

Millennium Development Goals Update

At the United Nations, there is renewed energy and hopefulness about humanity's ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. With the aid of the United Nations Foundation, the Arabella Philanthropic Investment Advisors, and the Permanent Missions of Austria, Qatar and the United Kingdom, the President of the General Assembly, Dr. Srgjan Kerim convened the following thematic debate in the early part of April: "Recognizing the Achievements, Addressing the Challenges and Getting Back on Track to Achieve the MDGs by 2015."

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In opening the debate, Dr. Kerim reported much promising information to the 110 participating delegations, including the following:

Since the Millennium Declaration in the year 2000,

- 34 countries are now on track to meet the infant mortality goal;
- 44 more countries are on track to meet the poverty goal;
- 47 more countries are on track to meet the education goal;
- The debt of more than 22 countries has been fully cancelled.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon also delineated the areas of "undeniable progress," globally and in specific countries. However, all present stressed the fact that "the MDG track record is mixed," and that humanity yet has a long way to go before achieving them fully.

Importantly, and as is the case increasingly, the interdependent nature and synthesis of all issues and all sectors of society were recognized, as evident in Dr Kerim's following assessment: "global consensus recognizes that economic growth, by itself, is not enough. Inclusive growth needs to be accompanied by good

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governance, care for the environment, social justice, human rights, gender equality and quality public services."