

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO THE GENOA MODEL UNITED NATIONS (GeMUN) 2015
CONFERENCE**

Genoa, 26-28 February, 2015

As the United Nations addresses grinding poverty, devastating conflicts, human rights abuses and challenges such as the spread of the Ebola virus, I take heart from the rise of a new generation of global citizens learning about our work. Thank you for your interest in the United Nations.

Your meeting comes at a critical moment for our common future. Not since the end of the Second World War have there been so many refugees, displaced people and asylum seekers. Never before has the United Nations been asked to reach so many people with emergency food assistance, you will be discussing in your conference, and other life-saving supplies. The impacts of climate change are growing more pronounced. Diplomacy is on the defensive, undermined by those who believe in violence. Diversity is under assault by extremists. Disarmament is viewed as a far-off dream.

Hope may be distant, but it is there: in changing mindsets; in new coalitions; and in clinics, classrooms and other places where the development agenda is making remarkable progress.

Global poverty has been cut in half. More children are spared death from preventable diseases, and more women survive pregnancy and childbirth. There is still much work ahead, but these and other gains show the power of the Millennium Development Goals, the ambitious, 15-year anti-poverty campaign launched at the United Nations in the year 2000.

Today, an inspiring and inclusive global conversation is taking place on a new development agenda for the next 15 years. More than five million people have voted online in the My World survey (<http://vote.myworld2015.org/>). I encourage all of you to log on and chime in.

People around the world are crying out for protection from violence, greed and inequality. They understand that the world needs greater international cooperation for the common good. The United Nations is striving to answer this call, but we need your engagement. I hope you learn all that you can in Model UN, and apply those lessons in actions to create a better world.