

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE TO THE SECOND PAN-AFRICAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT
Ifrane, 18-23 August 2005

This Second Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit is a wonderful opportunity to help mobilize young Africans in support of efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Young people are crucial to our work to fight extreme poverty and reach the other development targets agreed by the world community as a blueprint for building a better world for the 21st century. It is appropriate that during this International Year of Sport and Physical Education, your gathering will focus on the power of sport in advancing health, education and development, and in promoting tolerance and peace.

The Millennium Development Goals represent a partnership. Developing countries have committed themselves to improving governance, building up their human resources, and investing in health and education. Developed countries have committed themselves to providing more effective aid, offering more debt relief, and increasing trade opportunities.

But the world's political leaders need to be reminded of their promise to translate the Goals into reality. That is where young people like you come in. Your voices can hold leaders to those pledges. There are also many other ways you can contribute. You can develop local projects to reduce poverty in your community; you can promote equal opportunities for women and men; you can raise awareness of the need to protect our environment; you can fight the spread of HIV/AIDS by setting an example in your own life and joining forces with your peers to speak up about the epidemic.

You are the future of a continent that has a tremendous role to play on the world stage. I look to you, the next generation, to realize Africa's potential, to draw on our strengths, to bring to the world what Africa has to offer. In that spirit, I wish you a most successful summit.

Kofi A. Annan