

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**REMARKS AT PRESENTATION OF MEDAL AND CITY KEYS
AS DISTINGUISHED GUEST
Mexico City, 8 September 2009**

The Honorable Marcelo Ebrard, Chief of the Government of the Federal District,

Chief Justice of the Federal District Court, Magistrate Edgar Elías Azar,

Diputado Sergio Jimenez Barrios President of the International Relations Committee of the Federal District's Legislative Assembly

Members of the Government, of the Court and of the Legislative Assembly of the Federal District,

Heads of the UN Agencies in Mexico,

Señoras y señores,

Muchas gracias por esta bienvenida!

I am proud to have been named a distinguished guest. It is a particular privilege and great honor to be given this honor. I take this as a sign of your strong support for the United Nations -- and for its global mission of peace, justice and human rights.

Indeed we share a wide range of goals, from alleviating poverty to combating climate change. We are together on numerous UN causes.

La Ciudad de Mexico is one of the world's most vibrant cities.

Its history, culture, art and architecture have long been famous across the globe.

But today Mexico City is making its mark in another way.

It is at the forefront of social issues and human rights. It is showing a strong commitment to the well-being of the poor, vulnerable and marginalized.

The city has also adopted an ambitious yet achievable "green plan", including action on climate change, water, waste, energy and much more.

These steps have enormous potential for achieving sustainable development.

Like other major cities around the world, Mexico is coping with the challenges of a rapidly urbanizing world.

Slums and sprawl. Job creation. Water for all.

Pollution and the impact of natural disasters.

As the Mayor just mentioned, I just visited the Golden Valley. The floods affected the Valley, I have seen. I have met so many people that have been affected by these sudden floods. I was so sad.

I went together with President Calderon to express my deepest sympathy to all those people and to send my solidarity – solidarity from myself and solidarity from the UN.

I said to them that, in close coordination with the Mexican Government, the UN will mobilize the necessary humanitarian assistance and try to rebuild.

Some people were expressing their utmost frustration, even complaints and anger at their Government. I have a deep trust and confidence in President Calderon and his Government's capacity to make that town much better than even before it was affected by this flood.

The UN is working very hard to prevent, to get risk reductions. It is very important to addressing climate change and sustainable development.

How well are we prepared to have disaster risk reductions that will make a quick difference?

I know that this will give you good lessons, and this lesson should not be repeated. As we learn from this disaster, we should make improvements, and I am going to work together with the Mexican Government and many other Governments, to raise a follow-up to these natural disasters.

Mr. Mayor, I understand that in your approach to [different] challenges you are trying to recover public space, parks space, even the city's air.

The United Nations will continue to be your partner in moving towards a greener and more prosperous future.

I thank you for your commitment to improving the lives of all who live here in Mexico City.

I thank you for the honor. It is a great honor you have bestowed on me, and through me, on the United Nations.

And I am very grateful to the government and people of Mexico for their great contribution in terms of development, in terms of financial support, in terms of promoting human rights.

You have taken a great [initiative] in making this green economy and President Calderon has been a leader, a champion in addressing climate change. I have invited him to the Summit meeting which will be held on September 22 at the United Nations and I am looking forward to working very closely with President Calderon and your Government, the City of Mexico, under the leadership of the Mayor.

[inaudible] in making this City a green city a green economy and sustainable development.

And I hope that one day, like a good, progressive *mexicano*, I will be able to follow your good example and bike through Reforma Avenue and the Park of Chapultepec!

Muchas gracias.