

UNITED NATIONS



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**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
EUROPEAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT  
Vienna, 19-21 June 2006**

The United Nations European Youth Leadership Summit is a wonderful opportunity for Europe's new generation to become fully engaged in the global endeavour to reach the Millennium Development Goals -- the blueprint agreed by all Governments for creating a better world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As leaders of the future, you are essential to our efforts to meet these simple, powerful, people-centred objectives, ranging from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education -- all by the target date of 2015. The Goals are based on fundamental human needs which every young person, from Vienna to Vientiane, can easily understand and support.

Governments need to be reminded of the pledges they have made to translate the Millennium Development Goals into reality. That is where young people like you come in. Your voice can hold leaders to those pledges. I know you will not resign yourselves to a world where others die of hunger, remain illiterate and lack human dignity.

That is why this Leadership Summit is right to focus on sport and culture as tools to accelerate progress towards reaching the Goals. As the massive following of the FIFA World Cup currently shows us, sport has an exceptional power to mobilize, motivate and unite people from every continent, race and religion in a common cause. The same is true of culture in all its forms -- from music to poetry and art.

I thank the Government of Austria for its farsighted initiative to host the Summit during its Presidency of the European Union. This gathering will make an important contribution towards laying the groundwork for the United Nations Global Youth Leadership Summit later this year.

Above all, I wish all young people taking part in the Summit a most stimulating three days. I thank every one of you for your commitment, and hope that many more will follow your example.

Kofi A. Annan