

UN Millennium Summit

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Description The UN Millennium Summit, was the largest gathering of heads of state and government ever recorded when it took place in New York between 6 and 8 September 2000. Informed by the Secretary General's Millennium Report, *We the Peoples*, discussions focused on the role of the UN in the twenty-first century. At the Summit's close, over 150 world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration, a commitment to the principles and objectives that would make up the international community's agenda in the new era. The Declaration advanced six principles previously articulated in the Secretary General's report: freedom, equity and solidarity, tolerance, non-violence, respect for nature, and shared responsibility. It noted that the central challenge for policy-makers was to make globalization a positive force for all the world's people.

To meet this challenge, eight specific objectives to be met by 2015 were detailed. Subsequently termed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), pledges were made to: (i) eradicate extreme poverty; (ii) achieve primary education for all; (iii) promote gender equality and women's empowerment; (iv) reduce child mortality; (v) improve maternal health; (vi) stop and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (vii) ensure environmental sustainability; and (viii) solidify a global partnership for development. These goals are the Millennium Summit's principal legacy, and featured prominently in the 2005 campaign to "make poverty history." Journalistic accounts of the failure of several industrialized countries to live up to their commitment to devote 0.7% of GDP to foreign aid also feature the MDGs prominently.

The UN's Millennium Campaign to raise awareness and build the political will necessary to achieve the goals was launched in 2002, the same year that industrialized countries, including the United States, renewed the 0.7% target at the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development. An independent advisory to the Secretary General on the MDGs, the Millennium Project, was also established that year. Under the leadership of Dr. Jeff Sachs this body reviews development practices, sets priorities, identifies implementation strategies and determines the best means of financing the achievement of the goals. Its January 2005 report, *Investing in Development*, was incorporated into the Secretary General's March 2005 report on UN Reform. These documents will shape the agenda as world leaders convene at the Millennium +5 Summit in September 2005 to evaluate the progress towards achieving the Millennium Declaration. Debate over the content of the MDGs, implementation strategies, and financing continues amongst state actors, global civil society advocates,

and opinion makers.

Suggested
Reading:

Global Policy Forum website. *The Millennium Summit and its follow up*, www.globalpolicy.org/msummit/millenni (accessed 14 July 2005).

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