

[News story: Brokenshire pays tribute to Martin McGuinness](#)

I want to extend my sympathy and sincere condolences to the family of Martin McGuinness at this difficult time.

Martin's personal journey and the clear influence he had on others in the Republican movement were instrumental in shaping political institutions in Northern Ireland founded on exclusively peaceful and democratic means.

While not forgetting the past, no-one can doubt the essential role he played in helping to secure the power sharing arrangements and political progress in Northern Ireland. Martin's commitment to reconciliation and understanding across communities was a significant factor.

Whilst passionate and robust in his politics, on a personal level I always found Martin to be thoughtful and reflective and appreciated the personal consideration he showed. The importance of family and his home in Derry shone through.

Martin will be remembered for his contribution to politics in Northern Ireland and particularly during his near ten years as deputy First Minister.

[Residents of Delhi are cautioned against spurious schemes being floated in the name of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao](#)

It has come to the notice of Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India that certain unauthorised sites/organisations/NGOs/individuals are distributing illegal forms in the

name of cash incentive under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) Scheme.

Digital radios

There are a few cases of newer technology that is not as good as older technology. I need to mention digital radio.

Like everyone I was made to go out and buy replacement digital radios when they cut off the old broadcasting system. They said they would be better. I was supplied with a digital radio in my most recent car. They are worse than the ones they replaced, as well as being dearer. Nor was it environmentally friendly to have to ditch all the older radios which still worked fine all the time there was a signal for them to pick up.

There are places where my car radio now cuts out in the middle of busy areas because reception is poor. I used to get uninterrupted reception in these locations on the old system. The home radio needs to be switched on two to three times before it will work. It does not give you instant reception with a simple turn on/off button as the old radio did.

There is one room in the house where I cannot get good reception, and can only get some signal by balancing the radio high on a bookcase and adjusting the way it is pointing from time to time. When leaving the garage the car radio repeats itself.

In another room reception varies depending on where a person is in relation to the radio.

Whilst most modern technology is so much better than last century, digital radio is temperamental, poor quality and frustrating to the listener.

Nowruz a reminder that heritage helps make resilient, sustainable societies – UN cultural agency

21 March 2017 – In a message on the occasion of Nowruz – the day that celebrates the arrival of the spring season – the head of the United Nations cultural agency urged everyone to embrace the day's values and be inspired by its universal message of peace and solidarity.

At a time when violent extremism seeks to destroy diversity and freedoms, Nowruz is a reminder of the power of culture and heritage to build resilient and sustainable societies," said Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in her message.

Highlighting that in the midst of global challenges such as violent extremism, Nowruz is a source of confidence and belonging for all, Ms. Bokova noted that the message it conveys is all the more important given the efforts around the globe to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change.

Through dance, poems, songs, meals and other social practices, the celebration of Nowruz is a moment for men and women, boys and girls, to pay their respect to nature and wish for a better future," she added.

Nowruz, which marks the first day of spring and the renewal of nature, is celebrated by more than 300 million people all around the world and has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.

In 2009, Nowruz was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a festivity of rich diversity promoting peace and solidarity across regions and generations. The following year, the UN General Assembly welcomed its inclusion on the List.

Quoting Rumi, the famous poet, Ms. Bokova said: "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing, there is a field. I will meet you there." Nowruz is a field where reconciliation and dialogue can take their roots."

"It is a field where traditions and rituals are passed from generation to generation, to share moments of togetherness, tolerance, harmony and joy," she noted.

Also today, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) highlighted the importance of Nowruz in promoting cultural diversity and friendship among people.

Extending its best wishes to the people of the country on Nowruz, the UN Mission said that it was a time for renewal and celebration, as well as for promoting values of peace and solidarity between generations and communities.

"On the eve of this important day, the UN family in Afghanistan expresses hope that the year ahead brings peace to the Afghan people, who deserve a future free from conflict and filled with hope," said Tadamichi Yamamoto, the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA.

Warming earth threatens to release huge amounts of carbon – UN agency

21 March 2017 – Rising temperatures could release massive amounts of carbon trapped in the Earth's soil, the United Nations agricultural agency today reported, warning that soil management could make or break climate change response efforts.

Plants and organic residues take in carbon and then sequester it into soil, creating a vast reservoir of carbon. But when soil is disturbed or degraded, trapped carbon and other greenhouse gases resulting from decay are re-released back into the atmosphere, the UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) explained in a press release.

“This means that the Earth's soil carbon reservoir could either release massive amounts of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, or sequester more of them, depending on the management decisions we make going forward,” according to the report, *Soil Organic Carbon: The Hidden Potential*.

The report is being presented today at the start of the Global Symposium on Soil Organic Carbon, in Rome.

Speaking at the event, the FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva said that beyond its role as carbon sinks, healthy soils are the foundation for global food security.

“Soils with high organic carbon content are likely to be more fertile and productive, better able to purify water, and help to increase the resilience of livelihoods to the impacts of climate change,” Mr. da Silva said.

Improving the health of the planet's soils and boosting their organic carbon content is critical to achieving several of the international development goals established by the Sustainable Development Goals, including those related to eradicating hunger and malnutrition, he added.