

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL HUMAN SOLIDARITY DAY**

**20 December 2010**

International Human Solidarity Day highlights the importance of acting in common cause on behalf of society's most vulnerable people. One of the most far-reaching expressions of this principle is found in the Millennium Declaration, in which United Nations Member States include solidarity as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century.

The Millennium Declaration states that "global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most." The Declaration also defines a set of objectives known as the Millennium Development Goals – a time-based, target-driven roadmap for reducing poverty, hunger and environmental degradation and improving health and access to education.

This year's review of progress towards the Goals, including at the MDG Summit, showed tangible evidence of governments, non-governmental organizations, philanthropies, the private sector and the United Nations working in solidarity. Many countries are on track to halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015; school enrolment has increased, more girls are attending school and diseases are better controlled.

Despite these encouraging signs, deep disparities remain, among and within countries. Furthermore, hard-fought development gains have been jeopardized by economic and financial upheaval, volatility in food prices and energy markets, and the impacts of natural disasters and climate change. The global economic crisis has pushed an estimated 64 million more people into poverty, and unemployment is up by more than 30 million since 2007.

On this International Human Solidarity Day, let us pledge –as nations and as individuals – to reach out to our neighbours. Let us live our daily lives in solidarity with those less fortunate than us – the poor, the sick and elderly, those enduring abuse, discrimination or violations of their rights – and thereby build a better world for all.