

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE TO THE AMERICAS MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
Brasilia, 26-30 July 2010

On behalf of the entire United Nations system, I congratulate you for taking part in one of the most practical, hands-on experiences in international diplomacy for young people.

As you participate in this Model United Nations exercise, you will get a full taste of the complexity of international relations. You will gain a better understanding of the intricacies of negotiations, the challenges of achieving consensus, and the patience required to win diplomatic progress. These skills will help you in whatever course you choose in life.

People around the world are connected as a human family as never before. This opens up vast new possibilities for common progress. But we are also living through an age of multiple crises. The agreed deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, 2015, is nearly upon us, yet many countries are not on track. Climate change is a potentially catastrophic threat, especially for the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. Discrimination against women and girls remains widespread even though we know that women's empowerment is the key to prosperity. And we continue to live under the shadow of nuclear weapons.

None of these problems can be solved by any single nation acting alone. Never has the imperative of acting together been so self-evident. More and more people are coming to understand this fundamental fact.

Half the population of the world is under the age of 25. We need to harness the spirit of youth around the world to address the tough challenges we are facing. Extraordinary times create extraordinary opportunities for change. This is such a moment. Help us meet the trials of our age and shape the world for good.

BAN Ki-moon