



THE PRIME MINISTER



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It gives me great pleasure to express my appreciation for the United Nations Association – UK's work during the past year and to wish you every success for your annual conference in Edinburgh in June.

The British Government has been a strong and committed supporter of the United Nations since its creation more than sixty years ago. The United Nations plays a critical role in moving us towards our goal of a stable and prosperous world. It remains the only global organisation able to tackle the many challenges that we face today. Issues such as climate change, terrorism, proliferation, pandemics, economic instability and conflict affect us all.

The past year's challenges highlight the pressing need for modern, effective, international institutions. We must work together to build international systems and multilateral responses equipped to address new challenges to global stability, prosperity and sustainability.

As the London Summit in April showed, we are committed to finding global solutions to global problems. The United Nations remains central to this approach. We must continue in our efforts to strengthen and improve our United Nations: the lynch pin of our international architecture and a driver of effective responses to the range of challenges we face.

2009 also brings a renewed focus on nuclear disarmament. By signing the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty forty years ago, the UK committed itself to achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. As I made clear in my speech on 17 March at the International Conference on the Nuclear Fuel Cycle, we are still fully committed to achieving this goal through the framework of the Treaty. We need tough collective action against proliferation and renewed commitment by the nuclear weapons states to multilateral disarmament.

There are reasons for optimism. In Prague in April, President Obama recommitted the US to the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons; and the US and Russia announced in London their intention to negotiate a successor to START this year. Let us use this momentum as we approach the 2010 NPT Review Conference, to renew and refresh the Grand Bargain at the heart of the NPT.

I wish you every success at the conference.

Gordon Brown

June 2009