

# Executive Summary

At the United Nations Millennium Review Summit, September 14-16, 2005, world leaders will meet in New York to discuss the future of the United Nations, global collective security, and relations between rich and poor. This meeting will mark five years since the largest-ever gathering of Heads of State and Government adopted the Millennium Declaration.

This year, the world's political leaders are called upon to take decisions that will determine whether or not they can fulfill the vision of the Millennium Declaration: "to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the world's people...based on our common humanity."

At the centre of this vision are the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They embody specific targets and timelines for achieving many of the objectives of the Declaration: to alleviate worldwide poverty, hunger, and disease; to globalize human rights, the equality of women, and environmental protection; and to create fair rules of trade, increase development assistance, and put an end to unsustainable debt. These can only be achieved through a new Global Partnership for Development, "a development compact," in which rich join poor to fulfill the promises.

In short, leaders must come to share a common sense of human security in all its dimensions, for the whole inhabited earth. There is a need for new horizons of action and new thinking about and beyond the goals set in 2000.

## MOBILIZING CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT

For the last four years, The North-South Institute (NSI) and the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA) have conducted annual global online surveys of civil society engagement with the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs.

This year civil society organizations around the world are reviewing the progress made over the past five years and lessons that need to be learned. They are engaging in intensive dialogues about priorities, about policy change, about strategies, that meet the promise of the Declaration and beyond. Campaigns for change are springing up in country after country.

Through our most recent global survey, more than 400 groups provided a wealth of information about their work on the MDGs and their assessment of progress on Declaration objectives. Recent statements and reports from other groups, and advice from an experts' meeting in December 2004, help round out this report on civil society activities, views, and advice.



The Millennium  
Review Summit –  
“An event of decisive  
importance.”

UN Secretary-General  
Kofi Annan

### *Executive Summary (con't)*

#### **MESSAGES: POWERFUL AND URGENT**

Civil society organizations are becoming increasingly active in pressing world leaders to keep the promises they made in 2000, and to recognize that now, in the year 2005, their efforts must be broader and bolder if we are to secure the world envisioned in the Millennium Declaration.

These are their messages to world leaders:

- Keep the promises made to the world in the Millennium Declaration.
- Implement the Millennium Development Goals, but go beyond them. Get at the roots of poverty and growing inequality; remove the obstacles to universal human rights, health, and education; eliminate the dangers to our planet's climate and environment; and undertake urgent collective action to build and sustain peace everywhere.
- Strengthen the United Nations to assure development, social justice, peace, and security in our world.
- Commit the necessary resources, human and financial, to these ends.

Because the promises remain significantly unfulfilled, and the goals unmet, there must be a fresh commitment of resources to the objectives of the Declaration and clear markers for progress over the next five years.

#### **ENTRY POINTS FOR INFLUENCE**

The Agenda for the Millennium Review Summit is now being shaped and real opportunities exist for civil society to engage in this process.

What are the main entry points and opportunities for civil society to influence the preparatory process for the UN Millennium Review Summit in September? Openings for advocacy with national governments will vary country to country and must be assessed by each organization and network. Events at the UN itself, from January through July, will shape the Summit — details are provided in this report. The G-7/G-8 Summit of the richest nations in July will send decisive signals. Advocacy now, in all three “theatres” is essential.

As well, survey respondents have provided substantial information about their work and experiences, highlighting opportunities for people to participate at many levels in civil society activities. And they have shared useful ideas and recommendations about the development goals and how best to achieve them.

By acting now, we can propose priority issues, we can press for a stronger United Nations, and we can demand bold action and more accountability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the Declaration promises.