the UN’s development agenda beyond 2015.

- Read the concluding [press release](#).
- [Read also](#) “UN summit confident of achieving MDGs on time if world delivers on promises.”

II. EVENTS DURING THE SUMMIT

The “official” part of the summit consisted of six plenary meetings and six interactive roundtable sessions. In addition, around 80 partnership events were organized by governments, UN agencies and leaders from civil society, foundations and the private sector (see below). Many of these resulted in announcements of new initiatives, including on women’s and children’s health. The last day of the summit was held in parallel with a [high-level General Assembly meeting on biodiversity](#), followed by the [opening of the annual high-level debate](#) on 23 September and a special two-day meeting on the sustainable development of [Small Island Developing States](#) (24-25 September).

Plenary Statements

[Opening the summit](#), incoming GA President Joseph Deiss referred to a line from the Swiss Constitution: “The strength of the community is measured by the well-being of the weakest of its members.” Mr. Deiss noted that such a phrase acknowledges a moral duty to care about the wellbeing of others. “It seems to me that this aptly sums up what the international community undertook to do when it established the Millennium Development Goals,” he stressed.

Mr. Deiss called on all participants, as individuals, Heads of State and Government, and members of the UN to “reaffirm the commitment made at the Millennium Summit and declare that we want to create, today, the conditions that are needed in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.” Concluding, he urged, “We do not have the right to fail. The eyes of the world are upon us, let us not disappoint it.”

Ali Abdussalam Treki (Libya), former Assembly President in the run-up to the summit, in his [remarks](#) over the negotiation of the final outcome document, stressed that “we have forged a strong international consensus on the full and timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Negotiated over many months and many hours, the intensity of the discussions indicate how much importance is attached to the MDGs by all countries. We may disagree and have differences of opinion on how best to achieve these Goals, but we are in agreement as to the importance of not allowing the poor to be left behind.”

The UN Secretary-General, in his [statement](#), stressed that the MDGs were still achievable if the global community stayed “true” to the commitments they had endorsed 10 years ago. Being true also meant addressing inequality, both among and within countries. “The clock is ticking, with much more to do,” he urged. Concluding, he called on world leaders to provide the necessary investment, aid and political will to end extreme poverty. “There is no global project more worthwhile,” Mr. Ban [said](#). “Let us send a strong message of hope. Let us keep the promise.”

United States President Barack Obama gave what many at the summit regarded as a major development policy speech. He welcomed the significant progress in meeting some MDGs in many countries and celebrated the emergence of leading countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia in the global economy, but warned that progress was not coming nearly fast enough. “This is the reality we must face – that if the international community just keeps doing the same things the same way, we will miss many development goals. That is the truth. With 10 years down and just five years before our development targets come due, we must do better.”

President Obama announced his administration’s new “US Global Development Policy – the first of its kind by an American administration.” He had already emphasized that his national security strategy “recognizes development as not only a moral imperative, but a strategic and economic imperative.” He insisted that “aid alone is not development.... Consider the millions of people who have relied on food assistance for decades. That’s not development, that’s dependence, and it’s a cycle we need to break.... [T]he purpose of development – and what’s needed most right now – is creating the conditions where assistance is no longer needed.” Addressing himself to developing country governments, he said: “[W]e will partner with countries that are willing to take the lead. Because the days when your development was dictated in foreign capitals must come to an end.” To developed country governments he insisted: “Let’s resolve to put an end to hollow promises that are not kept. Let’s commit to the same transparency that we expect of others.”

French President Nicolas Sarkozy in his statement asked if the recent crisis was going to be used as a “pretext for doing less” or as an opportunity to keep the promises made 10 years ago. He urged participants to consider innovative financing measures to generate the resources necessary to meet the Goals. “Finance has globalized, so why should we not ask finance to participate in stabilizing the world by taking a tax on each financial transaction,” President Sarkozy said, adding that he would press for a global tax when France is chair of the Group of 20 and Group of Eight countries next year.

Wen Jiabao, Premier of the State Council of China, said progress towards the MDGs was uneven. Many countries had not yet made headway in improving the health of women and children, achieving gender equality and protecting the environment. A number of developing countries were hit hard by the global financial crisis, natural disasters and volatile food and energy markets. The global population living in hunger had increased. Achieving the Goals remained a “long and uphill journey.” China still had imbalances in development, as tens of millions of its people were still

below the poverty line, but he said it was convinced it would achieve the Goals through greater emphasis on poverty alleviation. He added that China and its Government would contribute its share towards early achievement of the Goals throughout the world. The international community must, with a greater sense of urgency and responsibility, put the achievement of the Goals on top of its agenda, so they were not interrupted or delayed by other issues. Developed countries should also honour their official commitments, improve coordination and cooperation to implement aid and uphold a durable peace and stability.

President of Bolivia, Evo Morales, said, rather than incessantly focusing on the effects of extreme poverty, more time should be spent discussing its causes. Unfair wealth distribution had created deprivation and the current economic and political framework was not geared towards solving that problem.

Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Prime Minister of Spain, said it was possible to fulfil the Goals in the next five years if each country fulfilled its commitments. First, countries had to keep up their efforts and maintain their attention on development despite the financial crisis. Second, all governments should clearly support a tax on international financial transactions. It was logical that nations undertake minimum efforts via the financial system to lift millions out of extreme poverty.

Bingu wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi and Chairperson of the African Union, speaking on Malawi's MDG Progress Report, said, "For Africa as a whole, we strongly appeal to the United Nations to review the supply side to improve access of ordinary people, especially women and children, to the services envisaged under the MDGs. Most MDGs depend on the availability of more schools, more hospitals, more rural infrastructures, more boreholes, dams and wells, more trained teachers, doctors, nurses, agronomists, scientists and more trained civil servants. We need teaching and learning materials, we need school feeding programmes, we need extensive immunization programmes. These need to be produced to push the MDG agenda. I said this when I addressed the General Assembly in 2005. I am saying this again. Let us pay attention to the supply side of the MDGs if we are to meet these Goals," he urged.

Micheline Calmy-Rey, Federal Councillor of Switzerland, noted that progress in reducing the number of poor people worldwide, in access to primary education and drinking water, and in gender equality was still insufficient. She noted that the majority of the countries and regions which were off track in achieving the MDGs were characterized by fragility of State institutions, conflict or armed violence, and that measures needed to be taken to ensure the provision

of basic services and the proper functioning of national institutions. To achieve the Goals, she called for mutual accountability among countries; respect for human rights and the right for all social groups, namely women and minorities, to participate; the creation of economic foundations for the improved wellbeing of all; as well as the rule of law in the private sector, and appropriate taxation for both enterprises and individuals.

The Goals, as important as ever since their adoption 10 years ago, even as the world had experienced significant changes, were a common reference point for the joint effort to create a better world for the poorest and most vulnerable people, said Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark. He said the international community needed to focus on the Goals' implementation during the remaining five years. Without private sector-driven growth, however, the international community would not be successful in eradicating poverty or mobilizing the necessary domestic resources for education, health and other social services. Ensuring that the benefits of growth reached the poor was especially important in Africa. He also stressed that equality and equal opportunities for women were a vital engine for economic and social development, and there was no chance of achieving the Goals without a strengthened focus on women's empowerment. Women must be able to freely decide if and when they wanted children and they needed access to health services when giving birth.

Nick Clegg, Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, stated that, behind the "officialese" of the MDG Summit, development meant the right of every person to have freedom from hunger, disease, poverty, ignorance and the right to take their life into their own hands and determine their own fate. He noted that progress was uneven and that a number of the Goals were off-track. That said, he stated, "the message is: we will keep our promises and we expect the rest of the international community to do the same."

Laura Chinchilla, Miranda, President of Costa Rica, said that her country had fully accomplished the second MDG on universal elementary education. All school age Costa Rican children now attended educational centres. However, the government was worried that only 90% of them actually completed the cycle. The country was, therefore, working so that by 2015, all children would complete school. That challenge was bigger with regard to higher education, where 89% of the young people entered high school but only 40% completed it. Monetary transfer programmes targeting families with limited resources had helped reduce the dropout problem.

As the first woman President in her country's history, she was particularly proud of its advances in the participation of women in political life. Nearly 40% of the

members of Congress were women, as were 30% of the Supreme Court members. On the environment and sustainable development, her country's dedication preceded MDG 7 as measures taken four decades ago meant that 25.9% of the national territory was under some type of environmental management or conservation scheme. The government was promoting several initiatives so that Costa Rica could generate 100% of its electricity from renewable sources in the next 10 years. The country was also working on the reduction of the production of greenhouse gases and had committed to making the country carbon-neutral. Costa Rica recognized that sustainable human development must be supported with democratic governance, the rule of law, transparency, respect for human rights, peace and security, she stressed. It believed that freedom must be part of development, but, in order to achieve development, there needed to be an intelligent link between growth, health, innovation, respect for the environment and the reduction of poverty.

Ivan Gašparovič, President of Slovakia, linked achievement of the Goals and sustainable development to national ownership and good governance in developing countries. All national development policies and strategies had to respect that basic principle. Most would agree that the key task was to support economic growth and job creation in developing countries. But, good political governance, fighting corruption, and preventing armed conflict were no less important. Two thirds of States facing the most difficulty in fulfilling the Goals were either going through conflict, or had done so recently. Highlighting the importance of domestic efforts in partner countries, he cited a need for higher tax revenues through better tax administration, transparent tax policies, measures to combat tax evasion, and the creation of ample conditions to bring in foreign investment. The absence of an agreement at the multi-lateral trade negotiations, and the remaining barriers to world markets for developing countries, remained a problem. More efficient financing also needed to be ensured, with particular emphasis on the key role of the private sector.

Ralph E. Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, said his country had made tremendous strides in the last 10 years to achieve the Goals. For example, it had far exceeded the standard set in Goal 1 to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty. In the last decade, extreme poverty had been reduced from 26% of the population to 2.9%. But poverty, more broadly defined, remained a vexing challenge, with 30% of people struggling with less extreme forms of poverty. Moreover, there are still many obstacles to achieving the Goals in the national, regional and international contexts, he said, citing Goal 8 (global partnership) as that most woefully unmet. As developing countries struggled to advance an

increasingly difficult economic environment, development partners had replaced their pledges of assistance with platitudes and empty rhetoric. The developing world had received US\$120 billion in 2009, far short of the US\$300 billion that had been pledged. The Gleneagles commitments to Africa were US\$20 billion short. The financial crisis and failed WTO Doha Development Round belie the Goal 8 pledge to develop an open, rule-based, non-discriminatory trading and financial system. "Somehow, we are expected to soldier on, with less assistance than promised, and in an international environment that is hostile to development," he stressed.

Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, recalled that the purpose of the current meeting was to elaborate strategies for accelerating the process of achieving the Goals. The environment had changed radically since the Goals were adopted. The growth of globalization and the resulting economic crisis, the growing influence of new partners for development in the East and South of the world and the growing effect of climate change were all factors presenting new challenges to development. "We need to ensure we are having a discussion for today and tomorrow's reality, not yesterday's," he said.

Encouraging South-South dialogue and economic cooperation, he stressed that agencies must work together to empower nation States. The lessons of the last 10 years showed that, even when resources were available and action plans adopted, progress had been sadly too slow. What was needed was to foster new working relationships and the adoption of values that were informed by home-grown priorities and owned by local leaders; empowered citizens and enabled communities to work productively; and balanced historical and cultural heritage with innovation and social progress. When governments owned their developments and real partnerships were formed between supporters and those supported, where the agenda was designed and executed by the people for whom it was intended, then tangible results were achieved and livelihoods were improved.

View statements to the summit

20 September <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/debate/20092010.shtml>

21 September <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/debate/21092010.shtml>

22 September <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/debate/22092010.shtml>

Roundtable 1: Poverty, hunger and gender equality

Reporting on Roundtable 1, on “poverty hunger and inequality,” Co-Chair Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, said participants had agreed that concrete national and international actions were needed to achieve the MDGs, which were essential for economic and social development efforts. Member States had committed to pursuing policies for inclusive sustainable development, giving priority attention to alleviating the effects of recent global crises and climate change. The participants had also pledged to mobilize private and public sector resources and increased development assistance. Additionally, they had recognized the promotion of gender equality and the need to include women in all levels of decision making and to implement gender-responsive laws.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

Roundtable 2: Meeting the goals of health and education

Summing up Roundtable 2, on “meeting the Goals in health and education,” Co-Chair Gert Rosenthal (Guatemala) said that several speakers had underscored the link between education and health. As the two sectors were central to poverty reduction and achieving all the Goals, many interventions had stressed that they must be closely coordinated in national development plans. Inequalities in education and health were seen as barriers to attaining the Goals. It was therefore crucial to improve access to good-quality education and health services, particularly for women and children, those living in rural and remote areas, vulnerable and poor populations and persons living with disabilities.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

Roundtable 3: Promoting sustainable development

Summarizing discussions of Roundtable 3, on “promoting sustainable development,” Co-Chair Etta Elizabeth Banda, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malawi, said that social, economic and environmental policies needed to be better integrated and the link between environment and development strengthened. National ownership of agreed development goals was crucial and commitment to better governance essential. All participants had given priority to improving access to clean water, reducing mortality, facilitating education and promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. There had been a call to address the most fundamental rights of urban slum dwellers, including access to water and sanitation, adequate shelter, nutrition, health and education. Investment in ecological infrastructure had been underscored, and peace and stability identified as essential preconditions for

sustainable development and a better quality of life for all.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

Roundtable 4: Addressing emerging issues and evolving approaches

Concerning the work of Roundtable 4, on “addressing emerging issues and evolving approaches,” Co-Chair Tarja Halonen, President of Finland, identified an urgent need for a new development paradigm with environmental sustainability and social inclusion at its centre. Moving to a green economy was both necessary and feasible, although several participants had said that financial assistance beyond existing commitments for ODA would be needed. A more comprehensive approach to the global financial and economic crisis had been called for; a long-term solution would require a review of regulatory oversight, pursuing reforms and putting job creation and decent work at the heart of macroeconomic policies. Basic social protection floors were important for combating poverty and rising inequalities. She also said participants were concerned that the importance of food security had been underestimated and had stressed that more investment was needed to feed a growing world and to improve rural livelihoods.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

Roundtable 5: Addressing the special needs of the most vulnerable

Summing up Roundtable 5, “addressing the needs of the most vulnerable,” Co-Chair Winston Baldwin Spencer, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Antigua and Barbuda, said the international community must spare no effort to advance equality and non-discrimination in terms of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, geographical location and HIV status. More disaggregated data was needed to determine who were the most vulnerable and why. Adequate resources were needed to tackle basic sources of vulnerability, such as lack of access to adequate nutrition, education, skills training, health services and decent jobs. Speakers had urged the international community to help vulnerable countries meet their specific needs and development challenges, focusing urgent action on effective aid and trade policies, fulfilling all ODA commitments and further mobilizing financing for development, capacity-building and technology transfer.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

Roundtable 6: Widening and strengthening partnerships

On Roundtable 6, regarding “widening and strengthening partnership,” Co-Chair Tina Intelmann (Estonia) said that,

while the responsibility for development lay with both developing and developed countries, the role of civil society and the private sector had also been acknowledged. Increasing the effectiveness and quality of aid according to the Paris Declaration was most essential. Ultimately, participants had said, governments were responsible for their own development. Another precondition to development was creating a stable and secure environment, involving the rule of law and the fight against crime. The roundtable had also acknowledged the need for a fair and equitable trading system to strengthen global partnership. Finally, it had recognized that many countries were in debt distress and that more mechanisms were required to deal with sovereign debt.

Click [here](#) for the background note.

To access civil society statements from the roundtables, click [here](#).

CLOSING PLENARY

In his [remarks](#) to the closing plenary, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted that the summit had laid a solid foundation for the progress needed in the quest to achieve the MDGs by 2015. “All the key issues and ideas have been on the table – part of the discussion – and now part of the outcome document. Jobs, especially green jobs. Inclusive and sustainable development. The need for a successful Doha Trade Round outcome. Smallholder farming, food and nutrition security. Inclusive financial services. Women’s health and empowerment. A rejuvenated global partnership,” he stressed.

Noting that the push forward should “begin now, this very minute,” he added, “In the past, we have seen that when the spotlights are switched off, world attention quickly moves on to other issues. With only five years left, we cannot let that happen.... The consequences of doing otherwise are profound: death, illness and despair, needless suffering, lost opportunities for millions upon millions of people.”

Mr. Ban highlighted the need to “hold each other accountable” and said he would look ahead, beyond the deadline for the Goals, in response to the request in the outcome document, to initiate a process that will result in a post-2015 framework for the development work of the UN. “I ask that all of you also consider the long-term, even as you intensify your efforts to achieve the Goals in the next five years,” he concluded.

The draft outcome document is available [online](#).

Access the webcast of the plenary meetings [here](#).

Side events, partnerships and other initiatives

Over 80 side events brought together a wide range of stakeholders, including Heads of State and Government as well as leaders from civil society, the private sector and the philanthropic community, throughout the summit. Topics discussed ranged from reducing child under-nutrition, to addressing the global water and sanitation challenge, to the [MDGs eNabler](#), which aims to use web-based knowledge tools and information resources to provide tangible and practical benefits to developing countries in their efforts to advance MDGs.

The most note-worthy partnership event was the launch by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Heads of State and Government, along with the private sector, foundations, international organizations, civil society and research organizations, of the Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health that aims to save the lives of more than 16 million women and children. To be led by the Secretary-General, the Global Strategy provides a road map that identifies the finance and policy changes needed, as well as critical interventions that can and do improve health and save lives. It also lays out an approach for global, multi-sector collaboration.

Read the press release [here](#).

For more information on the Global Strategy, click [here](#).

Compilation of Partnership Events and Action Commitments

A number of new initiatives and commitments were announced during the summit. A compilation report by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Office for Partnerships aims to capture commitments and planned outcomes announced in support of the MDGs. The events reflected in this report span the range of initiatives required to reach the MDGs: some have a focus on advocacy and raising long term awareness, while others concern major campaign initiatives to be launched in support of specific MDGs. The compilation serves as an indication of the sort of necessary actions that are being put in place and aims to encourage innovative thinking about working together and serving as a catalyst for tangible progress to achieving the MDGs.

To view the compilation report of action commitments made at various partnership events in support of the MDG Summit, click [here](#).

For a list of side events, click [here](#).

For summit and side event coverage by the International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Service (IISD RS), click [here](#).

Useful resources

The outcome document “ Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals ” is available online: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/mdg%20outcome%20document.pdf>.

The Report of the MDG Gap Task Force 2010, “ The Global Partnership for Development at a Critical Juncture, ” is available online: [http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/10-43282_MDG_2010%20\(E\)%20WEBv2.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/10-43282_MDG_2010%20(E)%20WEBv2.pdf).

The Millennium Development Goal Report 2010 is available online: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/MDG%20Report%202010%20En%20r15%20-low%20res%2020100615%20-.pdf>.

The report of the UN Secretary-General, “ Keeping the promise: a forward-looking review to promote an agreed action agenda to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 ” (A/64/665) is available online: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/64/665.

Access the UNDG: Thematic Papers on the MDGs & MDG Good Practices Publications here: <http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=1392>.

Access news and media from the summit here: <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/news.shtml>.

Further information, including civil society position statements and recommendations, is available on the NGLS MDG2010 website: <http://www.un-ngls.org/spip.php?page=mdg2010>.

NGLS 's interactive panel discussion: “ The MDG Summit Outcome: What Next? ”

On 4 October, NGLS is organizing a briefing and interactive panel discussion in Geneva, entitled “ The MDG Summit Outcome: What Next? ” The meeting will take stock of the outcome of the United Nations MDG Summit and will discuss the next steps and challenges ahead for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other key UN objectives.

The panel, including representatives of the UN system and civil society organizations, will examine the extent to which the summit lived up to expectations (whether in terms of strengthened human rights-based accountability frameworks, new development paths, a universal social protection floor, or reforms of the international development and financial architecture) ; and will identify the new openings offered by the summit outcome document, and gaps that still need to be addressed. Further information will be posted on the NGLS website as it becomes available.



Opening of MDG Advocacy Group Meeting, Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda and Co-chair of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Advocacy Group, convenes the opening session of the Group 's meeting. He is flanked by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (Left) and Joseph Deiss, President of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. 22 September 2010 / UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

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