Our world and our international system face grave and growing dangers. The global economic crisis continues to unfold with frightening velocity. The effects of climate change are being felt with accelerating frequency and force. The number of hungry people has risen to nearly one billion, an appalling tally. The spread of deadly disease, the proliferation of weapons, the hateful tide of extremism, the fallout of intra-state conflict -- all these ills transcend borders. They require unprecedented cooperation. They also demand tenacity of purpose. We either succeed together, or we fail individually.

The current crisis and the real threat of global instability call on us to forge a new multilateralism. We must review our frameworks and institutions to see if they measure up to the tasks we face. We must not succumb to inertia or a passive deference to political “reality”. Our times demand better.

The United Nations was founded on, and has always relied on, a combination of power and principle. While some of the Organization’s structures and rules reflect the geopolitical realities of 1945, they were situated within a set of broader, universal principles meant to govern all nations, regardless of size, strength or political system. If we are to make our way through today’s perilous moment, we need to harness both power and principle in various arenas to meet today's challenges.

Power and principle are on display in efforts to respond to the economic crisis. The G-8 “plus” and G-20 processes have gained momentum in recent years, and with good reason: the participant countries are home to roughly 65 percent of the world’s population and account for 85 per cent of global economic activity. But these processes need to take greater account of the popular aspirations of those not at the table. Their voices, too, need to be part of global economic and financial decision-making. After all, those being hurt worst by the crisis are the poor. Lacking the basics of health care, water and sanitation, they have no safety nets when trade slows and jobs disappear. The decline in remittances lights an additional social fuse.

At the Gleneagles Summit in 2005, the G-8 and other donors pledged to provide an extra $50 billion in official development assistance by 2010, half of which would go to Africa. Also at Gleneagles, the European Union indicated that its 15 established members would meet the long-established target of 0.7% of gross national income in aid by 2013, and 0.51% by 2010. These were historic, welcome commitments, and I was
encouraged that they were reaffirmed at the London Summit in April. For the poorest countries, the prospect of realizing the Gleneagles commitments that would result in at least $300 billion in aid over the next two years will be crucial in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

I have also welcomed the commitment of the world’s major economies to resist protectionism in trade and investment. This, too, was stated explicitly by the G-8 at the Hokkaido Toyako Summit in 2008. However, very little concrete action has emerged, and the picture has, if anything, become bleaker. Moreover, standing against protectionism is only a minimum step; states must also successfully conclude the Doha trade round. The world will continue to watch this situation very closely.

The combination of power and principle is also required in the realm of climate change. On the one hand, we have the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate, which brings together the key economies and emitters. What these countries do will go a long way toward solving -- or exacerbating -- the climate change problem. Yet even their contributions, crucial as they are, are not enough to ensure a full response to the challenge. We need a bridge between the Major Economies Forum process and the universal process represented by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Toward that end, I welcomed the commitment at the Heiligendamm Summit in 2007 to exert strong leadership in combating climate change and reaching a global agreement this year. Some observers have asked how we can afford to tackle climate change at a time of budgetary constraint and austerity. I say instead: how can we afford not to? At a time when the world needs growth, investments in energy efficiency and clean energy can create millions of jobs. Action on climate change is not a luxury, but rather an imperative for sustainable development and global prosperity.

Keeping peace around the globe, especially at a time of crisis and growing instability, also requires us to harness both power and principle. The principle of working for peace in all parts of the globe and for all peoples is central to the founding vision of the United Nations. Today, the Organization finds itself leading the charge to ensure peace in the forgotten and most challenging places around the globe. As a principle, all Member States that have capacities to support peacekeeping must do so if we are to meet the growing demands. The United Nations currently rely on a few major troop contributors, almost exclusively from the developing world; I am extremely grateful for their contribution, but unfortunately it remains insufficient to sustain the global demand. The fifteen members of the Security Council have the power granted under the UN Charter to ensure peace and security, but they also have a special responsibility to ensure that the resources -- human, financial, material, and political -- will be available to successfully discharge what they have voted for in the Council. And in these challenging times, we must broaden the base of those nations contributing human, financial, material, and political resources to bring peace to countries and regions desperately in need. In short, our power base must grow to more closely approximate our principle base.
In the nuclear realm, the disarmament regime has long been premised on the goal of moving from a world of “haves” and “have nots”, to a world free of nuclear weapons. In essence, it has been recognized that for the good of all humankind, we must move from the given power reality of a recognized nuclear club separated from all others, to a world where we are all free of the Sword of Damocles hanging over our heads. The United Nations cannot seek to eliminate certain weapons only in some countries, while certifying their legitimacy elsewhere. We are not merely seeking a world in which nuclear weapons remain in fewer hands, but a world in which no such weapons exist. We are not seeking just to limit the damages from a future nuclear war, but to achieve a world in which such a war cannot occur. There is admittedly great distance between this principle and current power realities. The nuclear club has grown in recent years, adding new risks and uncertainties to an already unstable world. A safer world requires all countries to forswear nuclear ambitions, for existing nuclear powers to shoulder a particular leadership role in ridding the planet of such weapons, and for us all to build robust systems to ensure that the nuclear genie can and will be put back in the bottle.

A new multilateralism will not only combine power and principle at the macro level, but will also monitor and help to address the "transmission channels" of vulnerability. Climate change is clearly one such channel, given the potential for environmentally-induced movements of people. Unemployment is another. As mining and manufacturing jobs dry up, the world is beginning to see not only reduced remittances but also a reversal of rural-to-urban migration, with people returning home to impoverished rural areas that lack the needed agricultural inputs. Hunger has already given rise to food riots, and could grow more acute. That is why we have developed a sophisticated multilateral mechanism to increase financial support for smallholder farmers aimed at building up household resilience. All these channels bear watching, and indeed, the United Nations has developed a global vulnerability alert which will identify global vulnerabilities that will require attention from the international community, including the G-8.

In that same vein, a new multilateralism will also fully fund the institutions to which the world turns for help. World leaders have agreed on significant new funding for the International Monetary Fund and World Bank. The United Nations should be the next focus of attention. Mandates have only grown in recent years, yet the Organization has experienced little if any commensurate growth in the resources it needs to carry out those tasks.

No single nation can hope to find security without taking into account the well-being of others. Forced by crisis on many fronts, the world is grasping the need for a transition -- to sustainable development, to new levels of cooperation, to a new multilateralism. I am determined to ensure that the United Nations can serve not only as an effective instrument of service for humankind, but as an agent of the transformation the world needs to weather these troubled times.
Dear Won-soo,

as you know in view of the G8 Summit of La Maddalena, the Italian Presidency has decided to issue a special publication which will focus on the current debate on global governance.

With a preface by Prime Minister Berlusconi, the volume will include chapters by many Heads of States and Governments.

Following my enclosed letter, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has kindly accepted to give his personal contribution on subject “How to Govern the World in the XXI Century: the United Nations’ Vision”. It will be most valuable since the Summit will also address some of the main issues at stake for the future of our Planet such as climate change, energy, and human rights on which the United Nations and the Secretary General himself play a very important role.

Ms. Silva Bonacito in your Office has been following this issue very effectively providing greatest assistance to finalize it by the first week of April as agreed. Now the volume is almost ready and my Minister of Foreign Affairs, Franco Frattini, has just asked me to see if we could appeal to Secretary General’s indulgence and have his contribution by April 3rd.

I hope that with your help we will make it on time. let me know your wishes and best wishes for this effort. Secretary General’s contribution is very important for us!

very truly,

Giulio Terzi
Ambassador

H.E. Mr. Kim Won-soo
Deputy Chief de Cabinet
Office of the Secretary General
United Nations
NEW YORK
As the G8 Summit of La Maddalena rapidly approaches, the Italian Presidency is planning to mark the event by issuing a special publication which will focus on the current debate on global governance as well as on some of the main issues at stake for the future of our Planet such as climate change, energy, and human rights.

With a preface by Prime Minister Berlusconi and the conclusions by Foreign Minister Frattini, the volume will include chapters by Presidents Medvedev and Zardari, Prime Minister Erdogan and other leaders who have already accepted to give their contribution. Enclosed you will find a draft outline of the publication.

It would be a great honor if you accepted to join this ambitious project by authoring a brief text on subject “How to Govern the World in the XXI Century: the United Nations’ Vision”.

I thank you, Mr. Secretary General, for the consideration you will grant to my Government’s request.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration and my warmest regards.

Giulio Terzi
Ambassador

H.E. Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York