



NORWAY

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STATEMENT

By

H.E. Mr Jens Stoltenberg
Prime Minister

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Mr President, Excellencies,

60 years ago, in the fall of 1948, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

That international bill of rights contains a forceful reminder that force can and will be checked, and that a prime purpose of our work here is to keep the strong just and the weak secure.

We will celebrate the Universal Declaration on Human Rights later this fall. And we shall be guided by its wording in everything we do.

The rights and opportunities of individuals, groups and countries are fundamental. And the United Nations is at the top of a system that oversees these superior rules.

When I come here every year, I am struck by the broad span of items which are discussed here.

We need to ask: Are we focussing on the truly essential, most serious issues of our times.

This year we left behind the unfinished business of the Doha Round on trade. The break-up stalled us in providing billions of people increased economic opportunity. It is compelling that we restart the process.

We face a global food crisis. The Secretary-General described its effect on hundred of millions of people who do not know if they will have enough to eat tomorrow.

Climate and energy are among the biggest issues of our time. They must be on the top of our agenda.

These big issues are also all about poverty, inequity and gender.

Leadership is called for. Leadership here at the United Nations.

I believe we face, not only a food crisis,
an energy crisis,
a climate crisis,
a trade talk crisis,
but a larger, decision-making crisis.

We have great institutional capacity.
We discuss, we deliberate and we study
But we are too often unable to decide.
Often, those countries,
who want the least. -
Those countries
decide the most.

Those who want the least of change and progress
are able to slow us down
and block decisions.
And now also the Security Council seems to face difficulties,

after many good years.

All countries

All member states

Share the responsibility for the functioning of the United Nations

As a decision-making body,

that serves us,

which is for people.

That solves global problems

And allows all people to benefit from the rights with which they were born

And which are written in the Declaration on Human Rights.

To become more effective the United Nations must reform.

The Secretary-General addressed this with strong conviction on Tuesday.

We should support him in that process.

I am vesting hope in the ongoing deliberation on system-wide coherence.

I co-chaired the High Level Panel on System Wide Coherence.

And I am heartened that more and more countries seem to opt in on the One -
UN approach.

Some organizations, funds and programmes are making efficiency gains.

They are truly exceptions.

Still, Norway is committed to using the United Nations as the arena for our most
important international policy-making activities.

We are the 7th largest contributor to the UN in absolute terms.

That is why we will be keeping an eye of scrutiny on how the funds and programmes manage their resources and our contributions.

We and other donor countries will have to require improved accountability, transparency and a result based management system.

Mr President,

Reaching the Millennium Development Goals is our foremost priority.

We have taken on a special responsibility regarding Millennium Development Goal number 4 on child mortality and number 5 regarding maternal health.

We must all dedicate the next seven years to the bottom billion.

Several leaders joined me today in presenting a report from the Global Campaign for the Health Millennium Development Goals.

And we presented a plan for the next seven years-

It is an exceptional plan that can allow us to save 10 million lives.

If we succeed, we will build more sustainable societies.

We will reduce conflict potential.

And provide a better basis for growth.

We are making progress towards the Millennium Goals.

Poverty is being reduced

Child mortality is falling.

But we have not made any progress with regard to maternal health.

The fact that we have not made any significant progress at all in reducing the number of women who die in pregnancy or childbirth, is appalling.

There can only be one reason for this awful situation

And that is persistent neglect of women in a world dominated by men.

Just think of all these millions of young girls and young women,
who know, and who fear and dread,
that giving life may cause their death.

And all this human tragedy is avoidable

By simple means.

But we have not taken the problem seriously.

Mr President,

Money doesn't seem to be a problem when the problem is money.

Let us look for a moment on what is happening on Wall street and in financial markets around the world.

There, unsound investment threatens the homes and the jobs of the middle class.

There is something fundamentally wrong when money seems to be abundant,
but funds for investment in people seem so short in supply.

The market mechanisms will not fund the schools in Afghanistan, the hospitals in Rwanda, or the vaccines given in the slums and the ghettos.

That kind of investment requires political will and decisions.

And we must provide the framework that will direct resources toward these ends.

Robert Kennedy was running for president 40 years ago, and said in a speech, that a country's health can not be measured simply by its economic output. That output, he said, "counts special locks for our doors and the jails for those who break them" but not the health of our children, the quality of their education or the joy of their play".

And still I would add - that health, - that education - and also the joy of that play - is the capital that must grow and spread.

Then, only, will we reach up to more equal levels of development and opportunity.

Mr President, I have come here directly from a visit to the great rain forests of the Amazon, Brazil, - a country where its president is committed to lifting his people out of destitution.

That has been President Lula's Leitmotiv all through his political life.

Norway is a fortunate and developed country.

With that follows a moral responsibility.

We pursue wider development goals, and seek to generate positive incentives for change, and improve climate change policies.

Efforts against deforestation may give us the largest, quickest and cheapest reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

In the years leading up to 2015, Norway will contribute up to 1 billion US dollars to reduce deforestation in the Amazon.

This makes Norway the first contributor to the Amazon Fund.

The size of Norway's contribution will depend on how successful Brazil will be in reducing deforestation.

In Bali last December – Norway announced a major initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Deforestation must be included in a new global agreement on climate change.

Addressing climate change in a fashion that will stand the test of time – and the scrutiny of future generations – ultimately boils down to us against the sand in the hourglass. It is a test of maturity for international cooperation.

Finally, a few words about a fellow Nordic country.

For the first time since becoming a UN member in 1946 – after 62 years – Iceland is a candidate for the Security Council.

Iceland's candidature reflects the long-standing commitment of all the Nordic countries to international peace and the vital work of the United Nations.

Iceland enjoys the active support of its partners in the Nordic group: Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway. Please take this into account.

Thank you.