



Thirty three global leaders from Saudi Arabia to the Holy See are among the 33 that remain on the speakers' list in the General debate of the UN General Assembly, which starts its second week of debates today. Countries from across the globe have called for an ambitious long-term sustainability agenda to succeed the current Millennium Development Goals ( [MDGs](#) ) cycle, as the United Nations General Assembly wrapped up the first week of its annual General Debate

The theme of this year's 68th General Assembly – “The Post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” – will seek to draw up a blueprint to totally eliminate poverty and its attendant ills in the decades following the end in 2015 of the MDGs cycle.

Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja called for ambitious "Sustainable Development goals in his speech to the General Assembly.

"Faced with advancing climate change and the accelerating loss of biodiversity we may, at best, have only a few decades time in which to reach ecological, social and economic sustainability.

Decisive action based on a sense of urgency is needed to turn the tide globally before it is too late. Either we succeed in this together or we are going to perish together," he declared.

"We must go beyond the traditional relationship between donors and recipients through the creation of partnerships with the involvement of new international actors," [Portuguese Foreign Minister Rui Machete](#) said in his speech on Friday (27 September) calling for a broader, more inclusive and strategic vision that will build on the MDGs' focus on poverty reduction and sustainable development while giving special attention to the needs of the least developed countries.

[Andorra's Head of Government](#) , Antoni Marti Petit, said he hoped that the goals of the post-2015 agenda will be even more ambitious than the MDGs and "that we will be able to dedicate a lot more effort to them," noting that most of the Millennium targets will not be reached by their deadline.

"Otherwise, we will run the risk of citizens seeing their institutions, and also the United Nations, as something far removed from their everyday lives and real problems," he warned.

Jose Maria Pereira Neves, [Prime Minister of Cape Verde](#) called climate change a "pressing problem of our times" that should be addressed with urgency and a great sense of responsibility. The issue deserved a major focus in the post-2015 development agenda, as its fallout impacts food security and ocean acidification, and exacerbates social tensions, opening doors to potential national and regional conflicts.

Elmar Maharram Oglu, [Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan](#) said that his country believed one of the key elements within the post-2015 agenda should be information and communication technologies (ICTs), "which is a driving force of development and progress."

## Leaders urge ambitious, targeted post-2015 development agenda

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