

# Empower teachers; give them the freedom to teach, UN urges on World Day

5 October 2017 – Underscoring the critical important role teachers play in ensuring the future for every society, the United Nations today called for empowering educators with the freedom and support they need to undertake their vital mission.

“Being an [empowered teacher](#) means having access to high-quality training, fair wages, and continuous opportunities for professional development,” the heads of key UN agencies and programmes said today in a joint message on [World Teachers’ Day](#).

Empowerment also means teachers having the freedom to support the development of national curricula, the professional autonomy to choose teaching methods and approaches and being able to teach in safety and security during times of political change, instability and conflict, they added.

The joint message was issued by Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)); Guy Ryder, the Director-General of International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)); Anthony Lake, the Executive-Director of UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)); Achim Steiner, the Administrator of the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)); and Fred van Leeuwen, the General-Secretary of Education International (a global federation representing organizations of teachers and other education employees).

It emphasized that academic freedom – while important for teachers at all levels of education – is especially critical for higher-education to support the educators’ ability to innovate, explore, and stay up-to-date on the latest pedagogical research.

“This World Teachers’ Day, join us in empowering teachers to teach in freedom so that, in turn, every child and every adult is free to learn – to the benefit of a better world,” they urged.

The importance of building a skilled, valued and empowered education workforce has also been underscored in the [2030 Agenda](#)’s Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

Target 4C of Goal 4, in particular, calls for “substantially increasing” the supply of qualified teachers by 2030, and in that context, underlines importance of international cooperation for teacher training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing States.

Marked annually on 5 October since 1994, World Teachers’ Day commemorates the anniversary of the signing of the 1966 UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning

the Status of Teachers – the primary reference framework that addresses teachers' rights and responsibilities at the global scale.

The theme for this year's commemoration is *Teaching in Freedom, Empowering Teachers*.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the 1997 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel, which complements the 1966 UNESCO/ILO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers, stressing the importance of teacher autonomy and academic freedom in building a world in which education and learning are truly universal.

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## Partnerships will play key role in future of work in Europe and Central Asia – UN labour agency

5 October 2017 – The United Nations International Labour Organization's 10th European Regional Meeting concluded today with a call for a future of work where partnerships play a key role in promoting dialogue, social progress and economic growth in the region.

Addressing the closing session of the [Regional Meeting](#) in Istanbul, Turkey, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder said that while there is a considerable amount of uncertainty as to the direction the world of work is heading in, determination and ambition must replace optimism and pessimism.

"We all have to come together with a feeling of [determination and ambition](#)," he said, stressing that ambition means not accepting, not being passive spectators to processes of change, but instead having the determination to be the architects of change, "so that the future of work can be shaped according to what we want."

The three-day gathering focused on the dynamic processes shaping the future of work in the region, which include rapid technological advances, globalization, demographic trends, large movements of [refugees and migrants](#), as well as environmental challenges.

The so-named 'Istanbul Initiative' presents a policy framework to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks relating to the future of work in the region. It also calls on the ILO to provide tripartite constituents in member States with the advice and support they need to design these policies.

"The ILO has not been a passive spectator to change over the past century. It has been a historic architect of change and we have done a lot to make sure that that change has bent in the direction of social justice. That is what we

must continue to do," he concluded. The ILO European Regional Meeting takes place every four years. It brings together government, employer and worker representatives from 51 European and Central Asian countries. The theme of this year's meeting was [What future for decent work in Europe and Central Asia: Opportunities and challenges](#).

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## **One year on from Hurricane Matthew, Haiti's children still incredibly vulnerable to disasters – UNICEF**

5 October 2017 – One year has passed since Hurricane Matthew made landfall in southwest Haiti – leaving terrible destruction in its wake – but children and adolescents on the island still remain highly vulnerable to the effects of natural disasters and extreme weather events, the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) has warned.

"Hundreds of thousands of children had their lives turned upside down by Hurricane Matthew," said Marc Vincent, the head of the UNICEF country office in Haiti, in a news release issued by the agency.

"The courage and determination of families to recover and begin to rebuild their lives is admirable and [we are] proud to be one of the organizations continuing to support them."

In the immediate aftermath of the storm, UN mobilized its staff on the ground to respond to the most urgent needs, sending emergency aid for affected children and families, including clean water and sanitation.

Working together with the Haitian Government and partner organizations, over the past 12 months, the UNICEF rehabilitated 120 schools damaged by the hurricane, enabling the return of more than 30,000 children to school. It also provided school furniture to some 139 schools and provided another 26,000 children with psycho-social support.

In the Sud and Grand'Anse departments – two of the worst hit parts of the island – UNICEF helped screen 160,000 children for malnutrition in an ongoing programme, and organized a series of consultations with adolescents to enable them to express their concerns and ideas about risk and disaster management, with the results shared with local authorities.

Recalling the destruction and feeling of despair, Bernard, a fourteen-year-old child from Roche-à-Bateau (in southern Haiti) said: "After [Hurricane] Matthew passed, I thought it would be virtually impossible to continue living. All the trees were uprooted."

“But people are beginning gradually to recover,” he added.

Hurricane Matthew (Category 4) made landfall in Haiti on 4 October 2016. At the time, the [“very powerful and slow moving”](#) storm was described as the [“worst storm the country had seen in decades”](#). As it passed over the country, the storm claimed hundreds of lives and destroyed critical infrastructure, including key bridges, communication links, and water and sanitation systems.

Source: UNICEF [[see in full screen](#)]

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## [Expert meeting at UN aspires to create ‘space’ for women in science and technology](#)

4 October 2017 – A three-day event on how to, among other things, improve women’s involvement in the aerospace sector as well as in the fields of science, technology and mathematics, kicked off today under the leadership of two United Nations offices.

The UN Office for Outer Space Affairs ([UNOOSA](#)) and [UN Women](#) have teamed up in organizing a [‘Space for Women’](#) Expert Meeting at UN Headquarters in New York to share expertise, enhance partnerships and promote efforts to encourage women and girls to become involved in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education – especially in developing countries.

“Space for Women is really a gender mainstreaming project where we will like to work with Member States; not only for STEM education but also to [help young girls when they graduate](#) to then find their place in their own society without being obliged to leave their own country,” Simonetta Di Pippo, Director of UNOOSA, said prior to the event.

The meeting will also delve into the role of space technology and science to fulfil Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality.

“And this has to be done with each Member State, and we will start with a small group of champions – as I like to call them – so, pilot countries with which we will develop this medium to long-term project,” she added.

With the most cross-cutting thematic priority of “capacity-building for the twenty-first century,” the event is discussing innovative approaches to meet the [2030 Agenda](#).

Astronauts, diplomats, decision makers and experts from around the globe have converged in to discuss the creation of a dedicated ‘Space for Women’

Project.

In line with UNOOSA's vision to bring the benefits of space to humankind, the focus of the Project is to realize that women and girls are included in those benefits and that they play an active and equal role in space science, technology, innovation and exploration.

On the final day of the event, a high-level panel on 'Space for Women,' which will include UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, Ms. Di Pippo and UN Women's Deputy Executive Director Laskhmi Puri, will make recommendations to UNOOSA.

The proposals, which will focus on using space to empower women, women's involvement in the aerospace industry and STEM fields, and how alliances can be made to move forward the project, will feed into the development of the 'Space for Women' project.

The first UN Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the global governance of space activities, known as UNISPACE, was held in 1968 – with subsequent others in 1968, 1982 and 1999. June 2018 will mark its 50th anniversary with a special segment of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which will set the future course of global space cooperation to advance humanity.

In December 1999, the General Assembly declared World Space Week to be celebrated internationally each year from 4 to 10 October.

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## [Libya: UN Mission condemns deadly bombing in Misrata](#)

4 October 2017 – Condemning an attack against a court house in the Libyan city of Misrata, the United Nations Support Mission in Libya ([UNSMIL](#)) underscored that those behind the incident must be held accountable.

At least three individuals were killed and more than 15 injured in the attack today, the responsibility for which is claimed by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) terrorist group.

"Indiscriminate attacks against civilians, including employees of the judicial institutions, are violations of human rights and international humanitarian law and cannot be justified," the Mission said in a [statement](#).

"Those behind today's bombing and other such despicable acts must face justice."

In the statement, the Mission also expressed its solidarity with the

Government and people of Libya.

It added that the Special Representative for the Secretary-General for the country and the head of UNSMIL, Ghassan Salame, expressed his condolences to the families of those killed and wished a swift recovery to the injured.