

UN chief calls for 'meaningful' youth engagement in peace efforts, not just symbolism

21 September 2017 – Young people must be meaningful partners in conflict prevention and sustaining peace, and the United Nations should think outside the box on how to relate to youth globally, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres told a ministerial event held today on the margins of the General Assembly's annual debate.

"Young women and men and their contributions to peace should stand at the very core of what will become our new common approach," Mr. Guterres [said](#), explaining that he has set in motion reforms to rethink the UN's work on preventing war and sustaining peace.

The event, co-chaired by Jordan and Norway, was held in support of Security Council Resolution 2250, a ground-breaking resolution adopted in 2015 which recognizes that "young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security."

Mr. Guterres noted that in today's uncertain and unsettling world, young people find themselves left out of decision-making and increasingly unemployed.

"We must do better in bridging these gaps and drawing on the enormous initiative, energy and ideas of the world's young people. We must make the most of the power of young women and men as drivers of a culture of peace," he said.

In a larger sense, the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, adopted by UN Member States in 2015, provides a tremendous foundation for action, he said, as it rightly defines young people as "critical agents of change" and as a priority across its 17 Goals.

"In all we do, our destination is clear: empowerment," he said. "We must commit to engaging young people fully – not as a symbol or to simply check a box. The goal must be meaningful participation."

In June, Mr. Guterres appointed Jayathma Wickramanayake as his Envoy on Youth to advance youth rights and priorities.

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UN officials urge sustained support for humanitarian efforts in Lake Chad Basin

21 September 2017 – United Nations officials today underscored the need for sustained international support for the humanitarian response in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region, where millions are in need of emergency assistance.

“We can and must help the millions of people displaced by the crisis as well as those hosting the displaced across the beleaguered Lake Chad region,” Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock [told](#) participants at a ministerial event held on the margins of the General Assembly’s high-level session.

Mr. Lowcock, who is also UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, visited Niger and Nigeria earlier this month to raise the global profile of the Lake Chad Basin crisis, which is affecting some 17 million people in the region.

In Niger, the number of food-insecure people is around 1.8 million. Some 800,000 children are affected by acute malnutrition and almost 250,000 people are either internally displaced persons, returnees or refugees from Nigeria.

In northeast Nigeria, around 6.5 million people need life-saving assistance. Nearly 5.2 million are severely food-insecure and 450,000 children will suffer from severe acute malnutrition, this year.

The \$1.1 billion appeal for the country is currently only 48 per cent funded.

“Together, we have managed to avert famine, but we cannot pause or slow down. We must continue to step up so that the millions of people who are still just a step away from starvation are not allowed to perish,” said Mr. Lowcock.

Humanitarian needs likely to remain high

Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed [noted](#) that for the past eight years, Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria have suffered the horrendous consequences of the Boko Haram insurgency.

“Humanitarian needs will unfortunately remain high into next year and beyond. Sustained support is essential.”

The Deputy Secretary-General also noted that the crisis is “a powerful example” of the complex, multi-dimensional and interlinked challenges that the region faces, and shows why an integrated, comprehensive and coherent approach is needed to address the humanitarian-development nexus and its link to peace.

These challenges, she said, are driven by under-development, economic and political exclusion, environmental degradation linked to climate change,

demographic shifts and structural fragility. Countries in the region are dealing with violent extremists at the same time as they are hit by economic recession and low oil prices.

“I myself grew up in Maiduguri in Nigeria – the heart of the Boko Haram insurgency,” she said. “I know better than anyone that no child is born a terrorist. Children and young people are indoctrinated and radicalized by circumstances, conditions and influences.

“Governments must act to address the root causes of violence, including the full spectrum of social, political, economic and religious grievances.”

She added that preventing crises requires investment in strengthening resilience and building the capacity of institutions and communities; investment in people and in social cohesion; reducing inequality and vulnerabilities; and expanding opportunities for all.

“The [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable development is the best preventive tool we have,” she stated, referring to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by world leaders in 2015 to end poverty, reduce inequality and tackle climate change.

[Haitian President backs Paris climate accord, calls on UN to honour commitments on tackling cholera](#)

21 September 2017 – Addressing the United Nations General Assembly today, Jovenel Moïse, President of Haiti, expressed deep commitment to the environmental targets in the global goals on sustainable development and said his island nation is seeking to build its resilience against the natural disasters and extreme weather events that consistently beleaguer its people and other countries in the Caribbean.

“My Government is committed to the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change,” Mr. Moïse told delegations gathered for the Assembly’s annual general debate, adding that he wished to see those countries most responsible for greenhouse gas production contribute the resources necessary for implementing that accord.

In the Caribbean, recent back-to-back extreme weather events had drawn attention to the ways in which climate affects Haiti. “Such weather phenomena are due to the impact of humans on the environment,” he stressed, and noted that in January 2018, when Haiti assumed the presidency of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), it would organize a regional conference aimed at establishing an inter-State commission that would devise a strategy for

addressing climate issues, such as the availability of climate insurance.

More broadly, he said Haiti has taken steps to consolidate democracy and the rule of law, having made significant efforts to promote development and political stability. Noting that corruption has “infected” and eroded Haiti’s economy, and compromised its political situation, he said it is time that official development assistance (ODA) and domestic resources upheld the interests of the Haitian nation. In the meantime, Haiti’s new leaders are waging an unwavering struggle against corruption.

Addressing two phenomena stemming from the UN presence in Haiti – heinous sexual abuse and exploitation by peacekeepers and other personnel, and the cholera epidemic – he said the Organization is morally obliged to provide the recourses to ensure that cholera left the country.

Improving Haiti’s health system, including by eradicating cholera, is a Government priority for his. Despite some progress, the number of cholera victims stood at 10,000 people and continued to grow. Further, there were tens of thousands of cholera orphans. The United Nations must live by and give tangible form to its noble ideals, including the announced ‘new approach’ to dealing with cholera, he stressed, by shouldering all its responsibilities to remedy the situation, which had caused grave harm to the Haitian people.

[Full statement \(in French\) available here](#)

Multilateralism is pathway forward to a better world, Cyprus tells UN Assembly

21 September 2017 – As the high-level segment of the United Nations General Assembly continued today, Nicos Anastasiades, President of Cyprus, spoke extensively about multilateralism as the only way to preserve the planet; peacefully resolve conflicts; end terrorism and extremism; prevent natural disasters and alleviate humanitarian crises around the world.

Only collective efforts can address crises “like the current one with North Korea, which threatens [...] the peace and security architecture of the region and beyond,” he stated. Mr. Anastasiades also pointed to international, multilateral cooperation as being vital in dealing with terrorism, while also calling “education, dialogue, economic growth and social inclusion” essential to prevent and counter violent extremism within societies.

Enhancing societal resilience is a key aspect of multilateral endeavours he said, telling the Assembly “our determination to implement the [2030 Agenda](#)

must remain high on our list of priorities, sustainable development is at the heart of dealing with the root causes of forced migration.”

The President also pointed to the need for “a just, effective and efficient global governance system,” for which Cyprus is in accord with the Secretary-General’s reform priorities to ensure that multilateralism remains relevant and effective.

Mr. Anastasiades stated Cyprus’ opinion that “the most vital pillar to achieving inter-State, regional and global peace is through respecting and ensuring the full and unhindered independency, territorial integrity and sovereignty” of each UN Member State as the only way to avoid inter-State conflicts that, in turn, establish conditions for protracted destabilization, violence and uncertainty.

Turning to matters closer to home and the recent UN-facilitated negotiations on Cyprus, he stressed that the vision of the people of Cyprus is on ending the unacceptable status quo and establishing a federal state which would ensure to the generations of Greek and Turkish Cypriots, conditions of stability for a safe, prosperous and peaceful future.

“A State free from any foreign interventions and dependencies; ‘a normal state,’ as the UN Secretary-General very correctly stated. A State led by Cypriots for Cypriots,” he said, urging Turkey and Turkish Cypriot compatriots to realize that it is only through mutual respect and compromises “and not obsolete fixations to failed practices that we will achieve a viable and lasting settlement.”

[Full statement available here](#)