

UNITED NATIONS



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**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE TO THE WORLD SUMMIT  
OF NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATES  
Rome, 13-15 December 2007**

I am honoured to send you my greetings for the first time as Secretary-General of the United Nations. As Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, you possess a combined wisdom and accumulated experience unrivalled by any grouping in the world.

Allow me to offer my warmest congratulations to Mr. George Clooney and Mr. Don Cheadle on receiving the 2007 Peace Summit Award. I thank them for their committed efforts to alleviate the suffering in Darfur. They are shining examples of what impact individuals can have in raising awareness of the urgent issues of our time.

You meet at a decisive moment in our endeavours to act on the Darfur crisis. We are now at a critical point regarding the deployment of a joint African Union-United Nations peacekeeping force. Politically, we have made some headway in the negotiations to bring peace and stability to the region, but the road ahead will remain very tough. It is crucial that we keep the momentum going on all fronts.

While any real solution will come through a political settlement, we are also doing everything possible to ensure the early deployment of an effective, robust peacekeeping force. But this requires capabilities on the ground -- capabilities which we need UN Member States to provide, but which is still dangerously lacking. The most striking example is helicopters. In the past weeks and months, I have contacted, personally, every possible contributor of helicopters -- in the Americas, in Europe, in Asia. And yet, not one helicopter has been made available yet

In Europe alone, there are thousands of military helicopters of different types. Large numbers of helicopters also exist in Asia and the Americas. Any assistance the Governments in these regions can offer would be profoundly appreciated, not least by the people of Darfur.

You all have an invaluable role to play in leadership and advocacy to advance our cause -- the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, who have a uniquely authoritative platform in our world; George Clooney and Don Cheadle, who have a voice that resonates far and wide.

I am grateful that I can count on your support, and I wish a most productive gathering.

Ban Ki-moon