

U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan Visits the Dominican Republic

Presentation of country's progress towards achieving
the Millennium Development Goals and
Lessons Learned as U.N. Millennium Project Pilot Country
(August 2006)



Secretary of Foreign Relations
(SEREX)



PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON
THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Dominican Mission
to the United Nations

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THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Dominican Mission
to the United Nations

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Contents

- I.- Introduction	5
- II.- News Highlights.	12
- III.- Presidential Palace - Presentation of the country's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) & Lessons Learned as U.N. Millennium Project Pilot Country	16
- IV.- Visit to local U.N. offices	30
- V.- Visit to National Congress	33
- VI.- Visit to FUNGLODE – Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo	35
- VII.- Presidential Palace – Duarte, Mella and Sanchez National Recognition of the Secretary-General & State Dinner	41

I. | Introduction



“You (Dominican Republic) are heading the right way and you are setting ‘a model’ here which I think will be of great interest to many countries in this region and around the world.”

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations.

I. Introduction

On 4 August 2006, Secretary-General Kofi Annan visited the Dominican Republic for the first time, on a trip that included a visit to the neighboring country Haiti.

The Secretary-General, his wife Ms. Nane Annan, the U.N. Resident Coordinator Mr. Niky Fabiancic, and members of the delegation that accompanied them throughout their trip to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, were received in the Presidential Palace by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Carlos Morales



Minister of Foreign Affairs Carlos Morales Troncoso and Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Troncoso; the Executive Director of the Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development (COPDES), John R Gagain Jr.; and the Director of Protocol in the Presidential Palace, Ambassador Roberto Blandino.



Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President Leonel Fernandez.



“We hope that you leave us with fond memories of the Dominican Republic, a country, that similar to yourself, is a promoter of peace, security, prosperity, and dignity for all human beings.”

Dr. Leonel Fernandez
President of the Dominican Republic

Immediately upon arrival, the Secretary-General and Ms. Annan entered the President's office for a short meeting with His Excellency Dr. Leonel Fernandez, President of the Dominican Republic. In that meeting, the Honorable First Lady of the Dominican Republic, Dr. Margarita Cedeño de Fernandez was also present.

After the meeting, the Secretary-General and the President proceeded to the Cariatides Room in the Presidential Palace where the Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development (COPDES) presented a video-presentation, on behalf of the President and the country, regarding the "Dominican Republic's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) & lessons learned as a U.N. Millennium Project pilot country", which served as a



Secretary-General Kofi Annan and President Leonel Fernandez..

basis for showing the Secretary-General the results achieved.

Later, the Secretary-General visited the local headquarters of the United Nations in the Dominican Republic where he held a brief meeting with the U.N. Country Team. He continued his trip by visiting the National Congress where he was received by the Presidents of both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

At the headquarters of the Fundación Global, Democracia y Desarrollo (FUNGLODE), the Secretary-General highlighted the importance that the Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals plays in achieving the global development goals. The Secretary-General congratulated President Fernandez for his initiative.



Secretary-General Kofi Annan, President Leonel Fernandez, First Lady Margarita Cedeño de Fernandez, Vice-president Rafael Alburquerque, Minister of the Presidency Danilo Medina.



“My wife and I travelled around the world and we have seen governments and communities trying to implement the Millennium Development Goals, but today you have demonstrated to us and you have shown us how one can organise this at the community level, getting the people and the communities involved and getting them to take ownership.”

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations.



Secretary-General Kofi Annan receives Duarte, Mella and Sanchez National Recognition from President Leonel Fernandez and are accompanied by Ms. Nane Annan and First Lady Margarita Cedeño de Fernandez.



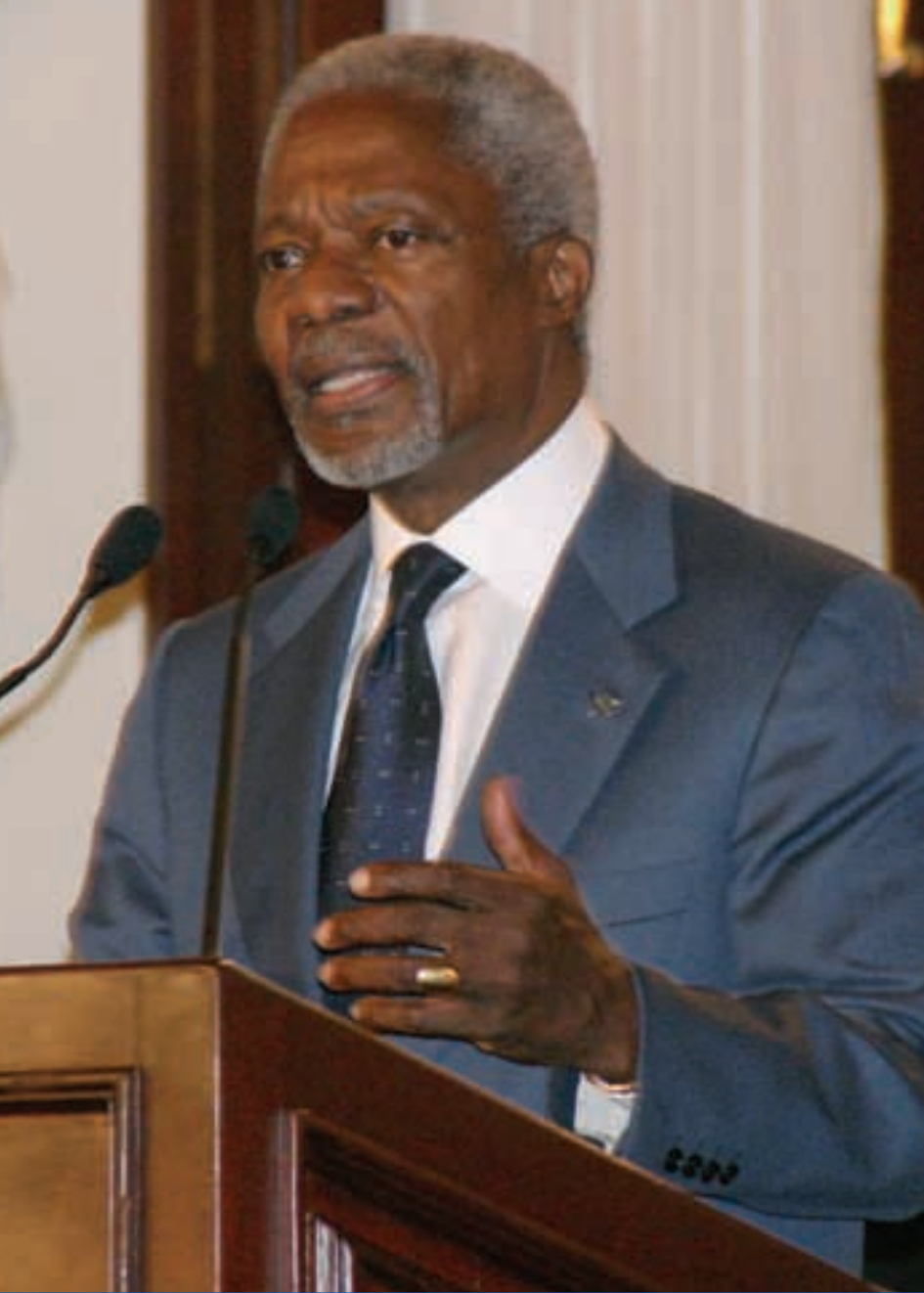
Secretary-General Kofi Annan, President Leonel Fernandez and Frederic Emam Zade, Director General of FUNGLODE.

Later in the day, President Fernandez and the Secretary-General made statements during a joint press conference, which was followed by a State Dinner offered by President Fernandez in the Presidential Palace where the Secretary-General received the highest national recognition: the Duarte, Mella and Sanchez Order of Merit for his exemplary work in benefit of peace and security for all humanity.

II. News Highlights

www.copdes.gov.do/titulares





“I want to thank you President Fernandez and the First Lady and the Government and the people of the Dominican Republic for embracing the Millennium Development Goals and using it to reenergise your development activities.”

Kofi Annan
Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Annan hails Dominican Republic for progress on antipoverty goals

5 August 2006 – On an official visit to the Dominican Republic today, Secretary-General Kofi Annan praised the country's progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of global antipoverty targets adopted at a United Nations summit meeting held in 2000.

"I think the way you are approaching it here, getting the communities involved, giving them technology, giving them clean water, looking after health, education and sanitation, is the way to go," the Secretary-General said after viewing a video presentation at the National Palace in Santo Domingo. "You are heading the right way and you are setting a model here which I think will be of great interest to many countries in this region and around the world."

Thanking the President and First Lady as well as the Dominican Government and people for embracing the MDGs and using them to reenergize development activities in the country, he pledged the UN's continued partnership in that endeavour.

Looking to the broader context, he emphasized that development is essential to achieving peace and security. "You cannot have security without development, and you cannot have development without security and you cannot enjoy either one for the longer term, unless there is respect for human rights and the rule of law," he said.

"These three pillars reinforce each other, and this is the work of the United Nations: security, economic and social development and respect for human rights, and any programme that is built on these three principles – and we intend to reinforce – them is bound to succeed."

III. Presidential Palace

Presentation of the country's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) & Lessons Learned as a U.N. Millennium Project pilot country

In an event, presided by His Excellency Dr. Leonel Fernandez, President of the Dominican Republic, in the Cariatides Room of the Presidential Palace, the Dominican Republic welcomed U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his first official visit to the country by presenting the country's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as lessons learned due to being a U.N. Millennium Project pilot country and the first country to have created a Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition to the President and the Secretary-General, the high-table included the following individuals:

- Dr. Margarita Cedeño de Fernandez, First Lady of the Dominican Republic
- Dr. Rafael Alburquerque, Vice-President of the Dominican Republic
- Annaba Hedi, U.N. Under-Secretary-General
- Danilo Medina, Secretary of the Presidency



Secretary-General Kofi, President Leonel Fernandez, First Lady Margarita Cedeño de Fernandez.

- Carlos Morales Troncoso, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
- Luis M. Bonetti, Secretary of Administration of the Presidency
- John R. Gagain Jr., Executive Director, Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development

Additionally, various ministers and high-level government officials from the Cabinet were present as well as the Presidents of the Senate and Chamber





of Deputies, Dr. Andres Bautista and Mr. Alfredo Pacheco, respectively. The audience also included over 100 business leaders that have signed on to the U.N. Global Compact as well as members of civil society, press, representatives from the Diplomatic Corp accredited in the Dominican Republic, the various development cooperation agencies, distinguished members of the religious community, and officials from the U.N. System of Agencies in the Dominican Republic.

The Event

The activity began with the words of the Master of Ceremonies, Mr. Omar Liriano who explained the purpose of this event and the Secretary-General's visit, which was to learn about the experience of the Dominican Republic as the only pilot country in the western hemisphere of the United Nations Millennium Project, which is commissioned by the Secretary-General himself. Additionally, this was an opportunity to display the pro-

gress made to the Secretary-General due to the fact that the Dominican Republic is the first and only country to date that has created a Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals. He expressed the honor it was for the Dominican Republic to have the Secretary-General present in the country. The Master of Ceremony was followed by the welcoming words of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Carlos Morales Troncoso.

Presentation of the "Lessons Learned" for achieving the MDGs in the Dominican Republic

The pivotal part of the event was a video-presentation prepared by the Presidential Commission on Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development (COPDES) on behalf of the President and the country, which addressed the work of the Dominican Republic as a "Model" as well as the "Lessons Learned" for achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the Dominican Republic.





Business leaders from the Dominican Republic.



Magnus Sundset, ITLA, Adriana Velasco, Miguel Ceara Hatton, UNDP.



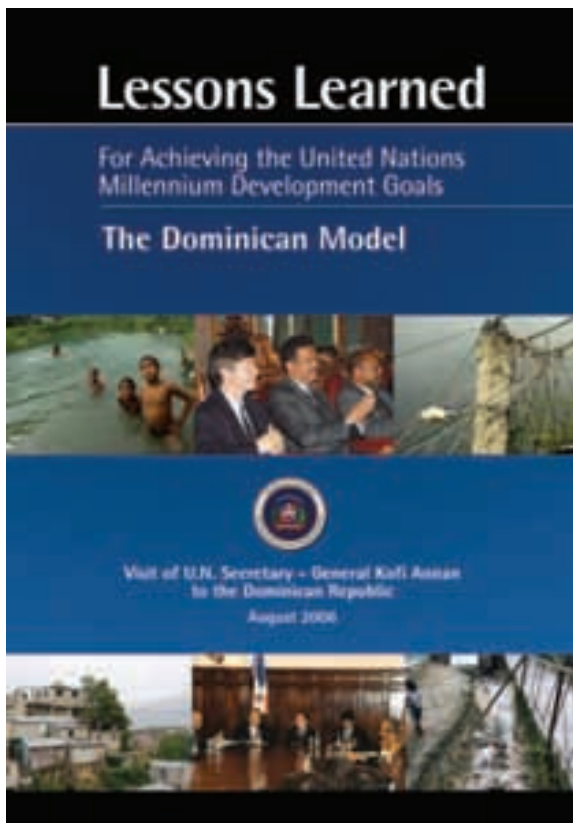
Cesar Pina Toribio and Francisco Domínguez Brito, General Counsel and Attorney-General, respectively.



Johnny Alcantara, Salvador Jimenez.



David Hanrahan, Justin Van Prooyen, video producers and Jose Núñez, Director of Model United Nations, Ministry of Education.



The lessons that follow were concisely outlined and circulated in a brochure for the Secretary-General and participants as they watched the video -presentation:

1. Its all part of one big problem...

- Poverty is multidimensional.
- Achieving MDGs must be multi-sectoral, collective, and interdisciplinary.
- Achieving one MDG depends upon achieving all the MDGs.



- One Ministry's intervention in an impoverished community would be minimally effective without being part of a "holistic approach".
- Piecemeal approach to development will not produce concrete results.



2. Holistic Approach = MDG Needs Assessment

- Synergies exist.
- Holistic means getting into local communities.
- "National" MDG Needs Assessments need "Local" MDG Needs Assessments.
- MDGs are not exclusive to themselves.
- MDGs are merely accountable & time-based measured-results.
- Achieving MDGs requires a "Larger Focus".

3. Achieving MDGs requires a "Larger Focus"

- MDG Interventions will include the "larger development agenda".
- Achieving MDGs requires interventions that address:



- Infrastructure.
- Transport.
- Energy & Electricity.
- Employment.
- Anti-Corruption, Good Governance, Transparency.
- Values, Civic Literacy & Responsibility.
- Community Safety & Delinquency and Conflict prevention.
- Sustainable Tourism.
- Migration.
- Dominicans leaving.
- Poor converging upon our cities.
- Haitians and others entering.

4. Go Local

- People are poor locally not nationally.
- Achieving MDGs requires addressing "pockets of extreme poverty".
- Going local is:
 - Getting to the root of the problem.
 - Empowering communities.



- Making partnerships.
- Ensuring quality and effective financing of development.
- Local communities need to help national Government help them.

5. MDGs = "Fabric" of Government and society

- Achieving MDGs require change, a paradigm shift
- Making change requires a National Budget linked with MDGs (i.e. sustainable fiscal space)
- Social policy is only effective if linked to "macro-economic and fiscal policy"



- MDGs as the fabric will ensure Dominican people's needs first rather than the priorities of others
- MDGs should not end with one Needs Assessment exercise, but should become "a way of life"
- Presidential Commission on MDGs should be as common as a Ministry of Education or Foreign Affairs.



6. MDG = "Preventing Problems rather than Confronting Problems"

- Building capacities, promoting human development, creating opportunities.
- Protecting Ecosystems & Natural Resources.
- Forestation.
- Investments in Freshwater & Sanitation.
- Maintaining infrastructure and public works.
- Pre-Natal y Primary Health Care.
- Improving Regional and International Cooperation.

The video-presentation addressed the advances towards achieving the MDGs and the efforts made as well as locally based initiatives that have been conducted as a result of the Dominican Republic's unique Presidential Commission and its role in coordinating all the efforts of government and society as well as its pilot country status.

The work exemplified the need to holistically address the MDGs in a cross-sectoral manner and how that has come to fruition in the Dominican Republic at all levels. Additionally, in spite of the lessons learned that were displayed, the overall message sent was that in order to achieve the MDGs, countries and governments will need to prevent problems and crisis instead of being forced to confront them.

El Seibo: First "Pueblo del Milenio" in the Dominican Republic

Following the video-presentation, the event continued with the symbolic presentation of the "El Seibo MDG Needs Assessment and Costing Analysis". As the first "Pueblo del Milenio" in the Dominican Republic, this was a special moment for not only President Fernandez and First Lady Cedeno de Fernandez, both of whom presented the report to the Secretary-General; but also for the hundreds of citizens from the local community that had participated in the process, all of whom made the report a reality.





A few of those citizens were present in the Presidential Palace; however, thanks to the local staff of the Office of the First Lady and her Community Technology Center, a televised satellite link connected the local community of El Seibo with the event in the Presidential Palace.

Secretary-General Kofi Annan

The event continued with the intervention of the Secretary-General, who instead of reading a pre-prepared text of a speech; spoke extemporaneously with emotion, passion, excitement, and interest after having seen the video-presentation, affirming that the Dominican Republic is on the right path towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Verbatim Text:

Let me first of all thank you for this for this wonderful video presentation. My wife and I traveled around the world and we have seen governments and communities trying to implement the Millennium Development Goals, but today you have

demonstrated to us and you have shown us how one can organize this at the community level, getting the people and the communities involved and getting them to take ownership.

When the Member States and their governments approved the Millennium Declaration, I remember telling the leaders gathered at the General Assembly in New York, that it is wonderful that we have adopted the Millennium Declaration, out of which the goals were developed. But do not think that you are going to leave it to me, the Secretary General and the Secretariat to implement it, it is your declaration and it has to be implemented at the country level and at the local level, and it is wonderful today to see how you have translated it into action, how you have managed to show leadership President Fernández. You have your whole government and the population involved.

I often describe the Millennium Development Goals as simple goals that are achievable and that is understood by the average man and women in the street. It is their life, it affects them, it affects their children and it affects their future, and if we can get them to buy into it and accept it as our program



for development with a bit of leadership you can see that, and it's been wonderful to see this program and to see how you're working effectively with the UN agencies, with UNICEF; and I see the Director there, and all the other UN groups.

I think what we have seen here we often think of the UN as an organization for constant peace and security, but development is also peace and security. You cannot have security without development and you cannot have development without security and you cannot enjoy either one for the longer term unless there is respect for human rights and the rule of law. These three pillars reinforce each other and this is the work of the United Nations: security, economic and social development, and respect for human rights. And any program that is built on these three principals and we attempt to reinforce them, is bound to succeed. And I am really excited to see how the Dominican Republic has approached it and the Presidential Commission was a wonderful idea, which also ties in the Government, the Ministers and the Parliaments that pass the budgets.

And I think once they have bought into it and they accept that it is a longer term proposition, I hope the annual budgets to pursue the Millennium Development Goals will be achieved.

Globally we are making progress; we have made progress in education, primary education, in most countries it has risen by 15%, mainly due to the enrollment of girls. We are doing well on water, clean water, and provision of clean water. Maternal mortality rate is dropping. There has been huge reduction in abject poverty in Asia due mainly to China and India.



But the performance is uneven, many countries cannot meet the Millennium Development Goal target of 2015, unless they accelerate their efforts and the partnership that underpins that process has to work, the partnership between the developed countries and the developing countries. That is goal number eight as underpinned by the Monterrey Consensus that the developing countries who will try to improve their governance, fight corruption, strengthen their institutions, engage their own communities and create the environment that will release the entrepreneurship and the creative energies of their people. And the donor communities will deliver more quality development assistance, debt relief and hopefully work with us to get a development Round at Doha, but at last Doha is in crisis and I use the word crisis, I didn't say dead, and I hope it can be revived. Because most of the countries would want to trade themselves out of poverty rather than live on hand outs. And I think that the way you are approaching it here, getting the com-

munities involved, giving them technology, giving them clean water; looking after health, education and sanitation—is the way to go.

A healthy and a prosperous nation is built on healthy and educated and enlightened citizenship. And I think Mr. President, under your leadership, you are heading the right way and you are setting a model here which I think will be of great interest to many countries in this region and around the world.

So, I want to thank you and the First Lady and the Government and the people of the Dominican Republic for embracing the Millennium Development Goals and using it to reenergize your development activities. And I urge, and I can assure you that my UN colleagues here in Dominican Republic and those of us in New York will continue to work with you in partnership, and it is a wonderful, wonderful example you have shown us this morning.

Thank you very much.



President Leonel Fernandez

The closing words were delivered by H.E. Leonel Fernandez, President of the Dominican Republic who expressed thanks to the Secretary-General for his visit, its significance to the Dominican people, and the challenges that lie for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Verbatim Text:

Today, a great joy embraces the Dominican people. The presence of U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan has become a historical event for our country.

Although the Dominican Republic is among one of the founding countries present at the San Francisco Conference in 1945, and consequently one of the first 50 U.N. Member States, it has not been until today that we have been privileged to have with us, the man that exemplifies, on a global scale, the values of peace, security and well-being for humanity.

That long wait, has had a gratifying compensation. The Dominican Republic accepts, without complaints, that during 61 years no Secretary General of that organization has visited our country, if after



that long wait, the person that honors us with his presence is a virtuous, sensitive, intelligent and courageous man such as Kofi Annan.

Thank you very much Mr. Secretary General, for allowing us this wonderful moment that will go down in diplomatic history in the Dominican Republic.

Fortunately, the Secretary-General of the United Nations is not visiting our country to resolve a conflict. Overwhelmed as he might be, with many threats to the peace and security in the world, we hope that what he takes with him after leaving our nation is that he remembers it as a very optimistic place, which lives in peaceful coexistence with the rest of the world.

From the several press reports that we have been able to read, we know that the Secretary General has just ended his visit to our neighboring country, Haiti, where he expressed concerns for the security

of its population, as well as the trafficking of arms and illicit drugs.

Those are also areas of concern for us in the Dominican Republic. Because of our common border, those problems too, are starting to emerge in our country.

Today we know, none the less, that is not only a Haitian and Dominican problem. It is a global issue that at this precise moment, affects different nations around the world, and in a particular way, our Latin American neighbors.

The tendency to be interdependent, has allowed us positive results, including: trade liberalization, foreign direct investment, and remittances, however, simultaneously, it has generated for humanity, new threats and challenges, like terrorism, money laundering, as well as trafficking of arms and drugs.

Due to the interdependence that humanity is experiencing currently, the Dominican Republic is no stranger to the evolution of different conflicts that cause world instability.

We are worried about the situation in the Middle East. We hope that the United Nations can play an effective role to agree upon a cease fire in the region and to establish negotiation mechanisms that will guarantee a lasting peace in that part of the world.

We embrace the condemnation voiced by the Secretary-General recently of the Israeli missile attack on the city of Qana, in southern Lebanon, however, at the same time; we condemn the laun-



ching of missiles by Hezbollah at cities located in northern Israel.

We are concerned about the accumulation of tensions in regards to Iran's pretensions of obtaining uranium and develop its nuclear program, and we observe with great worry the events in the Korean Peninsula and its effects in Southeast Asia.

In summation Mr. Secretary-General, the Dominican Republic is concerned as a result of the dangerous chain of events that are taking place in various regions around the world.

The effects that they have on petroleum prices and how it can influence negatively world economic

growth as well as the collapse it may cause to emerging economies, represents a legitimate source of anxiety and distress.

But we trust the vital role that the United Nations can play in impeding the development of the adverse situation as well as in the leadership of a visionary and perceptive man, such as that of Secretary-General, Kofi Annan.

We are aware of the great efforts Secretary-General Annan has made to reform and modernize the U.N. system. We have followed with great interest his initiatives to democratize different agencies of this international organization, including the opening of its doors to civil society; the Millennium Develop-



“The Presidential Commission was a wonderful idea, which also ties in the Government, the Ministers and the Parliaments that pass the budgets”

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations.



ment Goals, which aim to halve world poverty by 2015; the Global Compact, as well as his commitment to sustainable development, protection of the environment, gender equality and respect for human rights.

Mr. Secretary-General, we hope that you leave us with fond memories of the Dominican Republic, a country, that similar to yourself, is a promoter of peace, security, prosperity, and dignity for all human beings.

Thank you very much.

The Secretary-General, impressed by the speech of President Fernandez re-took position at the podium, however, this time together with President Fernandez and made a statement.

Verbatim Text:

The President said something which reminded me when I go to peaceful countries; sometimes the

press asks me why did you come here? What brought you here? What are you doing here? And you know, nations are like organizations and people, and each organization's hundred percent of the problems are created by 8 percent of the people and if you are not careful, you give all your time to that 8% and you have no time for the good ones.

And it is the same with nations, sometimes it is good to visit the peaceful and prosperous countries to hold the example that they have shown to others and also to remind you as well what it could be like, and get some energy, enthusiasm to continue your work with the others, to be able to say I just came from such and such country, it was peaceful, and know that others can follow this example and be like it, so, I often come also to encourage and to say that you are doing wonderful, you are a good role model, and we are going to share your experience with the rest of the world. So, do, carry on.

Once again, Mr. President, thank you.



IV. Visit to local U.N. offices



Kofi Annan Et Niky Fabiancic, U.N. Resident Coordinator – Dominican Republic

The Secretary-General's visit to the local U.N. offices included a meeting with all of the staff of the entire U.N. system of agencies in the Dominican Republic, during which the Secretary-General addressed issues including the Millennium Development Goals, human rights, the crisis in Lebanon, and U.N. Reform.



After his presentation, the Secretary-General entertained questions from the U.N. staff. The meeting lasted approximately 35 minutes. Approximately 120 staff members participated in the meeting. Thereafter, the Secretary-General met with the heads of the U.N. Agencies in the Dominican Republic.





“The Dominican Republic has made an exceptionally promising start. You are an inspiration to the international community, and an example to the developing world. I will follow with interest your progress in the next decade. I will no longer be Secretary-General, but I will definitely still be in your corner.”

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations.

IV. Visit to National Congress



Although the Secretary-General did not have time to visit all branches of Government on the official State Visit to the Dominican Republic, he was able to pass by the National Congress for a short meeting with legislators and a signing of the guest book of honor.



The Secretary-General is seen signing, while the President of the Senate, Andres Bautista and the President of the Chamber of Deputies, Alfredo Pacheco observe (both are former presidents as of 16 August 2006).

IV. | Visit to FUNGLODE

Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo

The Secretary-General's visit to the Dominican Republic also included a stop at the headquarters of the FUN-GLODE Fundación Global Democracia y Desarrollo / Global Foundation for Democracy and Development, the non-profit research-based non-governmental institution and library that President Fernandez created after his first-term as President of the Dominican Republic, which ended in 2000. The Secretary-General's speech addressed the Millennium Development Goals and the work towards achieving them in the Dominican Republic.

Secretary - General

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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC'S WORK TO REACH ANTI-POVERTY GOALS INSPIRATION TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, SAYS SECRETARY-GENERAL IN SANTO DOMINGO ADDRESS

Verbatim Text:

My wife and I are delighted to be in your wonderful country, and to experience the beautiful scenery that people come from over the world to see. We arrived only yesterday, but we like all of it so far!

In fact, we already feel at home here. New Yorkers feel a special bond with the Dominican Republic. Over half of all Dominican immigrants in the United States live in the New York state. Parts of New York City feel more Dominican than Santo Domingo. Which is fine with me. Give me a good longaniza over hot dogs anytime!



Of course, we are deeply excited to be in the land of Pedro Martinez, David Ortiz and Manny Ramirez. Not just because of the magic they perform on the baseball diamond; equally, for how they joined forces with United Nations to provide relief and recovery assistance following the terrible floods that hit your country two years ago. Thanks to the generosity of Pedro, David and Manny, and the way they motivated the Boston Red Sox and their fans to contribute, the people of the devastated town of Jimani have been able move into new homes, with hopes for a better life.

It is equally exciting to witness at first hand your country's efforts to ensure that all its resources – and the progress and investment that come with them – benefit all of the Dominican Republic's daughters and sons.

In particular, I am impressed with your country's work to reach the Millennium Development Goals – our shared blueprint agreed by all the world's Governments for building a better world in the twenty-first century.

The Dominican Republic has really mobilized itself behind these eight commitments, ranging from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education – all by the target date of 2015.

Just today, I met with the Presidential Commission on the Millennium Development Goals, the body created by President Fernández two years ago.

Your President has demonstrated just the kind of vision we need, by setting up the Commission to monitor progress, and to give guidance to Government ministries and local authorities on the steps needed to reach the Goals.

At the same time, he has asked the Commission to do something equally important: to maintain a dialogue and flow of information to and from all sectors – public and private – on the work that is being done. Only by sustaining awareness and engagement among all arms of Government, civil society and the private sector can we make real and enduring headway in moving towards the Goals.



That effort to build and keep up consciousness is working. We can see this in the vigorous support for the Goals that the Dominican people have expressed, speaking through numerous voluntary groups that have joined in partnership with the Presidential Commission and the United Nations Millennium Campaign.

How, then, are the Millennium Development Goals different from other bold pledges that became broken promises over the past 50 years? I would say they are different in five ways.

First, rich countries have accepted, for the first time, their share of responsibility to support the efforts of poor countries, through more and better aid, debt cancellation and fairer trade.

And developing countries have accepted their share, through improved governance and better use of resources.



Second, the Goals are people-centred, time-bound and measurable.

A classic complaint about development aid is that resources tend to be wasted by corruption and mismanagement, and that we have no way to track progress and ensure accountability. Now, we have a set of clear, measurable indicators, focused on basic human needs.

We have clear benchmarks of progress – or the lack of it – both globally and on a country-by-country basis. As President Fernández has said, the Goals enable us to better understand what we must do, while they challenge us to identify next steps, to assess what resources are needed, and to find them.

Third, the Goals have unprecedented political support.

The eight Goals were drawn from the Millennium Declaration, which was endorsed by all Member States of the United Nations six years ago. Never before have such concrete goals been formally endorsed by rich and poor countries alike.

Never before have the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and all the other main arms of the international system come together behind the same set of development objectives – and stood ready to be held accountable for achieving them.

Fourth, the Goals have unprecedented popular support.

They represent a set of simple, but powerful, objectives that every man and woman in the street, from Santo Domingo to Sydney, can easily understand and support.

Fifth – and most important – the Millennium Development Goals are achievable.

They are certainly challenging, but they are also technically feasible. They are not just wishful thinking.

Take the first goal – that of reducing extreme poverty by half. Over the past 15 years, there has been a massive, unprecedented reduction in poverty, led by Asia.

Latin America and the Caribbean are predicted to see growth of around 5 per cent this year – the second time in 25 years that the region will see four consecutive years of growth, with the regional gross

domestic product (GDP) posting a cumulative rise of almost 18 per cent. The Dominican Republic is one of the three countries with the highest growth rates in the entire region.

Globally, among the different Goals themselves, we have a mixed scorecard. There have been major advances in reducing hunger, improving access to drinking water and sending more children to primary school.

But mothers continue to die needlessly in childbirth throughout the developing world. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria continue to spread and to kill. Gender equality remains no more than a dream for women in many countries. Damage to the environment is a growing threat to people's food and water supplies, to their livelihoods and homes.

There is no autopilot, no magic of the marketplace, no rising tide in the global economy that will lift all boats. If current trends persist, some of the poorest countries will not be able to meet many – or perhaps any – of the Goals by 2015. Considering how far we have come, such a failure would be a tragic missed opportunity.

That is why the concept of a global partnership between rich and poor countries – the eighth Goal – needs to become a reality. Let me recall the terms of that historic compact.

Developed countries must give full support. That means providing more and better-quality development assistance. It means offering wider and deeper debt relief. And it means making the trading system one that truly supports development.

Recent lamentable setbacks in the Doha negotiations have led some participants to contemplate settling for something less than a true development round – or for no round at all. That must not happen. We must sustain the determination and political courage needed to conclude the talks by the end of this year.

Let us remember that two thirds of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on agriculture. That means we have to end agricultural subsidies in rich countries, to give farmers in the developing world a fairer deal. And we have to end trade and non-trade barriers that stifle progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

If developed countries do their part, so must the developing ones. Each one of them has a duty to its people to take charge of its own development. That means building better governance and fighting corruption. It means devising and stimulating policies and investments that strengthen the economy. It means making real resources available to build better lives.

It means assuming the primary responsibility to achieve all of the first seven Goals – covering poverty, hunger, education, the environment, women's rights and health, including the fight against HIV/AIDS.

It means integrating the global Goals into national policies, plans and budgets. Only when the goals are owned at the national level, and at the municipal and provincial levels; and only when resources are invested in them, will they be translated into services and benefits for the poor.



And it means transparent and accountable governance. Only when citizens, parliaments and media work in concert, will corruption be rooted out and Governments be held to account.

In all these endeavors, the Dominican Republic has made an exceptionally promising start. You are an inspiration to the international community, and an example to the developing world.

I will follow with interest your progress in the next decade. I will no longer be Secretary-General, but I will definitely still be in your corner.

And now I will be pleased to try and answer your questions.

Muchas gracias. Thank you very much

IV. Presidential Palace

Duarte, Mella & Sanchez
National Recognition of the
Secretary-General & State Dinner



“Your President has demonstrated just the kind of vision we need, by setting up the Commission to monitor progress, and to give guidance to Government ministries and local authorities on the steps needed to reach the Goals”

Kofi Annan

Secretary-General of the United Nations.



The highest National Recognition of Duarte, Mella, and Sanchez was conferred upon Secretary-General Kofi Annan by President Leonel Fernandez for his merits of working towards peace and security for humanity.



Concluding this presentation and serving as the last event on the schedule of the Secretary-General's official visit to the Dominican Republic, President Fernandez and the First Lady offered a State Dinner in the Presidential Palace in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Kofi Annan.



Secretary-General Kofi Annan & President Leonel Fernandez



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PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION ON
THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS
AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT