

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**VIDEO MESSAGE
ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE
21 September 2008**

Dear friends and allies,

This year, the International Day of Peace takes on special meaning.

This is the year we also mark the sixtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We know that human rights are essential to peace. Yet too many people around the world still have their rights violated -- especially during and after armed conflict. That is why we must ensure that the rights in the Declaration are a living reality -- that they are known, understood and enjoyed by everyone, everywhere. It is often those who most need their human rights protected, who also need to be informed that the Declaration exists -- and that it exists for them.

At the same time, we face a development emergency. This year, we pass the midpoint in the race to reach the Millennium Development Goals -- the common vision agreed by leaders of all countries for building a better world in the 21st century. Reaching these goals is also essential to peace. Yet many countries in Africa are not on track to reach a single one of the goals by the deadline of 2015. That is why, just after the International Day of Peace, Governments, civil society and business will meet at the United Nations to forge a broad coalition and try to bridge the gap.

There is so much to unite around on this the International Day of Peace. To mobilize people around the world, the UN is launching a text messaging campaign. I am sending my message today. It reads: "On 21 September, the International Day of Peace, I call on world leaders and peoples around the world to join forces against conflict, poverty and hunger, and for all human rights for all."

Together, let us send a powerful signal for peace that will be read, heard and felt around the world.

Thank you very much.