

Secretary-General's statement and press encounter on the Nobel Peace Prize
New York, 9 October 2009

I would like to wholeheartedly welcome and congratulate U.S. President Barack Obama on winning the Nobel Peace Prize for 2009.

This is great news for President Obama, for the people of the United States, and for the United Nations.

We are entering an era of renewed multilateralism, a new era where the challenges facing humankind demand global common cause and uncommon global effort. President Obama embodies the new spirit of dialogue and engagement on the world's biggest problems: climate change, nuclear disarmament and a wide range of peace and security challenges. President Obama's commitment to work through the United Nations gives the world's people fresh hope and fresh prospects.

We at the United Nations highly applaud him and the Nobel Committee for its choice.

I look forward to further deepening the U.S.-UN partnership as a key building block to a better and safer world for all.

Again, I send my deepest and wholehearted congratulations to President Obama. I wish him continued success.

Thank you very much.

Q: Mr. Secretary-General, could you tell us a little bit about your personal relationship with the President – how it has developed, and where your partnership stands and where it might lead?

SG: From Day 1 [since] his election, and during his transition as President-elect, and after he was formally inaugurated as President, he has shown extremely strong support for the United Nations, and his firm commitment to work together with the United Nations in addressing all global challenges, including climate change, poverty issues and food security issues. That has given me a great source of encouragement. His own participation in the Climate Change Summit meeting, as well as the General Debate, has also given great hope, [in a] renewed multilateralism, and I understand that the selection of President Obama as Nobel Peace Prize winner for 2009 by the Nobel Committee is in [that] connection, in regard [to] his strong commitment, and I again applaud, highly, the wise decision of the Nobel Peace Committee.

Q: Mr. Secretary-General, some people say that this award has come too early in the President's term, that while he has said many things that have perhaps changed the tone of U.S. relations with the rest of the world, he has not yet achieved any of the goals that

he has laid out. How would you react to this?

SG: I respect the decision and judgment of the Nobel Peace Committee. The Nobel Peace Committee has [made] their decision, and this should be respected, and I wholeheartedly support it. As I said, the Nobel Committee has made a very wise decision.

Thank you very much.