



25 September 2012 – Citing widespread insecurity, the squandering of vast funds on deadly weapons instead of economic development, and the growing impact of climate change, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon [warned](#) the world today that it is in a race against time to save itself.

“This year, I am here to sound the alarm about our direction as a human family,” he told the 67th General Assembly at the opening of its annual General Debate. “This is a time of turmoil, transition and transformation – a time when time itself is not on our side.”

Scores of the world’s heads of State and government and other high-level officials are expected to present their views and comment on issues of individual national and international relevance at the debate, which ends on 1 October.

Mr. Ban welcomed important progress on some fronts, noting that extreme poverty has been cut in half since the year 2000; democratic transitions are under way in the Arab world, Myanmar and many other countries; Africa’s economic growth has become the fastest in the world; and Asia and Latin America are making important advances.

“Still, we must raise our levels of ambition. We need more from each and every one of you. And

the world needs more from our United Nations,” he declared. “Your people want to see results in real time, now, not the distant future.”

The UN chief stressed that the severe and growing impacts of climate change “are there before our eyes – yet too many people in power seem wilfully blind to the threat.”

He noted that last December Member States agreed to reach a legally binding agreement by 2015. *“Now, you must make good on this promise,”* he declared. *“Time is running out on our ability to limit the rise in global temperature to two degrees centigrade. “Sustainability and the green economy offer compelling opportunities to promote jobs, growth, innovation and long-term stability. The future we want can be ours – if we act now.”*