



**Speech by Ms Renata Dessallien  
UN Resident Coordinator  
UN Day 2009**

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Honourable Chief Guest, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Dipu Moni  
Excellencies  
Distinguished guests  
Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues and friends

Assalamu Alaikum and a very warm welcome to you all.

As in previous years, I would like to open this occasion by reading out the UN Secretary-General's message for UN day:

**QUOTE:**

On this United Nations Day and every day throughout the year, the United Nations is at work -- for the planet, for jobs, for "we the peoples".

We deliver more humanitarian aid than anyone -- and to the toughest places. We vaccinate 40 per cent of the world's children. We feed more than 100 million people and are helping more than 30 million refugees, most of them women and children fleeing war and persecution. We are deploying more peacekeepers than ever -- more than 115,000. In the last year alone, we provided electoral assistance to almost 50 countries. And the entire UN system has mobilized to face global economic turmoil and the social unrest it threatens.

People look to the United Nations to defeat poverty and hunger, to keep the peace, to expand education and stand up for human rights in every corner of the globe. They look to us to stop the spread of deadly weapons and disease, and to protect people and families hit by disasters. In December, they will look to us to seal a comprehensive, equitable and ambitious deal on climate change that will protect us all and pave the way toward a greener, more sustainable economy.

This is a unique moment in world affairs. Multiple crises -- food, fuel, financial, flu -- are hitting all at once. Climate change looms larger every day. Each illustrates a 21<sup>st</sup> century truth: we share one planet, one home. As people, as nations, as a species, we sink or swim together.

The United Nations is doing its utmost to respond -- to address the big issues, to look at the big picture. We are forging a new multilateralism that can deliver real results for all people, especially those most in need. But I am also painfully aware of the distance to go and the gap between commitment and action. On this UN Day, let us resolve to redouble our efforts on behalf of the vulnerable, the powerless, the defenceless. Let us stand more united than ever -- united in purpose and united in action to make the world a safer, better place.

**UNQUOTE:**

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Ladies and gentlemen

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bangladesh's membership in the United Nations. On 17 September 1974, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution to admit Bangladesh. Former Prime Minister, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, then addressed the UN General Assembly as the first Prime Minister of Bangladesh. In his speech he said: "The noble ideals enshrined in the UN Charter are the very ideals for which millions of our people have made the supreme sacrifice. [...] The Bengali nation fully commits itself to the building of a world order, in which the aspiration of all men for peace and justice will be realized."

Bangladesh has remained committed to the former Prime Minister's pledge and, since then, has worked tirelessly with the United Nations to enhance peace, development, democracy, and respect for human rights in all corners of the world.

With the United Nations, Bangladesh has protected civilians and humanitarian personnel, and has disarmed and demobilised combatants in countries at war.

With the United Nations, Bangladesh has helped implement elections and establish democratic institutions in countries emerging from war.

With the United Nations, Bangladesh has worked in multilateral fora to uphold and promote human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the culture of peace;

And with the United Nations, Bangladesh has worked to raise awareness of the negative consequences of climate change, towards a global agreement among nations for our common good.

On this UN Day, I would like us to pause and celebrate our efforts and achievements, but at the same time recall the former Prime Minister's words. Let us (re-)commit ourselves to the building of a world order, in which the aspiration of all men (and women) for peace and justice will be realised. We owe this to the millions of people that have already sacrificed for this. We owe it to ourselves. We owe it to our children.

Excellencies

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

I take this opportunity to reaffirm the UN's full and unreserved commitment to support Bangladesh in consolidating democracy and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We stand ready and will do our utmost to respond to the needs of the government and the people of this beautiful and remarkable country that we are privileged to serve.

With this, I wish you all a very happy UN Day. Don't forget, it's your UN.

Thank you.

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