

World Summit 2005: The Outcome Document

"We believe that today, more than ever before, we live in a global and interdependent world. No State can stand wholly alone. We acknowledge that collective security depends on effective cooperation against transnational threats." ~The Draft Outcome Document

What is this outcome document?

This September the United Nations will host the largest gathering of world leaders in history for the 2005 World Summit. As the United Nations celebrates its 60th anniversary, there is widespread consensus in the international community that the institution needs to be strengthened to meet the challenges of a new century - and for the first time member states agree that UN reform is possible. States will discuss Secretary General Kofi Annan's groundbreaking proposals to promote democracy, protect human rights, end poverty, and fight global terrorism.

The outcome document is the result of talks and conferences over the past several years on how to make the United Nations an effective institution. This document presents what the international community should sign onto at this historic summit. Although world leaders agree to most of the proposals, the gathering will provide an opportunity for intense debate and negotiations on other provisions. There have been three draft outcome documents so far: one was released in April while the other one was released in June. The most recent document was released on August 5th. The following is a summary of the main topics in focus at the summit:

I. Values and principles:

- The UN Millennium Declaration that was adopted by member states in 2000 reaffirmed the international community's faith and commitment in the United Nations, its Charter and international law.
- It is important to recognize that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and cannot be enjoyed without each other.
- Human rights are universal - all cultures and religions should be respected as they contribute to the enrichment of humankind.

II. Development:

- Developed countries should establish timetables as soon as possible to invest 0.7 percent of their gross national income by 2015 to help people lift themselves out of poverty.
- The recognition that HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and other infectious diseases pose severe risks for all and pose challenges in achieving development goals. Thus, these problems require a cooperative international response.
- Member states affirm the need to urgently address the special needs of Africa which is the only continent not on track to meet any of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

III. Peace and collective security

- Member states should adopt one clear definition of terrorism as any deliberate attack on civilians and non-combatants for political purposes. Countries should also develop a comprehensive legal agreement on international terrorism.
- States should refrain from the use of force and settle their disputes by peaceful means in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

SUMMARY

- As peacekeeping missions continue to grow, it is important to develop partnerships between the UN and regional organizations such as the African Union. .
- The establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission is crucial to assist countries emerging from conflict and address their needs in order to achieve sustainable peace. In addition, a Peacebuilding Support Office should be created to assist the Commission.
- States should join and strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention; the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

IV. Human Rights and the rule of law

- It is important to strengthen the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and its field offices in order to respond to the broad range of human rights challenges facing the international community.
- Democracy is a universal value where people can express and freely decide their own political system, and thus member states should contribute to the new Democracy Fund to assist transitional democracies.
- Impunity for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes must end by cooperating with the International Criminal Court, and existing institutions for international justice.
- The international community should endorse the “responsibility to protect” people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This includes the need for the Security Council to work cooperatively to protect civilian populations, while the five permanent members should not use their veto power to block action to fulfill this responsibility.

V. Strengthening the United Nations

- The report does not pursue the expansion of the Security Council but merely states that the Council needs to be reformed to be more representative and efficient.
- The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) needs to be a more effective body for coordination on issues of economic and social development as well as the implementation of international development goals.
- A smaller and more effective Human Rights Council should replace the current flawed Commission on Human Rights to promote and protect human rights. The Council should consist of 30-50 members who will be elected directly by a two-thirds majority and serve for three years.
- The management reform proposals by the Secretary General should be implemented such as: the establishment of various independent committees to monitor corruption and effectiveness. The push towards ensuring ethical conduct amongst all UN personnel and protection for people who report misconduct is a welcome development.

About Citizens for Global Solutions

Citizens for Global Solutions envisions a future in which nations work together to abolish war, protect our rights and freedoms, and solve the problems facing humanity that no nation can solve alone. This vision requires effective democratic global institutions that will apply the rule of law while respecting the diversity and autonomy of national and local communities. We work to build political will for our vision in the United States by educating Americans about our global interdependence, communicating global concerns to public officials, and developing proposals to create, reform, and strengthen international institutions such as the United Nations.

To read the complete outcome document, go to <http://www.reformtheun.org/index.php/articles/1290>

For information on UN reform, http://www.globalsolutions.org/programs/intl_instit/UN_ref/UN_ref_home.html

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