

UN Millennium Goals

This past September 14-16, 2005 found 170 world leaders converging at the headquarters of the United Nations in New York for the 60th session of its General Assembly. Much publicity was given to President Bush's speech on September 14 that addressed concerns of terrorism, the spread of nuclear weapons and curbing the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. Other media reports focused on the reforms put forward by the Secretary General Kofi Annan and his ability to achieve such reforms in light of the oil-for-food scandal that had recently tainted his administration with charges of corruption.

The official agenda for the gathering, however, which did not gain much media notice, was the evaluation of the millennial goals, adopted by 189 world heads of state in the year 2000 and which proposed to end extreme poverty world wide by the year 2015. The September gathering was meant to evaluate progress made on the goals and to determine how to move forward on the attainment of those goals. There are eight millennial goals:

1. To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger;
2. To achieve universal primary education;
3. To promote gender equality and empower women;
4. To reduce child mortality;
5. To improve maternal health;
6. To combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
7. To ensure environmental sustainability;
8. To develop a global partnership for development.

The first seven goals concentrate on the specific techniques for eliminating poverty. The eighth goal implies that the accomplishment of those previous goals will be achieved by the investment of wealthy countries in delivering aid, providing debt relief and establishing free trade policies.