

Secretary-General Kofi Annan

You are meeting today because you are united in pursuit of a dream - the dream of a world forever free of polio. We know how to make that dream a reality.

The Global Polio Eradication Initiative is a shining model of how we can all come together against a common enemy of humankind.

Our joint efforts have now isolated polio to a handful of areas within just six countries.

A final victory is within reach.

That is why we must pull out all the stops over the next six months. By the end of that period, our vaccination campaigns must have reached every child.

If we do not, polio may come back with a vengeance.

Excellencies, your countries stand at the front lines of this last, crucial battle.

You are the key to success. That is especially true of a few states and provinces in India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

I hope I can count on your commitment. You, in turn, can count on the support of the United Nations family and its partners - especially Rotary International.

Above all, the children of the world are counting on your leadership.

I hope your leaders will come to the United Nations General Assembly in September and share with us the good news that **polio** is being conquered for good.