

## Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

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### LATEST STATEMENTS

#### **New York, 22 September 2010 - Remarks by the Secretary-General on "Addressing the Global Water and Sanitation Challenge: The Key to the MDGs"**

President Johnson-Sirleaf (Liberia ),

President Rahmon (Tajikistan),

His Royal Highness Prince Willem-Alexander (the Netherlands), Chair of my Advisory

Board on Water and Sanitation,

Prime Minister Balkenende (the Netherlands),

Foreign Minister Niang (Senegal),

Ms. Maria Otero (Under Secretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs, USA),

Mr. Han Seung-soo (Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea),

Ambassador Jan Eliasson (Chair of WaterAid and MDG Advocate),

Ambassador Tuneo Nishida (Japan),

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah, (USA)

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and welcome.

We are here because we know water is not only a basic necessity, it is a human right.

Without water, there is no life.

Yet hundreds of millions of people do not have access to safe, clean water. Approximately 2.6 billion people lack safe sanitation facilities.

Living in these conditions increases the likelihood of disease and death. It perpetuates poverty.

Clearly, we must boost our efforts. We are on track to meet the target for water, but all reports indicate that the MDG target for sanitation is far off track. The challenge is particularly great in rural areas.

We must urgently work toward a world in which every person has access to clean, safe water every day.

To get there, drastic changes must happen in public health policies and sanitation infrastructure.

Gender considerations must remain central.

As primary care-givers, women spend many hours simply trying to secure water. Access to clean water and sanitation will free up time and enable mothers to provide their children with a healthy start in life.

Experience also shows that girls are more likely to attend school when there are proper sanitation facilities.

Governments recently created a "Sanitation and Water for All" initiative to more effectively deliver to those most in need.

I count on you here today, a diverse and committed group of leaders, to speak and take the necessary action on these issues.

The UN system is working to support you, including through the UN-Water programme.

We have raised public awareness through campaigns such as the International Year of Sanitation in 2008.

We are also at the mid-point of the "Water for Life" decade that started in 2005.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Everyone should have the access to water and sanitation services that we in this room take for granted.

Thank you for your commitment to making these goals a reality.

Thank you for working to prevent needless deaths from water-borne diseases?to ensure that mothers have enough water to care for their families?to secure a life of dignity and health for billions of people around the world.

Let us build an unstoppable tide for progress.

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#### **Statements on 22 September 2010**

- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's closing remarks at High Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's remarks to "Bridging the Malaria Gap : Saving Children - Supporting Women" Event - African Leaders Malaria Alliance \[Delivered by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Malaria, Ray Chambers\]](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's remarks at launch of the Global Strategy for Women's And Children's Health - "Every Woman, Every Child" \[as prepared for delivery\]](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's remarks at MDG side event organized by UNDP - "Turning Evidence into Practice: Learning from what works to accelerate MDG Progress" \[as prepared for delivery\]](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's remarks at Private Sector Forum on the Millennium Development Goals \[as delivered\]](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General's remarks to the Millennium Development Goals Advocacy Group](#)
- [New York, 22 September 2010 - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's remarks at the High-level Event on Biodiversity](#)