

On International Day, UN chief urges action to address root causes of poverty

17 October 2017 – Highlighting the importance of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development to ensure a life of dignity for all, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres called for redoubling of efforts to eradicate poverty in its entirety.

This globally agreed agenda, pledges to secure a healthy planet and build peaceful and inclusive societies to ensure lives of dignity for all, said the Secretary-General in a [video message](#) marking the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Its pledge to leave no one behind will require innovative approaches, partnerships and solutions.

In particular, he called for addressing the root causes of poverty to eradicate it in its entirety, and in doing so to listen to the views and guidance of people living in poverty and acting together with them.

Despite progress to eliminate poverty, more than 800 million people around the world continue live in extreme poverty and many more are threatened by alarming rates of unemployment, insecurity, inequality, conflict as well as the effect of climate change.

Eliminating poverty, and alleviating the suffering and building resilience of those living in poverty is the target for Goal 1 of the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) to end poverty in all its forms everywhere.

The Goal also aims to ensure social protection for the poor and vulnerable, increase access to basic services and support people harmed by climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the [decision](#) by the General Assembly, designating 17 October as the [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#).

The theme for this year's commemoration is [Answering the Call of October 17 to end poverty: A path toward peaceful and inclusive societies](#).

It recognizes the knowledge and courage of families living in poverty throughout the world, as well as the importance of reaching out to the poorest and building an alliance with citizens from all backgrounds to end poverty.

Secretary-General welcomes launch of new UN mission in Haiti

16 October 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres welcomed the establishment Monday of the UN Mission for Justice Support in Haiti ([MINUJUSTH](#)), following the closure of its predecessor peacekeeping mission.

“MINUJUSTH reflects the commitment of the United Nations to continue supporting the consolidation of peace and promotion of stability in Haiti,” said a [statement](#) issued by Mr. Guterres’ Spokesman, Stéphane Dujarric.

The closure of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti ([MINUSTAH](#)) is “a testament to Haiti’s progress over the past 13 years,” the statement said.

In the statement, the Secretary-General extended his gratitude to all civilian and uniformed personnel who served with MINUSTAH, as well as to troop and police contributing countries.

MINUJUSTH will assist the Haitian Government to strengthen rule of law institutions, further develop the capacities of the national police and advance human rights.

“The Secretary-General is confident that the Haitian people and Government will work in close partnership with MINUJUSTH and the United Nations country team, to implement together joint priorities based on [UN Security Council] [resolution 2350](#) (2017) and reflected in the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development,” the statement said.

UN General Assembly elects new members to the Human Rights Council

16 October 2017 – The General Assembly today elected, by secret ballot, 15 States to serve on the Human Rights Council, the highest intergovernmental body in the United Nations system for matters relating to protection and promotion of human rights worldwide.

Newly elected to the Geneva-based Human Rights Council are Afghanistan, Angola, Australia, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Qatar, Senegal, Slovakia, Spain and Ukraine.

All would serve three-year terms beginning on 1 January 2018.

The 15 new members were [elected](#) according to the following pattern: four seats for African States; four seats for Asia-Pacific States; three seats for Latin American and Caribbean States; two seats for Eastern European States; and two seats for Western European and other States.

On the basis of [equitable geographical distribution](#), Council seats are allocated to the five regional groups as follows: African States, 13 seats; Asia-Pacific States, 13 seats; Eastern European States, six seats; Latin American and Caribbean States, eight seats; and Western European and other States, seven seats.

Created by the General Assembly in 2006, the 47-member Council is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on them.

Its meetings are held at the UN Office at Geneva, located at Palais des Nations, which used to house the League of Nations, until its dissolution in 1946.

[UN humanitarian officials call for global solidarity ahead of pledging conference on Rohingya refugee crisis](#)

16 October 2017 – Senior United Nations officials are urging the international community to come together in support of a 23 October pledging conference to “send a strong message to Rohingya refugees and their generous hosts in Bangladesh that the world is there for them in their greatest time of need.” Since late August, hundreds of thousands of Rohingya trying to escape discrimination and persecution in Myanmar’s Rakhine state have fled to neighbouring Bangladesh, sparking the [world’s fastest-growing humanitarian emergency](#), according to the United Nations.

“We call on the international community to intensify efforts to bring a peaceful solution to the [plight of the Rohingya](#), to end the desperate exodus, to support host communities and ensure the conditions that will allow for refugees’ eventual voluntary return in safety and dignity,” the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) said in a joint statement Monday.

“The origins and, thus, the solutions to this crisis lie in Myanmar,” added the UN High Commission for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, the UN aid chief, Mark Lowcock, the Director General, of IOM, William Lacy Swing.

They underscored that Bangladesh has kept its borders open, offering safety and shelter to fleeing families.

“We have been moved by the welcome and generosity shown by the local communities towards the refugees,” the senior officials stated, while noting their respective agencies have been working in overdrive with the Government of Bangladesh, local charities, volunteers and non-governmental organizations to provide assistance. Still much more is urgently needed.

The refugees are fully dependent on humanitarian assistance for food, water, health and other essential needs as basic services are under severe strain and some sites lack access to potable water and sanitation facilities, raising health risks for both the refugees and the hosting communities.

“The efforts must be scaled up and expanded to receive and protect refugees and ensure they are provided with basic shelter and acceptable living conditions. Every day more vulnerable people arrive with very little – if anything – and settle either in overcrowded existing camps or extremely congested makeshift sites,” the statement continued.

It announced that the ministerial-level [pledging conference](#), set to be held in Geneva on 23 October, organized by OCHA, IOM and UNHCR and co-hosted by the European Union and Kuwait, will provide Governments an opportunity to show their solidarity and share the burden and responsibility.

“Their further generous support for the [Joint Response Plan](#), which was recently launched by the UN and partners, is urgently needed to sustain and scale up the large humanitarian effort already under way. The plan requires \$434 million to meet the life-saving needs of all Rohingya refugees and their host communities – together an estimated 1.2 million people – for the difficult months to come,” added the statement.

[Kicking off ‘Africa Week’ at UN, Guterres says women and youths can unleash continent’s potential](#)

16 October 2017 – Africa must focus on young people, empower women and girls, and be innovative in leveraging resources and financing for development, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres said Monday as the United Nations kicked off Africa Week.

“[Africa Week](#) is to raise awareness and mobilize support. I am convinced that, together, we can meet the challenges,” Mr. Guterres said in his [remarks](#) to the high-level inaugural event at UN Headquarters in New York.

The Secretary-General said the international community must change the way it looks at the African continent.

“Africa is a land of resilience, and above all, it is a land of opportunity,” he emphasized, highlighting the continent’s recent progress in reducing poverty, diversifying its economies, building the middle class and nurturing growth in a variety of sectors.

To further unleash such potential, he said, young people must play a central role as Africa has the fastest growing youth population in the world.

“We can help make the most of this demographic dividend through greater investments in education, especially in science and technology and by ensuring to enable youth participation in economic development. People need skills that match the needs of today and tomorrow,” he said.

Empowering Africa’s women and girls is also crucial, as gender inequality is costing sub-Saharan Africa tens of billions of dollars a year, like everywhere else in the world.

Another key is to be innovative in leveraging resources and financing for development, including tax reform by African countries themselves and international efforts to fight tax evasion, money laundering and the illicit financial flows that have depleted Africa’s resource base, he added.

Also addressing the inaugural event was UN General Assembly President Miroslav Lajčák, who said that in the past, Africa was expected to listen, and accept the ideas and conditions of others.

“That era is over [...] When it comes to its own development, Africa now has the most powerful voice of all. We need to listen to it, and learn from it,” he said.

Among other priorities, he stressed the importance of cooperation between the African Union (AU) and the UN, particularly in the area of sustainable development. The AU’s ‘Agenda 2063’ and the UN’s [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development both outline a sustainable future for the planet and the people.

“They must be implemented in complementarity,” he said, noting that better and more regular engagement between the two entities is necessary at all stages, including planning, implementation, financing and review.

The events during Africa Week centre around the theme: ‘Supporting an Integrated, Prosperous, People-Centred and Peaceful Africa: Towards the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.’