

August 2, 2005

Ambassador R. Nicholas Burns
Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

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Dear Mr. Ambassador:

I am writing on behalf of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based international humanitarian and development nongovernmental organizations, to share our expectations for U.S. leadership in the lead up and during the 2005 World Summit in September at the United Nations.

The summit in September is a pivotal moment in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals as well as the larger issues of security and human rights. Our coalition strongly encourages the full participation of President Bush in these meetings as the visible symbol of the U.S. commitment to these global priorities.

U.S. leadership in establishing the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus will be necessary again in September to ensure that specific, time bound, results-oriented commitments result from the discussions. We urge the U.S. government to work closely with the President of the General Assembly to ensure that the summit outcome document translates the hopes of the world community into measurable commitments.

While there is much about the draft outcome document for September that constitutes major steps forward, we are concerned that it weakens key reform recommendations from the UN High Level Panel (HLP) on Threats, Challenges and Change and the report of the Secretary-General *In Larger Freedom*.

Human Security and the Responsibility to Protect

InterAction welcomes the emphasis on human security and the inextricable link between development, security and human rights initially articulated in the report of the HLP and advanced in the Secretary-General's report. We strongly support the clear endorsement of the responsibility to protect as an international norm. However, stronger commitments are required to pursue conflict prevention as the core element of the responsibility to protect.

Peacebuilding

We welcome the Administration's support for the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission and Support Office at the UN, but urge you to push for a mandate to engage conflicts before they erupt into violence, as well as a robust mechanism for consultation with civil society. The current proposal does not include any formal mechanism for NGO participation in the deliberations of the Commission.

The proposed support office in the secretariat also fails to provide for any formal mechanisms for consultation with civil society. We believe regular consultations with relevant NGOs should be instituted to ensure that the office receives independent early warning of potentially destabilizing conditions and ideas for preventing conflict from erupting.

We also urge you to support the Secretary-General's proposal to establish a \$250 million standing fund for peacebuilding that can be used to finance the recurrent expenditures of a nascent government, as well as critical agency programs in the areas of protection, rehabilitation and reintegration. We expect these resources to be additional and not to come at the expense of ongoing programs.

Rule of Law

A standing capacity to provide rule of law support is essential for successful post-conflict transitions. We urge you to show strong support for the creation of a UN-based integrated rule of law coordinating capacity to assess, plan and deploy international police, judges and legal experts during transitions to assure basic civilian protection and assist in training and establishing reformed indigenous rule of law institutions.

Development

Fostering an environment for social and political development and economic growth has been a central priority of the U.S. government's efforts to eradicate poverty and will require continued leadership from the U.S. in the future. Ensuring the quality of aid as well as the coherence of our foreign assistance with our trade positions are central to the realization of our development and security aims. InterAction strongly supports the U.S. government's commitment to supporting country-led development processes. We urge the U.S. government to actively support the establishment of measurable and time-bound commitments for aligning aid delivery as the necessary next step to realize the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

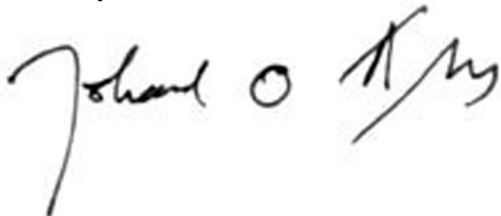
We ask that the U.S., working with other donors, provide the appropriate level of resources to meet international commitments such as the Millennium Development Goals. We call on the U.S. government to meet its commitment to double foreign assistance to poor countries, including nations in Africa, by 2010. Adequate financing is essential if we are to realize success in overcoming the challenges to stability posed by poverty and disease.

Gender

As has been recognized, development policies and actions that fail to take gender equality into account will have limited effectiveness and serious cost implications. As such, we strongly urge the U.S. to lead the effort to mainstream gender into development by supporting the UN Task Force Three recommendations highlighting the importance of post-primary education for girls, ensuring access to health services, including child and maternal health and family planning programs, and guaranteeing the property and inheritance rights of women and girls.

I appreciate the quality of our engagement with your office and look forward to our September 7, 2005 meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mohammad N. Akhter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "A".

Mohammad N. Akhter, M.D., M.P.H.
President and Chief Executive Officer

Cc: Ambassador John R. Bolton
Ambassador Shirin Tahir-Kheli