

UNITED NATIONS



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**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE FOR ROOTS OF PEACE “HARVEST OF HOPE”**

**Washington, DC, 3 December 2008**

I am pleased to send this message of support to the Roots of Peace “Harvest of Hope” Gala.

In my contacts with governments, I seize every opportunity to urge them to ratify the international treaties that address this scourge, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which entered into force earlier this year.

There has been significant progress, but governments are only part of the equation. More than a dozen United Nations entities play a role in mine-action programmes around the world. But much of the actual work is carried out by courageous and stalwart nongovernmental organizations such as Roots of Peace.

Together, in recent years, we have cleared tens of millions of square metres of land, destroyed hundreds of thousands of mines and unexploded ordnance, and educated millions of people about mine issues. Behind these numbers are moving stories of limbs spared, lives saved, and anguish avoided. But mine action does more than avert suffering; it lays the foundation for development and peace. Roads once unusable fill with traffic; land once laid to waste sprouts with hospitals and homes, schools and crops. This is tangible, meaningful progress.

I commend Roots for Peace for its leadership in international efforts to replace the detritus of war with the fruits of peace. And I add my voice to yours in paying tribute to this year’s recipients of your Global Citizen Award, Said Tayeb Jawad of Afghanistan and Gillian Sorensen of the UN Foundation. Please accept my best wishes for the continued success of your work.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ki Moon Ban". Below the signature, the name "Ban Ki-moon" is printed in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.  
Ban Ki-moon