



Address
by Joschka Fischer,
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Federal Republic of Germany,
at the 2005 UN World Summit,
High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly

New York, 15 September 2005

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Mr President,

In the world of the ^{21st} century, we are confronted almost daily with new risks and dangers. How can we avert conflicts about limited resources? How can we preserve the global ecosystem? How can we overcome the growing gap between rich and poor? How should we shape globalization? How do we ensure development opportunities for everyone? How do we prevent global conflicts?

Above all, security in the ^{21st} century means investment in development, in democracy and human rights. All of these challenges are inseparably linked. They are our core tasks.

Five years after the Millennium Summit we, the members of the United Nations, must assess together the extent to which we have achieved the goals laid down in 2000. We have to discuss how we want to proceed in order to implement the Millennium Declaration further and in full. And, as the mainstay of multilateralism, we must make the United Nations stronger and more efficient.

We therefore welcome the fact that the international community has succeeded after all in agreeing on a summit document. This paper provides a point of departure for further negotiations, even if it falls short of our expectations in many areas.

Mr President,

The Millennium Development Goals are the social Magna Carta of our time. Our actions must be guided by them. Now we must continue working to make them binding.

For we cannot accept that well over one billion people are living on less than one dollar a day. We cannot allow a situation where eleven million children die each year before their fifth birthday.

We must greatly strengthen the rights of women and do everything we can to ensure that women finally have equal opportunities in education, vocational training and at work. We must ensure that environmental protection and the principles of sustainable development become key components of international policy.

Only in this way can hunger, poverty and disease be overcome on a lasting basis. Only in this way can we stop the ever greater destruction of the sources of life on our planet.

Germany is aware of its responsibility in this respect. We want to increase our development aid and have agreed on a step-by-step plan until 2015 with our European partners to this end. We are also considering new instruments to finance development. We are working with other states on the "Action against Hunger and Poverty" alliance initiated by President Lula. Fairer trade conditions, especially free access to markets, are vital for lasting development.

However, it also has to be said that lasting successes will be achieved only through the developing countries' own efforts – in particular, good governance and the implementation of rule-of-law principles.

Development is also inextricably linked to climate protection. We therefore have to do everything in our power to implement the Framework Convention on Climate Change and to further develop the Kyoto Protocol. The steady rise in natural disasters means that vigorous action must be agreed upon at international level.

Mr President,

Discussing these issues today as representatives of our states, we must not forget that people in our countries are not interested in debates about agenda or procedure. They want our discussion to be decision- and result-oriented.

Germany would therefore have wished a document with a clearer mandate to act in many areas. It is regrettable that no agreement could be reached on the key issue of disarmament and non-proliferation, nor on the definition of terrorism. Our task now must be to discuss how we can nonetheless make progress in these spheres of key importance to international security.

Although I welcome the proposal contained in the summit document to establish a Human Rights Council, it raises serious questions. Without universal protection of human rights, without promotion of democracy and the rule of law, we will neither achieve sustainable development nor be able to guarantee lasting peace and stability. We therefore have to do everything we can to make this new body a powerful instrument. The negotiating body set up for this purpose should present its proposals as quickly as possible, preferably by the end of the year.

The proposal to establish a Peacebuilding Commission is also of great significance. For preserving world peace and international security is and remains the most important undertaking for the United Nations. The Commission will fill a gap in our Organization's institutional structure.

Mr President,

If we want to make the United Nations fit to secure peace, stability and development comprehensively and globally, then we have to equip it to cope with the challenges of the 21st century. The pressure of globalization and the international crises and conflicts have made radical reform essential in all spheres.

I am firmly convinced that the ultimate success of these reforms will largely depend on the reform of the Security Council. **Excuses**, half-hearted or bad compromises will not advance our cause. The G4 countries have submitted a proposal which meets the needs of the United Nations, its member states and regions. These reforms will have to stay on the agenda. I call upon you all to resume consultations on reforms at this 60^s Session of the General Assembly.

The world in the ^{21st} century will need a strong United Nations which has been renewed in every sphere. Either we act now and shape globalization through cooperation and partnership, or the crises and conflicts of the globalized world will force us to respond. We will therefore join forces with our partners and friends and work with determination and the necessary patience to strengthen the United Nations by renewing it.

Thank you.