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### UN Secretary-General Establishes MDG Advocacy Group

On 23 June, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon [announced](#) the establishment of an advocacy group of eminent persons to try to galvanize support worldwide towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by their target date of 2015. The MDG Advocacy Group will be co-chaired by Rwandan President Paul Kagame and Spanish Prime Minister José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero.

The group is tasked with helping Mr. Ban to build political will and mobilize global action on the eight Goals ahead of the [high-level summit](#) on the issue that will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York in September. Mr. Zapatero will host the first meeting of the MDG Advocacy Group in Madrid in July.

“We need to emerge from the September Millennium Development Goals summit with concrete national action plans for realizing the Goals. These advocates can help us get there,” Mr. Ban stressed. Each of the group’s members have been asked to focus their advocacy efforts on specific Goals.

#### The members include:

**Muhammad Yunus** (Bangladesh); Nobel Peace Prize Winner, founder of the Grameen Bank  
Focus on MDG 8 (global partnership for development)

**Michelle Bachelet** (Chile); Former President  
Focus on MDG 3 (gender equality and the empowerment of women)

**Stine Bosse** (Denmark); CEO of TrygVesta Group, Chairman of Børnefonden (The Childrens’ Fund)  
Focus on MDG 3 (gender equality and the empowerment of women)

**Philippe Douste-Blazy** (France); UN Special Advisor on innovative financing for development  
Focus on MDGs 4, 5, 6 (child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS and other diseases)

**Wangari Maathai** (Kenya); Nobel Peace Prize Winner, environmental and political activist  
Focus on MDG 7 (environmental sustainability)

**Dho Young-Shim** (Republic of Korea); Chairman of the UN World Tourism Organization’s Sustainable Tourism for Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) Foundation  
Focus on MDG 2 (universal primary education)

**Julio Frenk** (Mexico); Dean of the Harvard School of Public Health, former Minister of Health  
Focus on MDG 4 (child mortality)

**Akin Adesina** (Nigeria); Vice President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)  
Focus on MDG 1 (extreme poverty and hunger)

**HHS Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser** (Qatar); First Lady, Chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development  
Focus on MDG 2 (universal primary education)

**Graça Machel** (South Africa / Mozambique); Former First Lady, advocate for women’s and children’s rights  
Focus on MDG 3 (gender equality and the empowerment of women)

**Jan Eliasson** (Sweden); Chair of WaterAid Sweden, Former President of the UN General Assembly  
Focus on MDG 7 (environmental sustainability)

**Ray Chambers** (United States); The UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for Malaria  
Focus on MDG 6 (HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases)

**Bill Gates** (United States); Philanthropist, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Chairman of Microsoft Corp.  
Focus on MDGs 4, 5, 6 (child mortality, maternal health, HIV/AIDS and other diseases)

**Jeffrey Sachs** (United States); UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on the MDGs  
Focus on all MDGs

**Ted Turner** (United States); Philanthropist, Chairman of Turner Enterprises Inc.  
Focus on all MDGs.

Mr. Ban has indicated that distinguished personalities from China, India and the United Kingdom will also join the group soon. Also on 23 June, Mr. Ban issued the latest [UN assessment report](#) on efforts to reach the Goals, which shows that there has been mixed progress in the developing world. Extreme poverty is falling rapidly but maternal health and sanitation are lagging and there are still large gaps between rich and poor, men and women, and urban and rural communities.