

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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REMARKS TO THE SUMMIT OF THE AFRICAN UNION
“Towards Greater Unity and Integration through Shared Values”
Addis Ababa, 30 January 2011

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

President Mutharika, Chairperson of the African Union,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government of the African Union,
Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia,
President Nicolas Sarkozy of France
President Mohamud Abbas, of the Palestine National Authority (PNA)
President of the United Nations General Assembly, Joseph Deiss,
Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Jean Ping,
Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We gather at this Summit to draw strength in unity ... to confront common challenges ... and to heed the voice of the people of Africa who are insisting on more peace and democracy and greater opportunity for themselves and their families.

I have seen that potential in every corner of this great continent. And since we met last year, so, too, has the world.

The FIFA World Cup in South Africa proved that the real winner was not any team that took home a trophy.

The real winner was Africa – African pride, African dynamism, African ambition.

As we meet, the eyes of Africa ... and the world ... are on events unfolding on the continent’s North, East and West.

Yesterday, I co-chaired a meeting with the African Union and ECOWAS on the volatile situation in Cote d’Ivoire. We must remain firm and unified.

I commend the African Union Peace and Security Council for its resolute stand and welcome its decision to create a High Level Panel to find an urgent solution.

As we look ahead there are five principles that should guide that work: respecting the clear results of the election; a national unity government formed by President Ouattara; removing all obstructions to the work of the United Nations; full support to the legitimate government in addressing social and economic challenges and upholding human rights and justice; and, finally, close coordination between the Panel and the UN.

The action we take will have an impact not only on the credibility of our organizations, but also on other democratic transitions and elections in divided societies.

Please allow me to express my gratitude to the peacekeepers and staff of the United Nations serving the cause of peace in difficult circumstances in Cote d'Ivoire and so many other places. I also want to thank the many countries who have contributed troops and other life-saving support.

In Sudan, the peaceful and credible conduct of the referendum is a credit to all parties – the governments of Sudan and Southern Sudan ... the African Union ... the United Nations ... and, above all, the Sudanese people.

The CPA parties have much to address in the coming months -- border security ... citizenship ... wealth sharing ... demarcation ... popular consultations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States ... the status of Abyei.

Consolidating the peace in North and South Sudan will require statesmanship ... wisdom ... patience ... and the consistent engagement and support of the international community.

It will also depend, to a large extent, on peace and security in Darfur.

I call on all parties to recommit themselves to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. The people of Darfur are desperate to return to their homes and build a future for their children.

In Somalia, I will continue to urge greater support for the Transitional Federal Government and the UN-backed African Union Mission.

This includes 4,000 additional troops for AMISOM, and adequate technical, logistical and financial support. We must use the next few months to build on recent successes and ensure that the transition in August lays a foundation for stability and progress.

We must also do more to confront the growing threat of piracy. My Special Advisor on Piracy has presented me with ways to end impunity and we will confer with African and other partners on how those may be implemented.

Let us also continue working closely together to facilitate the transition to constitutional order in Niger—as we celebrate the peaceful democratic transition in Guinea.

And, in Tunisia, let us support the swift establishment of an inclusive interim government that will work with all of society to restore peace and stability.

We at the United Nations will be pleased to help the people of Tunisia freely choose their leaders through timely and credible elections.

With respect to Egypt, I once again make a call for restraint, non-violence, and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights.

And around the world, we must listen attentively to the voice of the people, their aspirations, their hopes for a better future.

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The winds of change are blowing.

Throughout Africa, people are becoming empowered -- at the ballot box ... and in the marketplace.

Africa is on the move.

The new narrative for Africa is a story of growth.

Even the economic and financial crisis has not held you back.

Africa is rebounding stronger and faster than anticipated.

Six of the world's fastest-growing economies are in sub-Saharan Africa.

The proportion of people living in extreme poverty is declining, despite continued population growth.

We are seeing success in the fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria, and we stand on the brink of eradicating polio from the continent.

Primary school enrolment is up. Girls have greater access to education. And more women are rising to political power.

As partners, our challenge is to maintain and increase this momentum.

How will we do this?

By honouring our founding pledges. By living up to our shared values. And by putting a special focus on three areas: women ... youth ... and the private sector.

First, the women of Africa.

Women's empowerment is not just a question of rights or justice. It is an economic and developmental imperative.

Countries with greater gender equality grow faster and are more competitive.

Let us give company to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf -- the only female head of state in Africa.

Let us spread the example of Rwanda, where women legislators outnumber men.

And let us honour Africa's rural women who produce most of Africa's food.

We must also liberate Africa's women from the threat of violence.

Domestic violence ... rape ... the abuse of vulnerable young girls ... such crimes can never be rationalized as a matter of "culture" or "tradition" anywhere in the world.

They should be condemned. They should be prosecuted. Most of all, they should be prevented.

Women also suffer disproportionately in Africa's conflicts.

Sexual violence is used as a cruel and destructive weapon – not only against women, but against entire communities.. We must stand against such crimes.

The beginning of the African Women's Decade also marked the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325.

We need to include women in all conflict resolution and peace processes.

And we need to focus on their health.

The United Nations is strengthening its work on all these issues through the establishment this year of UN Women. I am pleased the Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, has joined us in Addis Ababa.

Second, the youth of Africa.

If Africa's young people are nurtured they will help countries to achieve greatness.

But if their ambitions are stifled, we risk a harvest of unrest and instability.

Jobs is a central issue – no jobs means no development and no stability.

But Africa's young adults also want education and they want respect for human rights. They want a say in how they are governed. They want freedoms and opportunities.

This brings me to my third point – partnerships with the private sector.

Development depends in large part on productive enterprises and vibrant trade.

Businesses throughout Africa and the world are poised to make the most of Africa's barely tapped potential. My MDG Advocacy Group – co-chaired by President Kagame – are working hard with governments and the private sector to help achieve development goals.

Africa is the world's fastest-growing market in communications technology. It has abundant natural resources. And it is ideally placed to pioneer a new green economy.

African countries – with their abundant solar, wind and geothermal resources – can become important users and exporters of clean energy.

This is the way of the future, and Africa's governments and business partners can pave the way.

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our planet is under growing strain. We need a practical, 21st century model of development that connects the dots between poverty reduction, climate change, food, water, and energy.

Last year I established a panel on global sustainability to look into these issues, co-chaired by President Zuma of South Africa and President Halonen of Finland.

I am confident that its deliberations will inform the ongoing climate negotiations.

The progress in Cancun makes me optimistic for this year's climate conference in Durban, South Africa.

I urge all governments – here in Africa and in all regions – to strengthen national efforts to reduce emissions and strengthen climate resilience.

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa's challenges remain great. Yet I see clearer skies ahead.

The credit for this resides with you, the member states of the African Union.

From the New Partnership for Africa's Development to the African Peace and Security Architecture and the African Standby Force, you are working increasingly effectively for economic development and political stability.

The Charter of the United Nations – of which you are all signatories – and the Constitutive Act of the African Union share the same principles and values.

Peace, security and stability ... human rights, good governance and the rule of law ... dignity and economic development ... social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Let us work to realize these shared values and fulfil these ambitious goals.

I am here to say that the United Nations will remain your steadfast partner.

Together I am confident we can succeed.

Thank you.