



**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
“Pulling Together in Testing Times: Securing a Better Future for All”
New York, 23 September 2010**

Mr. President,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to New York in this beautiful autumn season.

And welcome to the opening of this 65th general debate.

Mr. President, congratulations.

I look forward to working closely with you in the year ahead ... across the full range of challenges facing our community of nations.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We ... the peoples of the United Nations ... are bound by certain sacred duties and obligations.

To care for the welfare of others ...

To resolve conflicts peacefully ...

To act in the world with empathy and understanding ...

To practice tolerance and mutual respect as a bedrock principle of civilization.

Today, we are being tested.

Social inequalities are growing ... among nations and within.

Everywhere, people live in fear of losing jobs and incomes.

Too many are caught in conflict, women and children bearing the brunt.

And we see a new politics at work — a politics of polarization.

We hear the language of hate ... false divisions between “them” and “us” ... those who insist on “their way” or “no way.”

Amid such uncertainty ... so much confusion of purpose ... we naturally seek a moral compass.

At the UN, we find the proper path in community ... global common cause ... mutual responsibility for a destiny we share.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the soul of global governance, the theme of this General Assembly.

A collective stand ... principled and pragmatic ... against forces that would divide us.

And that is why the United Nations remains the indispensable global institution for the 21st-century.

As we gather today, in solidarity, let us recognize:

This is a season for pulling together ... for consolidating progress ... for putting our shoulder to the wheel and delivering results.

Real results ... for people most in need ... as only the UN can do.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Together, over the past three years, we embraced an ambitious agenda ... framed by three over-arching ideas for our time.

A more prosperous world, free of the deepest poverty.

A cleaner, greener, more sustainable world for our children.

A safer world, free of nuclear weapons.

These are the great challenges of our era.

They are not dreams.

They are opportunities, within our power to grasp.

Together, we have made progress.

We will press ahead — with fresh thinking ... fresh approaches ... a strong sense of leadership and political will.

The MDG Summit showed our collective determination.

One hundred and thirty-nine heads of state and government came together with concrete national plans to meet the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

They agreed on a responsible and mutually accountable partnership ... a partnership that will better the lives of billions of people within our generation.

Our challenge is to deliver on this promise ... to turn hopes into realities.

We must draw on lessons learned over the past decade:

Helping people to help themselves;

Investing resources where they have the greatest effect — smart investment in education, decent work, health, smallholder agriculture, infrastructure and green energy;

The importance of putting women at the fore.

That is why, at the Summit, I welcomed the endorsement of our Global Strategy for Women and Children's Health.

Backed by billions of dollars in new commitments ... from governments, business, NGOs and philanthropic organizations ... this was a tangible expression of global solidarity.

That is also why, last week, I named a dynamic new head of UN Women.

In Michelle Bachelet, the former President of Chile, we found a global leader who can inspire millions of women and girls around the world.

We must support her to the utmost.

Because ... by empowering women, we empower societies.

[Pause]

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Three years ago, we called climate change the “defining challenge” of our era ... and so it remains.

Clearly, the road toward a comprehensive, binding agreement ... in Cancun and beyond ... will not be easy.

And yet, we have made progress ... and we can make more.

This is a year to build on important areas of agreement — on financing for adaptation and mitigation ... on technology transfer ... on capacity-building and preventing deforestation.

In the longer-term, we face the “50-50-50 challenge.”

By 2050, the world’s population will grow by 50 percent.

To keep climate change in check, we will need to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent by then.

The world looks to us for creative solutions.

And that is why, on Sunday, we hosted the first meeting of our high-level Panel on Global Sustainability.

I am confident it will stimulate new thinking as we work toward Rio+20 in 2012.

[Pause]

On nuclear disarmament, as well, we see new momentum:

A new START agreement ... the Summit on Nuclear Security ... a successful NPT review conference.

Our role is to keep pushing ... to find a path to bring the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty into force ... to realize agreements on fissile materials and securing nuclear materials and facilities.

Tomorrow, we are hosting a high level meeting to rejuvenate the Conference on Disarmament.

I believe the next few years will be critical.

Will we advance our work on non-proliferation and disarmament ... or will we slide back?

It is up to us.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As always, over the past year, we were there for those in urgent need:

The people of Pakistan, coping with epic floods and the monumental task of reconstruction;

The people of Haiti, where the work of rebuilding goes on ... and where so many lost their lives, including 101 of our colleagues;

The people of Somalia ... Sudan ... Niger ... Gaza.

As always, we continue to work for peace and security.

Three years ago, in partnership with the African Union, we deployed the first peacekeeping force in Darfur.

During the coming year, the UN will be critical to keeping a larger peace as north and south Sudan decide their future. Tomorrow's High-Level Meeting on Sudan will help chart that path.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we have adapted our mission to new and changing circumstances.

We have worked closely with the African Union in Somalia.

We have seen victories for preventive diplomacy, as well.

In Iraq, we helped broker the compromises that kept this year's elections on track.

In Guinea, we stand with regional partners in insisting on democracy.

In Sierra Leone, we helped defuse confrontations and keep peace moving forward.

Quick-footed diplomacy helped contain the troubles in Kyrgyzstan.

In Afghanistan, we carry on our work despite exceptionally difficult security and humanitarian conditions.

We will seek to reduce tensions on the Korean Peninsula and encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks.

On Iran, we continue to urge the government to engage constructively with the international community and comply fully with Security Council resolutions.

In the Middle East, we see encouraging movement toward a comprehensive peace.

Working with the Quartet, we will do everything possible to help bring negotiations to a successful conclusion.

I strongly discourage either side from any action that would hold back progress.

In all we do, human rights are at the core. There can be no peace without justice.

The global community has worked hard and long to usher in a new “age of accountability.”

In our modern era, let us send a clear message:

No nation, large or small, can violate the rights of its citizens with impunity.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me close on a theme that has defined our work together: building a stronger UN for a better world.

The renovation of our Secretariat is on track ... on schedule ... on budget.

Organizational changes introduced over the past few years are bearing fruit.

Among them: the “New Horizons” initiative to streamline peacekeeping operations.

In consultation with the members and our staff, we will do all in our power to create a faster, more modern, flexible and effective UN workforce ... to recruit the best talent of tomorrow.

Excellencies,

Today and in the months ahead, we will speak of many things — important issues, affecting all humankind.

Let us remember, in these difficult times: we are being tested.

Let us remember: the many lives lost in service to our ideals.

Let us remember: the world still looks to the United Nations for moral and political leadership.

The great goals are within reach.

We can achieve them by looking forward ... pulling together ... uniting our strength as a community of nations ... in the name of the larger good.

Thank you.