

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON UN DAY**

**24 October 2009**

On this United Nations Day and every day throughout the year, the United Nations is at work -- for the planet, for jobs, for “we the peoples”.

We deliver more humanitarian aid than anyone – and to the toughest places. We vaccinate 40 per cent of the world’s children. We feed more than 100 million people and are helping more than 30 million refugees, most of them women and children fleeing war and persecution. We are deploying more peacekeepers than ever -- more than 115,000. In the last year alone, we provided electoral assistance to almost 50 countries. And the entire UN system has mobilized to face global economic turmoil and the social unrest it threatens.

People look to the United Nations to defeat poverty and hunger, to keep the peace, to expand education and stand up for human rights in every corner of the globe. They look to us to stop the spread of deadly weapons and disease, and to protect people and families hit by disasters. In December, they will look to us to seal a comprehensive, equitable and ambitious deal on climate change that will protect us all and pave the way toward a greener, more sustainable economy.

This is a unique moment in world affairs. Multiple crises – food, fuel, financial, flu – are hitting at once. Climate change looms larger every day. Each illustrates a 21<sup>st</sup>-century truth: we share one planet, one home. As people, as nations, as a species, we sink or swim together.

The United Nations is doing its utmost to respond – to address the big issues, to look at the big picture. We are forging a new multilateralism that can deliver real results for all people, especially those most in need. But I am also painfully aware of the distance to go and the gap between commitment and action. On this UN Day, let us resolve to redouble our efforts on behalf of the vulnerable, the powerless, the defenceless. Let us stand more united than ever – united in purpose and united in action to make the world a safer, better place.