

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY  
FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY**

**17 October 2009**

Today we recognize the daily struggles and contributions of those living in poverty and resolve to intensify efforts to eliminate the scourge once and for all.

At a time of multiple global crises, the poorest and most vulnerable have a special claim on our attention. We know that, in any recession, those hurt first—and worst—are the poor. According to recent estimates, the global economic crisis has claimed at least 50 million jobs this year. As many as 100 million more people are expected to fall below the poverty line in 2009. Climate change further compounds the problem.

The theme of this year's observance, "Children and Families Speak Out Against Poverty", coincides with the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We recognize that investing in children and securing their rights is one of the surest ways to ending poverty.

Despite our world of plenty, children's basic needs are still being sidelined. Millions of children continue to be deprived of an education, with many more at risk of dropping out of school. This is particularly true for girl children.

Yet we also know that common sense investments to meet the Millennium Development Goals can make a profound difference. In areas where global investments have been scaled up – such as AIDS, TB, malaria and vaccine-preventable diseases – we are seeing heartening progress. There has also been notable success in reducing under-five mortality. These gains suggest how we can accelerate progress toward those MDG targets where the world is still far behind – by investing in key areas such as primary education, basic infrastructure and maternal health.

The United Nations system is responding to the crisis on a number of fronts -- promoting food security, building a greener economy, ensuring stronger safety nets and putting forward a Global Jobs Pact. We are also developing a Global Impact and Vulnerability Alert System—GIVAS—to create a networked capacity for real-time data collection and analysis. Policies must be driven by a solid picture of developments on the ground.

We are at a critical juncture in the fight against poverty. Now is the time to amplify the voices of the vulnerable and ensure that the world follows up on its pledges. With the

right investments and concrete action, we can build upon the gains, fulfill our commitments, and ensure that every man, woman and child has the opportunity to make the most of their potential.