

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

BY

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PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN

HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY MEETING
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr. President,

For decades, solidarity with the poor and the oppressed has been a guiding principle in international affairs. The United Nations has provided the structure needed to turn that solidarity into effective measures for peace and security.

Today, we need the United Nations not only for expressing solidarity. For all of us, multilateral cooperation has become a necessity. Surely, one can try to deal in isolation with climate change, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, famine and disease. But most likely, such efforts will fail.

Rarely has the need for joint action been so obvious as in the current Doha round. The benefits on development from trade can only be realized through greater market access and reduced subsidies.

Our times command multilateral cooperation. That need increases over time, and is as valid for large nations as for small. It requires a common agenda, based on the recognition of shared responsibility.

We share the praise for progress.

We share the blame for problems.

We share the responsibility for ensuring change.

Tomorrow night, we will agree a common agenda. It has many strengths.

It demonstrates that peace and security, development, and human rights form part of one single entity. It reminds us that we will not succeed in one area if we ignore the others.

It affirms important principles, such as our collective responsibility to protect our populations from genocide and ethnic cleansing.

It paves the way for important concrete measures, such as the establishment of a peace-building commission, the creation of a human rights council and the conclusion of a convention on terrorism.

But there are also areas in which we need to advance multilateral cooperation much further.

Firstly, the recent lack of progress in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation is a failure. The risks emanating from nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction are far from fading. We need urgent measures for both disarmament and non-proliferation. Advancements in one area will bring pressure for progress in the other.

Secondly, tougher action must be taken to address climate change. A functioning Kyoto protocol is a crucial start. But we must also look to the period after 2012. We must become better at combining economic growth with environmental sustainability.

Thirdly, we must agree on reforming the Security Council. The Charter includes all the provisions we need to address the threats of our times. It requires no revision when it comes to the use of force. What we do need is a Security Council that better lives up to its responsibility.

We must get a better representation from Africa, Asia and Latin America. The Council's efficiency must be safeguarded. No extension of the veto power should take place.

Fourthly, developed nations must increase ODA-levels. If we are to reach the Millennium Goals, more resources are needed for women's and children's rights, sexual and reproductive health, the fight against HIV/Aids and environmental protection. Also, measures must be taken to ensure good governance, freedom from corruption and strong political and economic institutions in all countries.

The founders of the United Nations knew that states working together can achieve things that are beyond what even the most powerful state can accomplish by itself.

Today, we need the vision, determination and political will of those men and women.

As political leaders, we have an obligation to our citizens to abide by the common agenda agreed here. It is only through personal commitment by all of us, that this will succeed.

Thank you!