

The full text of the prime minister's speech to the United Nations in New York, 31 July 07:

It is a pleasure to be here in New York today.

Coming here six years after September 11th I recall the resilience and bravery shown in this city in the face of tragedy. Indeed, America has shown by the actions of all its people that while buildings can be destroyed, values are indestructible; and while lives have been put at risk, the cause of liberty never dies.

And let me begin by thanking the UN Secretary General warmly for the work he is undertaking to bring peace to the troubled region of Darfur.

For today is an important decision day for Darfur - and for change.

The situation in Darfur is the greatest humanitarian disaster the world faces today. Over 200,000 dead, 2 million displaced and 4 million on food aid. Following my meeting with President Bush, and I thank him for his leadership on Darfur, the UK and the French have now, with US support, agreed and tabled a UN Security Council resolution that will mandate the deployment of the world's largest peacekeeping operation to protect the citizens of Darfur. And I hope this plan - for a 19,000 African Union-UN force - will be adopted later today. Immediately we will work hard to deploy this force quickly. And the plan for Darfur from now on is to achieve a ceasefire, including an end to aerial bombings of civilians; drive forward peace talks starting in Arusha Tanzania this weekend on 3rd August; and as peace is established, offer to and begin to invest in recovery and reconstruction. But we must clear if any party blocks progress and the killings continue, I and others will redouble our efforts to impose further sanctions.

The message for Darfur is that it is time for change. And I am here to say that it's also time for change so that we can meet the world's millennium development goals.

We do this best when we all join together in common cause. So I want to discuss with you how starting from the shared needs, common interests and linked destinies of all countries across the world - rich and poor - as well as private and voluntary sectors, we can come together to forge a new global alliance for peace and prosperity.

When one month ago I took office as Prime Minister, one of my first acts was to ask Ministers of the United Kingdom Government - from International Development and Foreign Office to Business and Trade, Treasury and the Environment - to report to me on what we must do to meet the world's Millennium Development Goals and to eradicate the great evils of our time: illiteracy, disease, poverty, environmental degradation and under-development. Earlier this month, the UN Secretary General launched the UN's 2007 progress report on the goals. He said there was a clear need for urgent and concerted action.

Now one month later I have come to New York - to the city where the world convenes - to support the Secretary-General's call and to tell the truth: the goals the world has set are not being met and we face an emergency - a development emergency - and we need emergency action if we are to meet them.

And I have come today to New York because it was here seven years ago... in this United Nations conclave... with the eyes of the whole world upon us all... that every world leader, every international body, almost every single country signed a historic declaration for the new millennium, pledging to set and then to meet by 2015 eight development goals.

It was a remarkable moment --- the whole world coming together as one, the leadership of the poorest countries to be empowered by the obligations accepted by the richest. All of us accepting our shared responsibilities to work together for change.

But seven years on it is already clear that our pace is too slow; our direction too uncertain; our vision at risk.

The Millennium Development Goal to be met in 2015, is to reduce infant mortality by two thirds. But unless we act, it will not be met by 2015, not even by 2030, not until 2050.

The Millennium Development Goal of 2000, to be met in 2015, is primary education for every child. Unless we act it will not be met by 2015, not even by 2050 but at best by 2100.

And unless we act, the planet will by 2015 be suffering not less but more environmental degradation and millions of people will still be struggling on less than one dollar a day with millions of children still hungry.

As the UN Secretary General said earlier this month pointedly and persuasively 'millions of lives quite literally hang in the balance'.

The calendar says we are half way from 2000 to 2015. But the reality is that we are we are a million miles away from success.

The world did not come together in New York in 2000, come together again in Doha in 2001, in Johannesburg and Monterrey in 2002, in Gleneagles and New York in 2005 and Heiligendamm in 2007 to make, re-make and reaffirm promises, for us then to break them.

We cannot allow our promises that became pledges to descend into just aspirations, and then wishful thinking, and then only words that symbolise broken promises.

We did not make the commitment to the Millennium Development Goals only for us to be remembered as the generation that betrayed promises rather than honoured them and undermined trust that promises can ever be kept. So it is time to call it what it is: a development emergency which needs emergency action.

If 30,000 children died needlessly and avoidably every day in America or Britain we would call it an emergency. And an emergency is what it is.

So when the need is pressing, when it is our generation that has made historic commitments, when the time to meet them is now short, the simple questions that - to paraphrase the words of an American president - we must ask are:

If not now, when?

If not us, who?

If not together, how?

And I believe the scale of the challenge is such that we cannot now leave it to some other time and some other people but must act now, working together.

Yet despite all the failures, success is not beyond our vision or our grasp. And for all the measures of despair I have mentioned, there can also be reason for hope.

For we know that when we act, and act together, we can make progress.

We have shown how we can address polio, measles and tuberculosis.

The numbers of children out of school has fallen from 100 million to 77 million.

34 countries are now on track to meet the infant mortality goal.

44 countries now on track to meet the poverty goal.

47 countries now on track to meet the education goal - because of aid and debt relief.

So let no one say aid and debt relief don't make a difference and politics never works - what doesn't work is doing nothing.

And with 130 million children immunized in a life-giving movement to eliminate polio and smallpox, we have also shown we can act with boldness to vaccinate children. The International Finance Facility for Immunization - backed by the Gates Foundation, six European governments, Brazil and South Africa - is frontloading 4 billion dollars of funds and will enable, by 2015, 500 million children to be vaccinated and at least 5 million lives saved.

And if this can be achieved by one world-wide financial facility in one sphere of healthcare, how much more can be achieved by private and public sectors, and faith groups and NGOs working together - not just in health but across education, economic development and the environment?

And so my argument is simple: the greatest of evils that touches the deepest places of conscience demands the greatest of endeavour.

The greatest of challenges now demands the boldest of initiatives.

To address the worst of poverty we urgently need to summon up the best efforts of humanity.

I want to summon into existence the greatest coalition of conscience in pursuit of the greatest of causes.

And I firmly believe that if we can discover common purpose there is no failing in today's world that cannot be addressed by mobilising our strengths, no individual struggle that drags people down that cannot benefit from a renewed public purpose that can lift people up.

For you also know what I know: that the world has the technology to cure, the science to heal, the medicine to save lives.

Past generations had the old excuse.

They could say:

If only we had the knowledge

If only we had the technology

If only we had the medicine

If only we had the science

If only we had the wealth.

Today we have the science, technology, medicine and wealth: what we now need is the unity and strength of purpose to employ the ingenuity and resources we have - and to employ them well - to help those who need it.

And we need a compact - the rich accepting their responsibilities to invest, to support, to end protectionism and to deliver our promises; the developing countries accepting their responsibilities to reform, to open up to trade, and to be transparent and free of corruption.

But our objectives cannot be achieved by governments alone, however well intentioned; or private sector alone, however generous; or NGOs or faith groups alone, however well meaning or determined - it can only be achieved in a genuine partnership together.

So it is time to call into action the eighth of the Millennium Goals so we can meet the first seven. Let us remember Millennium Development Goal eight – to call into being, beyond governments alone, a global partnership for development, and together harness the energy, the ideas and the talents of the private sector, consumers, NGOs and faith groups, and citizens everywhere.

The sum of all the individual actions working together to achieve real change.

Some people call it the mobilisation of soft power...I call it people power.

People power in support of the leadership of developing countries.

So let me say to governments of developing countries: you are the leaders in charge of the destiny of your countries. And you have told us that that destiny is not to be poor. The world has moved from the age of colonialism to the age of political independence but economic dependence, to what must become the new age of empowerment: and our task is to support and empower you in the open, transparent decision-making and reforms you need to make, and to keep our promises.

Let me say to business: you know better than anyone that in the long run you simply cannot succeed in places where the roads are impassable, where people have no access to markets, where employees are under-educated or under-fed, where the rule of law is poorly established or poorly respected. Not only does business have the technology, the skills, the expertise for wealth and job creation that if fully mobilised for global purpose will help meet our goals, it is also in your best business interest to help poor countries develop.

Let me say to faith groups and NGOs -- your moral outrage at avoidable poverty has led you to work for the greatest of causes, the highest of ideals, and become the leaders of the campaign to make poverty history. Imagine what more you can accomplish if the energy to oppose and expose harnessed to the energy to propose and inspire is given more support by the rest of us—businesses, citizens, and governments.

Let me say to individuals....I know that many of you want to help make a difference, want to be responsible consumers, want to make your voices heard, want to be active citizens of the world. You can play a part as individuals in ensuring that when the history books look back on 2007 and 2008, they talk of a popular campaign for change so big, broad, deep and wide that governments around the whole world had to sit up, listen and act.

Let me say to all our global institutions and international financial institutions: We have been standing at the crossroads of change for too long. It is time to implement the reforms needed, prove your relevance for the global age, and make the difficult choices that will give us an international system that is truly fit for the 21st century agenda --- one that reflects new shared purpose for the age of globalisation, delivering change to those who need it most.

And let me say to governments of developed countries: We must deliver on our previous promises --- on 0.7 per cent, on making our aid more effective, on debt cancellation, on trade, on universal access to AIDS treatment, on reducing carbon emissions. And let us not just fulfil the commitments we have already made but work with everyone who has a contribution to make. Not just more reports or more studies - for we know what needs to be done - but action.

A programme of action on education to end illiteracy and to ensure opportunity for all.

A programme of action on trade and economic development to end poverty and ensure prosperity for all.

A programme of action to challenge degradation and to protect the environment, to promote safety and security for all.

And a programme of action to eradicate disease to ensure decent health for all.

So today 12 world leaders and 20 top businessmen and women have come together to sign up to a new commitment to action to meet this development emergency.

I am delighted that the UN Secretary General is here today to witness and respond.

Together we are calling on all – not just governments but also private sector, civil society and faith groups - to come together in a worldwide initiative to form new partnerships to help accelerate our progress.

I want us to come together as one world – public, private, voluntary sectors including faith groups and international institutions – in education – government, teachers, schools, universities, business, NGOs and faith groups; in trade and wealth creation - government, business, trade unions, cities, NGOs and faith groups; in the environment - government, business, scientists, cities, NGOs and faith groups; in health - governments, doctors, scientists, businesses, NGOs and faith groups.

I want us to call an emergency meeting next year at which we report on where we are and what we have to do.

In the coming year we must turn these renewed commitments into immediate action. We must agree in the autumn a global trade deal that delivers for the poor not just the rich; we must in Bali, in December, agree the outline for a bold climate plan and at the G8 in Japan in July 2008 we must deliver on the promises we made on aid and debt.

And each year from 2008 in our countdown to 2015 we must mobilise action around detailed objectives: lives saved from killer diseases like TB or polio, children in school, people with clean water, people on anti-retrovirals, people in jobs, businesses created. All the individual actions can be measured and aggregated as steps towards our goals.

I welcome the work already being done in the United Nations, particularly the start this year of Annual Ministerial Reviews of the Millennium Development Goals by the Economic and Social Council, and the preparations for a major Financing for Development conference in Doha next December.

And around them we must build a consensus to support the urgent actions we must all take, with everyone playing their part.

Education

Let me set out what I believe our partnership for 2015 can achieve for our first goal - to end illiteracy by ensuring schooling for all.

Last year in Mozambique, under the inspiration of Nelson Mandela's leadership, the international community launched a new 'Education For All' initiative: the demand that the promise of free education must be kept, school by school, class by class, and child by child.

And I ask all NGOs, churches and faith groups to demand of every country that they support this great literacy initiative that will help ensure that young children are given hope.

In Indonesia I have seen barefoot children living above open sewers; in India I have witnessed hundreds of children sleeping rough in the streets; in Nigeria I met AIDS orphans who have AIDS and TB themselves; and in Mozambique I heard from children being taught on the floor with leaking roofs and four shifts a day.

Today in Africa governments, local and national, provide the majority of school places but up to one third of schooling is provided by churches and faith groups, and hundreds of businesses and charity foundations are involved in supporting schools.

So how can we move forward ?

Already 25 African and Asian countries have agreed to submit ten year education plans.

The Netherlands, Canada, Ireland, France, Australia, Germany, Spain and Japan have made new commitments.

The US and G8 have pledged to help fill the immediate funding gaps in the Fast Track Initiative.

And to set a ten year goal the UK has pledged 15 billion dollars – locking in the long-term financial commitment that is vital to delivering high quality education for all.

We will call on others in education, business and the voluntary sector to join us so that we can put in place long-term predictable funding to finance long-term education plans.

We will encourage schools and colleges and universities in rich countries to reach out to partner with schools and others in poor countries.

In Britain we will review 'gift aid' charity reliefs to maximize the contribution of everyone – individuals, businesses and foundations.

And it is because we are committed to the rights of every child that we will do for education what the Red Cross and Medecins Sans Frontieres do for health and seek to provide education not just in places of comfort and peace but everywhere in the world – for the 40 million children living behind frontiers in conflict zones and failed states. And it is a measure of the engagement we need that this new initiative can be led only by voluntary action.

And let me tell you why I believe schooling for all can be achieved. Education is not only the most economically efficient and socially beneficial investment we can make but also the cheapest and most cost effective. For in the developing world it costs just 100 dollars per child per year for schooling. Just 2 dollars a week. And so to finance all the schools and teachers we need costs 9 billion dollars a year.

For every person in the richest part of the world that is less than two pence a day, or four cents, a day.

If every person in the rich world contributes 10 pounds - or 20 dollars - a year today, we could meet our education goal tomorrow.

Trade and Economic Development

While education is the key to empowerment, trade, wealth creation and job creation are the only routes to long term prosperity.

And it is time to agree a new partnership for prosperity:

in each country, the government undertaking a rigorous examination of the obstacles to business formation...

in each country, development agencies helping to create the infrastructure necessary for growth...

in each country, the power of entrepreneurship unleashed...

in each country, a focus on agricultural productivity...

in each country, government and businesses being long term partners in a joint mission on economic development.

In the 1990s the talk was structural adjustment; in 2007 it is sustainable development. But perhaps for too long we have talked the language of development without defining its starting point in wealth creation - the dignity of individuals empowered to trade and be economically self sufficient.

No country has moved to development without opening up to trade.

So I accept an immediate obligation on world leaders to address protectionism and work to make what we promised - the development trade round - happen this year.

It is urgent that heads of government stand ready to break the deadlock, using all our resources of leadership. In recent days I have talked to Chancellor Merkel, President Barroso, Prime Minister Socrates and President Lula,

President Mbeki and Prime Minister Singh, as well as Pascal Lamy. And I am determined that contacts between leaders are stepped up so that we are ready to quickly finalise an agreement in the near future.

And we must not only open the door but enable people to walk through it, so alongside our fight for a trade agreement must come a multi-billion pound 'aid for trade' programme for poor nations – for which the US, Japan and Europe have already contributed 9 billion dollars - to build the infrastructure, the communications and education to take advantage of trading opportunities and to prevent their most vulnerable people from falling further into poverty as they become integrated into the global economy.

Climate Change

I address you today as many of you go into important discussions taking place at the General Assembly later this morning and again in September on climate change. And I strongly welcome the leadership the Secretary General has shown on this issue in the run-up to the Bali conference in December.

We know that the gains from global prosperity have been disproportionately enjoyed by the people in industrialised countries and that the consequences of climate change will be disproportionately felt by the poorest who are least responsible for it - making the issue of climate change one of justice as much as economic development.

And we know that developing countries are already living in their daily lives with what we live in fear of in ours: in Southern Africa malaria has spread into new areas where it was never previously a threat; Lake Chad is no longer a lake but a dust bowl; farmers in Kenya are unable to identify the seasons in order to know when to sow their crops; the Pacific islanders of Tuvalu – only 3 metres above sea level – are already negotiating the right to move to New Zealand; water scarcity across Asia and Africa is forcing women to walk miles further for water.

And because we are already having to spend \$6 billion of aid a year simply to respond to humanitarian crises caused by environmental neglect, we are spending to deal with the consequences of failure - resources diverted to tackle the short term consequences of environmental change, when we need to invest now to create the low carbon conditions for success in the future.

And I want to say to you today that there is no trade off between meeting our goals on economic development and meeting our goals on the environment and climate change – that tackling poverty is just not possible without also tackling climate change. Indeed that economic progress social justice and environmental care now go together.

That is why Millennium Development Goal seven – that we ensure environmental sustainability - is central to what we do.

Creating a sustainable planet not just for some but for all means doing much more to help developing countries invest to adapt to the immediate consequences of climate change. For our part, Britain is offering a new Environmental Transformation Fund worth 1.6 billion dollars which will help meet our international commitment to poverty reduction through investment in clean energy, sustainable forestry, adaptation and environmental protection.

And building on the global Clean Energy Investment Framework of the World Bank and multilateral development banks – we should make the World Bank a bank for environment as well as development and strengthen its role to stimulate investment in energy access, energy efficiency, low carbon supply, and adaptation in developing countries - not least through innovative new mechanisms joining public and private finance in common cause.

At the same time, rich countries must significantly cut our own greenhouse gas emissions with the European Union committing itself to a 20 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions – 30 per cent if part of a new global effort - as we move to an ambitious, comprehensive and binding international agreement for the period after 2012, putting the world on the path to halving global emissions and including commitments to develop, deploy and transfer low carbon technologies, to create a global carbon market and to help finance developing country investment in clean energy.

And building on the historic commitments made by the G8 earlier this year it is vital that all countries work to achieve such an agreement by the end of 2009.

But working together - harnessing the innovation of business to develop new technologies, the responsibility of consumers and individuals to change their own behaviour, and the conscience of NGOs - we can achieve even more. In particular I want the private sector involved in designing a global carbon market that genuinely benefits the poor.

Health

Public and private sectors can also now work together more effectively to address the fourth evil: disease. For the greatest of human afflictions demands the greatest genius science can offer.

There is no greater cause than that every child in the world should be able to benefit from the best medicine and healthcare.

And today we have it in our power the ability to create lives free from the burden of preventable disease, a gift of life unimaginable even ten years ago, a gift that enriches us all.

Before us is the dream that we can triumph over ancient scourges and for the first time in the history of the world we can conquer polio, TB, tetanus, measles and then – with further advances and initiatives – go on to eliminate pneumococcal pneumonia, malaria and eventually HIV/AIDS.

I want to encourage pathbreaking public private partnerships not just in research but in development and delivery of treatments and drugs.

At Gleneagles in 2005 the G8 agreed the target of universal access to HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care by 2010. Over 50 countries led by the United States have contributed to the Global Fund for HIV, TB and malaria. And

France, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Chile and Norway, joined now by some other donors, have launched UNITAID - an international drug purchase facility designed to provide additional predictable funding to scale up access to drugs and diagnostics – and lower their cost.

Yet too often we talk only of mobilising money to cure individual diseases. The biggest challenge is to devise and organise and manage health care as a whole - not just for curing individual diseases or for the distribution of single drugs but to build overall health care systems that will serve generations.

So drugs and vaccines are only part of the answer. Weak health systems and insufficient doctors and nurses are also among the main obstacles to access to basic healthcare.

Take Malawi – with 12 million people - and just 250 doctors -- one doctor for 50,000 people. And just 3800 nurses.

For 20 million people in Mozambique, just 500 doctors and 4000 nurses.

For 38 million people in Tanzania. Just 800 doctors and 3600 nurses.

So we should set a new objective - to match advances in drugs and treatments by advances in the capacity of healthcare systems to deliver.

Later this year we will launch a new initiative to better align finance from donors and from within countries themselves with comprehensive national health plans and provide more long term predictable financial support.

And in the next year I want the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation to have more power to use international finance to build health care systems for the future.

Today, across the world, medical science, human altruism backed by the innovation and ingenuity of financial services have joined together as one in a humanitarian effort of unprecedented scale and influence.

The private-public partnership which has given birth to the international financial facility for immunisation is, in my view, a model in one sphere in health for what we can achieve in public-private co-operation across health, education and infrastructure.

The principle is that by investing money now in addressing the causes of poverty and underdevelopment we save money that we would have to spend later on addressing the symptoms. In this way the rates of return from investment are greater than the cost of borrowing and make it cost effective.

Moving immunisation from just a fortunate minority to all the population dramatically cuts the risk of contagion and by investing now in preventing disease saves the costs of treatment of that disease later.

This approach however is relevant to other areas too: it can be extended to building the capacity for the provision of health care itself - indeed for the very creation of national health services.

And this model can be applied also to education, money spent up front on schooling and skills paid back by the productive gain from educated people.

But to make this work we need a genuine partnership between governments and markets, the best and most cost effective way of meeting many of our Millennium Development Goals: Long term commitments from donor countries sufficiently secure for markets to front load finance. Public and private sectors working together.

A New Partnership

So my call today is not just to the public purpose of this generation but to the idealism of this and the next generation - that great causes can inspire new energy and transformative change.

Let us call on the world's entrepreneurs to put their talents to create businesses and jobs in the new economies - and to encourage a new generation of entrepreneurs for the future.

Let us call on the world's scientists to put creative genius and innovative flair at the service of solving the technological challenges that face poorer countries as well as richer countries - and to train the scientists of the future.

Let us call on the world's engineers from IT to water and sanitation experts to apply their problem solving expertise to address the infrastructure needs of the under-developed as well as the developed economies – and then to train a new generation of engineers.

Let us summon up the energies of the world's doctors, nurses and healthcare workers to help us cure the diseases and plan the healthcare systems of all and not just some countries - and then to train a new generation of doctors and nurses and health carers.

Let us call upon the teachers of the world not just to teach but to inspire the young – and then to train a new generation of teachers.

In 1960 here in America President John Kennedy called for a peace corps – an international commitment to harness the idealism many felt in the face of threats to human progress and world peace. Today we should evoke the same spirit to forge a coalition for justice.

And when conscience is joined to conscience, moral force to moral force... think how much our power to do good can achieve

Governments, business, scientists, engineers, doctors, nurses, charities and faith groups coming together to make globalisation a force for justice on a global scale.