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## THE PRIME MINISTER

I am delighted to have the opportunity to express my appreciation for the work of the United Nations Association over the past year.

The United Nations remains central to upholding international peace and security in the world today. But the world has moved on since 1945 and we must ensure that other international institutions reform at pace. There is considerable scope for international institutions to be more effective, for example on tackling the threats and challenges we face from improving international security and conflict resolutions/prevention, climate change and tackling poverty. With strengthened international systems and the UN at its core we will be able to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

I am therefore greatly encouraged by the programme events and conferences UNA-UK has held over the past year on UN peacekeeping, nuclear non-proliferation, business and human rights, and the MDGs.

I especially welcome the UNA - UK's outreach projects with youth and student networks, through which you have helped to foster a better understanding and appreciation of the role of the UN in an ever changing world. Your success is evident in the fact that today the UNA - UK has student branches in, England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

2008 marks the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. The UK Government is committed to promoting and protecting human rights worldwide. This year the UK is standing for re-election to the Human Rights Council, the body at the forefront of the UN's work on Human Rights. Re-election will enable us to continue our active participation in the Council's work and promote it as a forum for dialogue and co-operation in tackling human rights challenges.

I very much welcome the UNA - UK's contribution to the challenges we face, and I am pleased that the British Government's relationship with the UNA continues to develop. I am grateful for the constructive relationship we share throughout a number of Whitehall Departments.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you success with the Annual Conference and with your work in the year ahead.

Gordon Brown

March 2008