



The G20 at the Leader's Level

The New Multilateralism: Moving from Reflection to Reform



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Meeting Summary: Joint Statement CIGI CFGS EPC ICG

When leaders meet at the United Nations in September for the 5 year follow-up to the Millennium Summit, they will have a rare political opportunity, one that comes once in a generation. On the table will be the Secretary-General's Report "In Larger Freedom"¹. The UN and the conduct of international relations would be truly transformed if the report's package of reforms were adopted. Perhaps inevitably, UN members are divided on many of the Report's recommendations. Some are apprehensive that change will constrain their power and dilute their influence. Others feel the status quo is unsustainable. Some worry about undermining the principle of national sovereignty and lowering the normative barriers to unwarranted interference in internal affairs. Others fear there will be too little intervention and the wretched will be left to suffer what they must. Some believe legitimacy lies in greater Security Council representativeness and others argue for more effective performance. None of these problems is simple and addressing them will not be business as usual. Leaders will be sitting down in New York with the moral obligation to surmount bureaucratic stasis, rise above narrow interests and act for the common good. That is what leaders are for.

We believe that with the requisite statesmanship, many of the Secretary General's recommendations can be adopted. The way forward is a package approach, in recognition that generating agreement inevitably entails give-and-take. Innovations within reach include:

1. The adoption of a 0.7% ODA timetable, preferably by the year 2015, and the "Quick Wins" strategy
2. The creation of an International Financial Facility
3. Endorsement of guidelines on the use of force
4. The adoption of the emerging norm of the Responsibility to Protect
5. The adoption of the High Level Panel's definition of terrorism
6. The endorsement of the International Atomic Energy Agency Additional Protocol, as part of a larger understanding including innovation on nuclear fuel supplies and a renewed commitment to reducing nuclear weapons
7. The creation of a Peace Building Commission, transformation of the Human Rights Commission into a Council and the establishment of a Democracy Fund
8. Action on regulating Small Arms traffic.

Only leaders have the crosscutting authority to resolve inter-institutional and interdisciplinary issues beyond the mandates of existing international organs and portfolios of individual ministers. Leaving reform to Permanent Representatives who lack the warrant to exceed their instructions is a prescription for deadlock. Frank dialogue and problem-solving by Leaders can bring impetus and coherence to the reform imperative.

¹ Report of the Secretary General: "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", distributed March 21, 2005. The report draws extensively from the UN High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, titled A More Secure World: Our shared responsibility, released in December 2004, and from the Millennium Project report "Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals".

The handful of recommendations below, packaged for September decision, would be an excellent start on reform efforts.

We recommend that leaders agree to:

1. A timetable for reaching the 0.7% ODA/GNP target, preferably by 2015. With respect to the Millennium Development Goals, we endorse the "Quick Wins" actions identified by the independent UN Millennium Project (free bednets, ending primary school user fees, the 3 million target for AIDS anti-retroviral treatment, expansion of school meals programs, soil nutrient replenishment, and national campaigns to reduce violence against women). However the bed net shortage in Africa alone is vast - a lot more community resolve (including G-8) will be required for this to be a "quick win".
2. An International Finance Facility, enabling front-loading of ODA, necessary for infrastructure investments. This innovative action would facilitate the provision of the requisite finance for development.
3. Guidelines on the use of force. The Security Council should come to a common view on guidelines (not criteria) for intervention, i.e., "the seriousness of the threat, the proper purpose of the proposed military action, whether means short of the use of force might plausibly succeed in stopping the threat, whether the military option is proportional to the threat at hand, and whether there is a reasonable chance of success". Today it is increasingly accepted, including in Africa, that development and security are inter-dependent, and that both repose on human rights.
4. Endorse the emerging norm of the "responsibility to protect" as part of a continuum from prevention of conflict to re-action to severe abuses to re-building.
5. Accept the High Level Panel's definition of terrorism that "in addition to any actions already proscribed by existing conventions, any action constitutes terrorism if it is intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act".
6. Action with respect to civilian nuclear fuel cycle technology, especially guarantees of supply of the fissile material necessary for peaceful nuclear uses in return for making the Optional Protocol mandatory, as part of a package including "negative security assurances", the fissile material cut-off treaty, and extension of the moratorium on test explosions. Such a package should provide both a fair and balanced outcome and enhance everyone's security.
7. The establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Democracy Fund and the Human Rights Council, as recommended by the Secretary-General.
8. Action on regulating the marketing of arms and negotiation of an instrument on illicit brokering. Combined with effective export controls on small arms, the harmonization of national regulation of arms brokers and a mechanism to "name and shame" those involved in illicit exploitation of natural resources, these steps will prevent or diminish the carnage caused by future conflicts.

We believe concerted action on these 8 areas to be in the national interests of all member states and in the common, global interest at the same time. Only leaders can make it happen. In New York, they will be bolstered by the aspirations of humanity.