

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE TO MARK THE 100-DAY COUNTDOWN TO THE
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE
13 June 2009**

The International Day of Peace, observed each year on 21 September, is a global call for ceasefire and non-violence. It is a time to reflect on the horror and cost of war and the benefits of peacefully resolving our disputes. This year, I will use this important day to ask governments and citizens of the world to focus on the important issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The end of the Cold War helped lift the burden of nuclear catastrophe from a generation that had lived under its cloud since the end of the Second World War. Nonetheless, the threat persists, as recent events attest. Unless we vigorously work for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we will continue to face threats from existing nuclear weapons, as well as additional risks that more States, even terrorists, might acquire and deploy such weapons, potentially annihilating millions of people.

This alarming outlook is counterbalanced by a new momentum on the part of world leaders to address the issue of nuclear weapons. The United States and the Russian Federation have signalled a new commitment to cut their nuclear arsenals. Furthermore, the Conference on Disarmament, which includes all States with nuclear arms, has recently broken a decade-long deadlock and agreed to work to resolve some of the key issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

We must build on this momentum. To that end, I am launching the WMD-WeMustDisarm! Campaign. Over the next 100 days, the United Nations and our partners around the world will work to raise awareness of the true costs and dangers of nuclear weapons. Between now and 21 September, we will issue 100 reasons to disarm, via Twitter, MySpace, Facebook, email, text message, radio and from friend-to-friend. Celebrities will also help us spread the message. And finally, as we observe the International Day of Peace with world leaders gathered in New York for the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, I will proclaim one strong, simple message: We Must Disarm!