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## NGOs Create Interactive Web Site to Discuss 2005 Summit of World Leaders At United Nations in September

United Nations, New York, 11 August 2005 (DPI/NGO Section) – In anticipation of the 2005 Summit of world leaders at the United Nations in September, civil society organizations are voicing their views on how to strengthen the Organization as it confronts the challenges of extreme poverty and global security. Non-governmental organizations working with the United Nations have created a web site at <http://www.undpingoconference.org> that features an interactive discussion area to debate issues that will be addressed at the 58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, entitled *Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnerships and Renewal*, scheduled to take place at the UN Headquarters in New York from 7-9 September 2005.

While the Conference is closed to the general public, the web site will enable social activists from around the world to participate in the discussion of issues as set forth in the Secretary-General's report *In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All*. The web site aims to increase the number of Conference participants from around the world, especially NGO activists, youth, the media and the general public.

An online discussion area, an interactive feature of the 58<sup>th</sup> DPI/NGO Conference website, where the general public can participate in a discussion forum on Conference topics and issues, will be launched on 15 August 2005, at 10:00 a.m., by the Conference Planning Committee – four weeks prior to the Conference, to encourage an exchange of ideas before the event. During the Conference, online participants will also be able to pose questions which may be addressed to panel speakers to enable real-time, virtual participation. The online discussion area for comments, questions and answers will be available before, during and after the Conference.

The discussion forum will feature several thematic issues on a rotation basis: freedom from want – development issues; freedom from fear- peace and security; freedom to live in dignity – human rights and rule of law; strengthening the United Nations; and the role of civil society in the United Nations. Each topic will be launched by a series of questions by a moderator, who will check the discussions daily. Special online sessions with high-level United Nations officials or NGO representatives will be announced separately.

The web site will host live a webcast of the panel discussions, which will feature Shirin Ebadi, 2003 Nobel Peace Prize Winner; Ann Veneman, Executive Director, UNICEF; Juan Somavia, Director-General, International Labour Organisation; Anwarul Chowdhury, United Nations High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States; Fatou Bensouda, Deputy Prosecutor, International Criminal Court; Gareth Evans, President and Chief Executive, International Crisis Group; Paul van Tongeren, Executive Director, European Centre for Conflict Prevention; and Bill Pace, Executive Director, World Federalist Movement.

In addition, 30 related workshops will take place with representatives from civil society, the United Nations and governments, such as Andrew Natsios, Administrator, US Agency for International Development; Catherine Kinney, President and Co-Chief Operating Officer, New York Stock Exchange and Görel Bogarde, Save the Children. Workshop summaries will be available on the web site.

To access the Conference web site go to <http://www.undpingoconference.org>. Other organizations can link to the conference web site and are encouraged to do so via the link provided on the website. Questions about the web site and the Conference can be directed to [dpingo@un.org](mailto:dpingo@un.org)

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