



CONFERENCE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS OF THE ARCTIC REGION

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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for your support for this year's treaty event by hosting this panel discussion on the Arctic, and giving me the opportunity to brief you today on the plans for the 2008 Treaty Event.

[This year's event]

This year's event is entitled "2008 Treaty Event: Towards Universal Participation and Implementation – Dignity and Justice for All of Us", and it highlights 53 multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

- It will take place from 23 to 25 September and 29 to 30 September in the Treaty Signing area in the General Assembly building, and it will coincide with the General Debate of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly.
- In 2000, the Secretary-General initiated the annual Treaty Event as an awareness raising measure to promote participation in the multilateral treaty framework. During the past nine events, an impressive total of 1359 treaty actions have been undertaken.
- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has invited Heads of State and Government visiting New York for the opening of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly to reaffirm their commitment to the rule of law in international affairs by undertaking treaty actions with regard to the more than 530 treaties deposited with him.
- To enable States to prepare themselves for the event, the Treaty Section publishes a booklet each year in English and French. The booklet contains the objectives and the key provisions of each of the highlighted treaties, as well as the relevant dates of adoption and entry into force. It also lists the Signatories and Parties for each treaty. It will be sent to the Permanent Missions later this month and we would request to the delegates here to forward them to your capitals.
- Treaties are the main source of international law and international relations are largely based on treaties. Much of what we take for granted in our day-to-day life rests on an underlying framework of treaties.
- Well in advance of each treaty event, a list of highlighted treaties is put together. For this year's event, we were approached among others by the Conference of Parliamentarians of the



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Arctic Region and as a result treaties relevant to the International Polar Year are included in this list.

- This year is also the International Year of Sanitation as well as the Year of Planet Earth, and last but not least, it is the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- Both the Chair of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation and the High Commissioner for Human Rights have provided introductory remarks for the publication covering this year's event.
- Last but not least, among the highlighted treaties one can find treaties related to transit, customs and trade agreements to draw attention to the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.
- This event will additionally highlight treaties that address disarmament, non-proliferation and penal matters as well as privileges and immunities and the safety of United Nations and associated personnel. Of course, during the yearly event, States can sign or accede to any of the more than 530 treaties for which the Secretary-General acts as the depositary.

In Summary:

- As the Secretary-General has noted last year:

"Furthering the causes of security, development and human rights is a shared responsibility, as well as a shared interest, and participation in the Treaty Event and the further consolidation of the multilateral treaty framework will contribute to this noble goal."
- We encourage States to participate in the multilateral treaty framework, and I would like to thank you once again for this opportunity to draw attention to the annual Treaty Event.