



World Union for Peace Human Rights and the Rights of People

NGO associated to the Un Department of Public Information

NEWSLETTER

From Un to Citizen International News



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INTERNATIONAL DAYS

UNIPAX

Global revolution

Newsletter Unipax

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Thanks for the kind cooperation to UNRIC - United Nations - Regional Information Centre in Brussels - and the Desk Office for Italy, San Marino, Malta and the Holy See

The Global Revolution for a New Humanism project to all UN Ambassadors

Illustrious Ambassador,

on the occasion of the Thirtieth Anniversary of its foundation, UNIPAX, NGO associated with the DPI Department of Public Information of the United Nations, is supporting an important political and cultural initiative that fully captures the dramatic international situation and that suggests some ways out of the planetary emergencies, in order to start, in due time, a New Humanism through a peaceful global revolution.

It is a **global multimedia project** designed by its Founder and Honorary Chairman, Orazio Parisotto (all details and information available on the website www.unipax.org).

Despite the project may seem utopian, it presents concrete proposals and a draft of how society should evolve drawing on fundamental human rights and cosmopolitan democracy. In this context, the renewed and reformed United Nations are called to play an absolutely central and decisive role.

The entire media operation is developed starting from the essay "**THE GLOBAL REVOLUTION FOR A NEW HUMANISM. The ways out from the global emergency**" which is the real engine of the initiative through its multiple applications.

This book, unique in its kind, has already received important and prestigious reviews including:

His Eminence Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Vatican Secretary of State

"Herculean job, full of interesting ideas and concrete suggestions aimed at creating a fairer and more united society".

Francesco Paolo Fulci, former Italian Ambassador at the United Nations

"This is a truly powerful study, full of information and ideas, which deserve to be included in the library of every student of international relations. The book captures very well the essence of the diplomatic battle carried on from Italy to New York, for an Organization (of the United Nations) more democratic, participatory, including all Member States and their peoples, and without exclusion and marginalization of anybody"

Even among the younger generation the book has aroused interest and attention, opening a debate and a rich exchange of ideas and contributions. In this regard some words are particularly representative:

Virginio Lelo, student at the University "La Sapienza" of Rome, Faculty of Economics

"As many young people, I had a slightly optimistic outlook on my future, given the socio institutional global chaos where we live. This book with its project for a New Humanism gave me confidence and desire to commit myself for a better world."

In agreement with the Italian Publisher Effe2Edizioni, we are sending you for free a e-book in English (which you may also forward to your colleagues and to your government representatives).

Since this is a very serious and challenging work that also affects your institutional role, we kindly ask you to read and spread it (the book is sent to all UN Ambassadors).

Best regards

THE CHAIRMAN UNIPAX
CEDRIC HERVAUD BONIOLO

UN Observatory

WESO 2016

Poverty goal of 2030 Agenda at risk without decent work

After a period of significant gains the pace of poverty reduction is threatened by a lack of decent jobs.

Geneva, 18 May 2016 – The global deficit in quality jobs and deteriorating economic conditions in a number of regions threatens to undo decades of progress in poverty reduction, warns a new report by the International Labour Organization (ILO). What's more, relative poverty in developed countries is increasing. Using the latest available data, the ILO's World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO) 2016 – Transforming jobs to end poverty, finds that over 36 per cent of the emerging and developing world live in poverty – on a daily income of less than US\$ 3.10 purchasing power parity (PPP). The report calculates that some US\$ 600 billion a year – or nearly US\$ 10 trillion in total over 15 years – is needed to eradicate extreme² – and moderate³ poverty globally by 2030. The report concludes that the problem of persistent poverty cannot be solved by income transfers alone; more and better jobs are crucial to achieving this goal. It is estimated that almost a third of the extremely or moderately poor in developing economies have jobs. However, their employment is vulnerable in nature: they are sometimes unpaid, concentrated in low-skilled occupations and, in the absence of social protection, rely almost exclusively on labour income. Among developed countries, more workers have wage and salaried employment, but that does not stop them from falling into poverty. "If we are serious about the 2030 Agenda ... then we must focus on the quality of jobs in all nations."

Guy Ryder, ILO Director-General

WESO 2016 finds that the incidence of relative poverty has increased by one percentage point in the European Union, since the start of the crisis. "Clearly, the Sustainable Development Goal of ending poverty in all its forms everywhere by 2030 is at risk," said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. "If we are serious about the 2030 Agenda and want to finally put an end to the scourge of poverty perpetuating across generations, then we must focus on the quality of jobs in all nations." "Right now, while 30 per cent of the world is poor, they only hold 2 per cent of the world's income," said Raymond Torres, ILO Special Advisor on Social and Economic Issues. "Only through deliberately improving the quality of employment for those who have jobs and creating new decent work will we provide a durable exit from precarious living conditions and improve livelihoods for the working poor and their families." The study also finds that high levels of income inequality reduce the impact of economic growth on poverty reduction. "This finding tells us that it is past time to reflect on the responsibility of rich nations and individuals in the perpetuation of poverty. Accepting the status quo is not an option," says Torres.

Fragile and uneven progress

The ILO estimates on poverty reduction come after a sustained period of global progress, with the share of population living in extreme poverty falling from 46.9 per cent in 1990 to just under 15 per cent among 107 emerging and developing countries. When the moderately poor are considered, the rate has fallen from 67.2 per cent to 36.2 per cent. But the data demonstrates that progress on poverty has been uneven. Poverty has declined rapidly in middle-income countries, especially in the Asia and Pacific region, but by a much lesser extent in low-income countries, where 47.2 per cent of people remain in extreme

poverty. In developed countries poverty has in fact increased in recent years, notably in the European Union. Further, despite the significant overall progress in reducing extreme poverty, WESO 2016 warns that continued poverty reduction is threatened not only by weak economic growth but by key structural obstacles to quality employment creation. Recent deterioration of economic prospects in Asia, Latin America and the Arab region and natural resource rich countries has begun to expose the fragility of employment and social progress. In some of these countries income inequality has begun to rise after decades of declines, raising the possibility that progress on poverty might be at risk. Poverty reduction across sectors within countries has also been uneven. Using the latest data, estimates based on 43 emerging and developing countries show that a quarter of those employed in agriculture were in extreme poverty (nearly two-thirds of all the working extreme poor), compared with just 12 per cent of those employed in industry, and only 7 per cent of those employed in services.

Transforming jobs to end poverty

The WESO 2016 report concludes with a number of recommendations to address the structural challenges to providing quality jobs and a concomitant reduction in poverty. They include:

1. *Tackle low-productivity traps, which lie at the heart of poverty:* Economic growth, when narrowly-based, goes hand-in-hand with persistently high or rising poverty rates. Policies need to diversify the productive base and tackle low-productivity traps, by i) spurring sustainable enterprises and facilitating transitions from the informal to formal enterprises and employment arrangements, ii) tackling job precariousness, and iii) investing in skills and in lagging sectors, particularly agriculture and rural non-farm economies.
2. *Strengthen rights at work and enable employer and worker organizations to reach the poor:* Individuals should be empowered to refuse unacceptable forms of work, which highlights the importance of international labour standards and social protection floors. Collectively the poor and vulnerable also need a voice to be able to influence national labour policy. Employer and worker organizations therefore need legal protections to enable them to represent the poor.
3. *Alleviate poverty through well-designed employment and social policies:* Governments should draw on the many recent examples of successful employment and social policies, which boost employment prospects of the poor, in both advanced economies and developing countries. In addition, given the high incidence of poverty among children, it is urgent to strengthen targeted schemes that combine education with income support.
4. *Reinforce governments' capacity to implement poverty-reducing policies and standards:* Poverty is often associated with a low implementation capacity of public administrations. To implement the above policies, an effective labour administration, delivery institutions and social dialogue are essential. Also, to ensure that income support reaches the poor, corruption needs to be tackled.
5. *Boosting resources and making the rich aware of their responsibility:* As many of the policy tools identified require a reorientation of policy priorities and government funds, a progressive tax base and fair tax treatment of large and small enterprises are important in providing funding while improving incentives. This would be an effective way of making the rich aware of the fact that persistent wealth and income inequalities might impede further progress in poverty reduction.
6. *Involve the ILO in the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals:* The evidence shows that decent work is a necessary condition for ending poverty by 2030. The ILO will work to catalyse international cooperation on policies that boost decent work and sustainable enterprises, in close cooperation with the UN, the World Bank and donor countries.

WHS: Humanitarian summit has 'set new course,' says Ban, calling for action on commitments

New York, 24 May 2016 – Hailing the global community's achievements at the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today called for commitments made to be taken forward for transformative change from the top down and from the ground up.

"The World Humanitarian Summit has been a unique event, in form as well as substance," Mr. Ban said in Istanbul, Turkey, speaking to reporters on the second and last day of the Summit, dedicated to improving the humanitarian system and alleviating the suffering of millions.

"We have the wealth, knowledge and awareness to take better care of one another. But we need action, based on the five core responsibilities of the Agenda for Humanity," he stressed, referring to the principles that guided the hundreds of events organized at the two-day conference.

In total, the Summit brought together 173 Member States, 55 Heads of State and Governments, some 350 private sector representatives, and over 2000 people from civil society and non-governmental organizations. Together, some 1,500 commitments were made, including:

- The Education Cannot Wait fund to help provide quality education to children and youth in crises.
- A Grand Bargain that will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of investment in emergency response
- The Global Preparedness Partnership to better prepare twenty of the countries that are most at risk of crisis
- The One Billion Coalition for Resilience which aims to mobilize a billion people to build safer and more stable communities worldwide

Yet, the Secretary-General also expressed disappointment that some world leaders could not be in Istanbul, especially from the G7 countries, except Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany.

"They are some of the most generous donors of funding for humanitarian action, but I urge their greater engagement, particularly in the search for political solutions," he stressed, noting that "aligning the interests of such a diverse constellation of actors is inherently challenging."

The UN chief said divisions between the members of the Security Council have prevented progress in recent years, not only on critical issues of war and peace, but on humanitarian affairs.

"That is why I make a special appeal to leaders of the nations that are permanent Members of that Council to take important steps at the highest level. Their absence from this meeting does not provide an excuse for inaction," he said.

Speaking at the closing ceremony with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Mr. Ban further highlighted that the Summit is not an end point, but a turning point.

Slow Food's Carlo Petrini named FAO Special Ambassador Zero Hunger for Europe

Role includes awareness raising on improving agriculture; need for sustainable food supply chains

Rome, 26 May 2016 - Carlo Petrini, President of Slow Food, an organization working to prevent the disappearance of local food cultures and traditions and to ensure everyone has access to good, clean and fair food, has been named FAO Special Ambassador Zero Hunger for Europe, the Organization announced today. FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva praised Petrini's contribution to increasing public awareness on the need to improve agriculture in Europe and ensure a sustainable food supply chain. "These include numerous activities

drawing attention to the necessity to reintroduce local crops that smallholders and subsistence farmers can produce for their own consumption and sell on the markets as a means to achieve food security," Graziano da Silva said. Petrini's nomination and his involvement in FAO's advocacy activities will "send a strong signal to the international community that we can create a world where no one is hungry," the FAO Director-General added. It would contribute towards building the Zero Hunger Generation and ending hunger by 2030, he said. Accepting the appointment, Petrini said: "The shame of hunger ... can and must be defeated within this generation; commitment in this regard must take a political priority in all international forums, along with national and civil society." In his role as a Special Ambassador Zero Hunger, Petrini will help ensure a better understanding of FAO's vision of a world free of hunger and malnutrition in which food and agriculture contribute towards improving livelihoods, particularly those of poor people. Activities also include participation at high-level events and public fora as well as contributing to key publications, field project visits and fund raising activities. Slow Food is an international, non-profit grassroots organization that aims to promote quality food produced and distributed in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner. It has over 100,000 members worldwide and is active in 160 countries. Through a 2013 agreement, FAO and Slow Food have been working together to promote inclusive food and agriculture systems and have participated in joint advocacy campaigns and global initiatives including the 2016 International Year of Pulses and the 2014 International Year of Family Farming.

As Mediterranean death toll soars, Ban urges collective response to large refugee and migrant movements

New York, 31 May 2016 – At least 880 people appear to have died over the past week as their vessels capsized in the Mediterranean, bringing the total fatalities along the dangerous crossing route to 2,510 so far this year, the United Nations refugee agency said today, as Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for a comprehensive and collective response to large movements of refugees and migrants. According to a statement issued later in the day by his spokesperson, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is "deeply saddened" that in the last few days, hundreds of men, women, and children have died in the Mediterranean Sea. The UN chief expressed his deepest condolences to the families and friends of those who perished. "While the Secretary-General commends the brave efforts of the joint Italian and European search and rescue operations, he calls on concerned Governments and organizations to redouble their efforts to save those at risk at sea and to counter the migrant smuggling and human trafficking networks in the Aegean and Mediterranean Seas," the statement continued. At the global level, Mr. Ban in his statement called for a comprehensive and collective response to large movements of refugees and migrants, including expanded legal pathways. "The 19 September High-Level Meeting at the United Nations on this issue is a unique opportunity to agree on such a framework," said the statement, adding that the meeting will also be an opportunity to demonstrate greater solidarity and shared responsibility with countries which host the vast majority of refugees. The UN refugee agency said that comparatively, some 1,855 died in the crossing in the same period in 2015 and 57 in the first five months of 2014. So far this year, 203,981 people have made the journey on the Mediterranean. "The odds of being among the dead are currently one in 81," said William Spindler, spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "This highlights the importance of rescue operations as part of the response to the movement of refugees and migrants in the Mediterranean, and the need for real, safer alternatives for people needing international protection," he added. According to new information from people who landed in Augusta over the weekend, 47 people were missing after a raft carrying 125 people from Libya deflated. Eight others were reported separately to have been lost overboard from another boat, and four deaths were reported after fire aboard another. These figures bring last week's death toll to 880. The Turkey-Greece route accounted for three quarters of the nearly 204,000 people who made the journey prior to the end of March. Some 46,714 travelled to Italy. The North Africa-Italy route is dramatically dangerous: 2,119 people, or one

in 23, died. UNHCR is working to better understand the possible reasons and dynamics behind these movements. The majority of boats departing Libya are at present reported to be leaving from the Sabratah area to the west of Tripoli. And as in the past they remain more crowded than those that have normally been seen on the Turkey-Greece route, often carrying 600 or more passengers, and sometimes being towed by larger fishing boats which in turn puts them at risk, Mr. Spindler said. According to some unconfirmed accounts, the recent increase in numbers is linked to efforts by smugglers to maximize income before the start of the holy month of Ramadan, in the coming week, he said. Survivors told that smuggler hubs operating in locations including Niger remains active in feeding people from West Africa through to Libya, where many remain for many months before being put onto boats for the crossing to Europe. Nigerians and Gambians are the most prominent nationalities travelling from Libya to Italy so far this year. Somalis and Eritreans, who are among countries more commonly associated with refugee movements, accounted for nine per cent and eight per cent respectively. Reports of trauma from sexual and other forms of gender-based violence among women making the journey – or being trafficked – appear common. Some women have told they were subject to sexual slavery in Libya. Arrivals of unaccompanied children are on the rise.

DPI/NGO: UN conference adopts global education action agenda to mobilize civil society

Gyeongju, Republic of Korea, 1 June 2016 – A global education action agenda affirming the importance of Sustainable Development Goal 4 – ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong opportunities for all – was adopted today in Gyeongju, Republic of Korea. Speaking from the podium at the 66th United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI)/Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference, Ms. Cristina Gallach, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, said “This Conference has demonstrated another example of the value for the United Nations in investing in partnership with academia and NGOs.” The Gyeongju Action Plan provides concrete guidance for NGOs around the world to enhance their ability to lobby governments to commitment to implementing the Sustainable Sustainable Development Goals and mobilize NGOs in communities on the ground.

“The United Nations is committed to continue to support and partner with NGOs and academia in our joint efforts to advocate for and successfully implement the 2030 Agenda,” Ms. Gallach continued. The newly adopted Action Plan includes a series of concrete measures for NGOs around the world to jump-start implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the grass roots level. Dr. Scott Carlin, Conference Co-chair and Associate Professor of Geography at Long Island University, said “NGOs from around the world brought passion and expertise to lively final consultations on the outcome document. We are grateful for all of the inputs received and very proud of the Gyeongju Action Plan.” “We hope that Gyeongju was an inspirational setting for finalizing a truly unifying action plan that will be useful for NGOs, wherever they are working,” added Co-Chair Dr. Yukang Choi. For the first time in the history of the DPI/NGO Conference, youth also developed and issued a Youth Declaration. Ms. Gallach pointed out that youth had “come in great numbers, demonstrating the value that they see in partnering with the United Nations.” Ahmad Alhendawi, the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, noted “the Conference not only reinforced the critical role of NGOs to achieve a vision for the 2030 Agenda, but also stressed the urgency for greater investments in education for Global Citizenship to unlock the potential of this massive generation of children and youth.” “Unfortunately youth are still not involved enough in policy making processes around the world,” said Ms. Saphira Rameshfar, representative of the Baha'i Community and Conference youth leader. “The Youth Declaration is a necessary reminder that young people are needed as leaders and decision-makers not only in youth forums and special-purpose councils, but in those spaces where the course and direction of society as a whole are determined,” added Ms. Rameshfar. The Action Plan was drafted through a global multi-stakeholder consultation process, leading up to, and during the conference. It was adopted at the Conference's final plenary session and will be shared widely

with civil society as well as the UN Secretary-General, the UN System, Member States and learning communities.

Urges more efforts to address rural hunger and poverty, reduce migration pressure

Graziano da Silva: improve access to land and other resources for small-scale farmers; increase investments in sustainable agriculture, resilience building

Brussels, 15 June 2016 - Sustainable rural development is key to addressing hunger, poverty and the other root causes of migration, a growing phenomenon which is undermining many countries' ability to achieve their development goals, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva said today. "The migratory pressures causing major concern at a global level today result from war, conflict and political instability, but FAO also calls for adequate attention to be given to pressures associated with the very root causes of migration," Graziano da Silva told participants at the European Development Days 2016 in Brussels. Persistent economic distress, poverty, food insecurity, changing demographics and climate, as well as increasing inequalities and pressures on natural resources, are forcing millions of people to seek a better life elsewhere, often abroad, the FAO Director-General stressed. A central element to counter this trend is to improve for the rural poor, especially small-scale family farmers, access to land, water, credit, markets and technology, Graziano da Silva said. Organized by the European Commission, this year's European Development Days focus on the recently approved 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Graziano da Silva noted how achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 of ending hunger, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable development practices, poses a particularly difficult challenge in rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia where the levels of extreme poverty and undernourishment are still very high. The FAO Director-General stressed the importance of helping to build rural communities' resilience and boosting access to decent jobs, especially for women and young people. He also referred to social protection as a buffer in times of need and as a source of extra income to invest in productive assets. "We also need increased investment in areas that really benefit the poor population. This includes ensuring their access to public goods such as education, health, clean water and sanitation," he added.

Climate change

Combating the impacts of climate change is crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, Graziano da Silva said. "The international community must step up to help countries move to the next stage: that is to identify specific adaptation strategies, finance opportunities, technology transfer and robust data collection," he added. For its part, FAO stands ready to support its member countries to identify specific adaptation strategies, such as the implementation of climate-smart agriculture techniques and practices, the Director-General noted.

Antimicrobial Resistance

Graziano da Silva also referred to the link between Sustainable Development Goal 2 and Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) which often results when antimicrobial drugs are misused in the treatment and prevention of diseases in livestock, the aquaculture sector as well as crop production, raising the potential risk of emergence and spread of antimicrobial resistant micro-organisms. While noting that good progress has been made to combat AMR through the World Health Organization Global Action Plan, FAO, which is working closely with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) believes much more needs to be done, Graziano da Silva said. "I would like to count on the support of European countries through voluntary contributions, either financial or in-kind," he said noting that the difficulty of finding well-trained people in this field could be addressed through the secondment of experts at national level.

FAO and the European Union, a fruitful partnership

In his address, Graziano da Silva thanked the European Union (EU) for supporting FAO's programmes and projects worldwide. In particular he cited joint initiatives such as the EU Food Facility which came about as a response to the 2007-2008 global food crisis, and the Food and Nutrition Security Impact, Resilience, Sustainability and Transformation Programme (FIRST), which seeks to mobilize skilled professionals to provide policy and capacity-building support to countries.

Pope Francis hails FAO role in new Mediterranean migration initiative

José Graziano da Silva briefs pontiff on the Blue Hope Initiative, impact of El Niño

23 June 2016, Rome - Pope Francis in a meeting today with FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva praised the agency's efforts to address migration in the Mediterranean region as well as its work to promote the strong links between peace and food security, climate change and sustainable development. Graziano da Silva briefed the pontiff on FAO's Blue Hope Initiative which seeks to transform Southern Mediterranean coastal zone communities into engines of stability and growth, in particular by supporting the activities of small-scale fisheries. "Migration is an issue which is very close to Pope Francis' heart. Much more needs to be done to tackle what is happening in the Mediterranean where more than 2,500 people are estimated to have died so far this year in attempts to reach Europe by sea," the FAO Director-General said after today's meeting. The pontiff and Graziano da Silva also discussed the current peace efforts underway in Colombia and in the Central African Republic and the hope that lasting solutions will be found for the conflict in the two countries.

Boosting rural development to counter migration

In his discussion with the pontiff, Graziano da Silva outlined FAO's belief that increasing investments in food security, sustainable rural development and in efforts to adapt agriculture to climate change, will help create the conditions whereby people, especially the youth, will no longer be forced to abandon their lands in order to seek a better life elsewhere. He described to Pope Francis FAO's position on the issue of migration and the agency's role in efforts aimed at achieving the international community's Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of hunger by 2030. During their Graziano da Silva also informed Pope Francis of his concern over the impact that the El Niño climate event is having on large swathes of the globe, such as severe drought and flooding. The UN's High Level Task Force on Global Food and Nutrition Security, of which Graziano da Silva is Vice-Chair, on Wednesday held a special discussion on El Niño. The FAO Director-General informed the pontiff that FAO will be hosting two high-level meetings to examine the extent of El Niño on Central America's Dry Corridor and in Africa, Asia and the Pacific on 30 June and 6 July 2016 respectively. The FAO Director-General noted how around the world, climate change is putting at risk the livelihoods of millions of small-scale family farmers, many of whom are heavily dependent on subsistence agriculture. Graziano da Silva stressed that responding to the impacts climate change requires investing in improving poor rural communities' ability to access land, credit and other resources while also ensuring they are provided with basic services like water, sanitation, health, education, transport infrastructure and electricity. Pope Francis, for his part, expressed concern with the current bureaucracy in international organizations and said that within the UN system they should work more for the benefit of their member states.

Statement by Christine Lagarde on the U.K. Referendum

Washington, June 24, 2016 . Christine Lagarde, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), issued the following statement today:

"We take note of the decision by the people of the United Kingdom. We urge the authorities in the U.K. and Europe to work collaboratively to ensure a smooth transition to a new economic relationship between the U.K. and the EU, including by clarifying the procedures and broad objectives that will guide the process.

"We strongly support commitments of the Bank of England and the ECB to supply liquidity to the banking system and curtail excess financial volatility. We will continue to monitor developments closely and stand ready to support our members as needed."

In wake of UK vote to leave EU, Ban says UN to continue to work with both 'important partners'

New York, 24 June 2016 – Following the vote in the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said today that the UN looks forward to continuing to work with both "important partners." "The Secretary-General expects the European Union to continue to be a solid partner for the United Nations on development and humanitarian issues, as well as peace and security, including migration. He also expects that the United Kingdom will continue to exercise its leadership in many areas, including international development. He very much hopes that this will continue," said a statement released by the office of Mr. Ban's spokesperson. "When we work together, we are stronger," the statement also said. In the statement, the Secretary-General said he has closely followed discussions surrounding the referendum in the UK, and that the vote to leave the EU came at the end of "intensive deliberations and rich discussions," not just in the UK, but across Europe. "Now, as the United Kingdom and other EU Member States embark on the process of charting a way forward, the Secretary-General trusts in Europe's well-proven history of pragmatism and common responsibility in the interest of European citizens," the statement said. "At the UN, we look forward to continuing our work with the United Kingdom and the European Union – both important partners," the Secretary-General also said in the statement.

European Union

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Israeli President calls on MEPs to help build trust in the Middle East

“The elected Israeli leadership has been and is in support of two states for two peoples solution”, President of the State of Israel Reuven Rivlin, told MEPs. However “at this time, a permanent agreement for peace between us and Palestinians cannot be achieved”, he added, calling on EU to help build trust between the parties.

President Rivlin stressed that the political and regional circumstances which would enable Israelis and Palestinians to reach a permanent agreement “are failing to materialise.” Among other things, a total lack of trust between the leaderships and the people is to blame, he explained. “Help us step forward” in building trust, investing in joint Israeli-Palestinian ventures, developing the Palestinian economy, and educating people, he asked MEPs, acknowledging the European Parliament’s efforts to bring the two sides together by welcoming the Israeli and Palestinian presidents to the same plenary session. European Parliament President Martin Schulz noted that the Middle East region has seen wars and acts of terrorism, and that ending violence is the first step towards stability. He pointed out that the European Parliament voted last year in favour of a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as the capital of both states.

Palestinian President puts his state’s case to MEPs

It is time for our people to live in freedom, without walls and checkpoints”, urged President of the Palestinian National Authority Mahmoud Abbas in his address to MEPs. He conveyed his people’s gratitude to the European Parliament for recognising a State of Palestine and criticised Israel for pursuing its occupation of Palestinian territories.

The “Palestinian nation wants to live in full sovereignty [...] and the EU, being a major player, is helping to create an embryo Palestinian State”, said President Abbas. He asked MEPs for more help to find a fair and just two-state solution based on the 1967 borders. Mr Abbas also welcomed the recent French initiative to revive the Middle East peace talks, but advocated for setting a deadline for these talks to end. President Abbas also condemned the use of violence and terrorist attacks as a means to build a state, warning that terrorism could be eradicated from the region only if Israel puts an end to its occupation of Palestinian territories. “Israel has turned our country into an open prison”, he said. European Parliament President Martin Schulz said that helping to ensure the stability and proper functioning of Palestine is a moral duty for EU. “Your presence here today, the day after President Rivlin delivered his address, sends a strong signal that the will to achieve a lasting peace between Israel and Palestine is still alive”, he added.

ENERGY

MEPs call for more ambitious and consumer-focused energy targets beyond 2020

The EU's renewable energy target - 20% of total consumption by 2020 - has already been hit by many EU member states. But others lag behind and must do more, MEPs urge in a resolution on the EU Commission's "renewables progress report." To achieve the EU's energy efficiency target - a 20% gain by 2020 - member states need to implement EU legislation faster, and in full, says a second resolution, also voted on Thursday.

Increasing renewable energy share beyond 2020

Using all existing funding schemes effectively, to ensure access to capital, is crucial to achieving the current 20% renewables target by 2020, say MEPs in their non-legislative resolution. The text also reiterates Parliament's call for binding targets to ensure that renewables account for at least 30% of total energy consumption by 2030.

Implementing energy efficiency legislation

On the other hand, the overall 20% efficiency improvement target is at risk if member states do not implement existing EU legislation in full, says Parliament's assessment of member states' progress in improving energy efficiency. MEPs reiterated their previous calls "for a 40% energy efficiency target for 2030", considering that "binding requirements are vital in order to achieve a maximum degree of ambition and effort" from the member states.

MEPs want a better deal for consumers

Self-generation and self-consumption are "basic rights", and the upcoming review of the Renewable Energy Directive should foresee measures to promote and encourage investments in these areas, say MEPs, stressing that a more integrated market is essential to the development of renewables and to reducing energy costs. MEPs call on the EU to invest more in information and support programmes in the member states that could help to raise participation in current local energy efficiency schemes, and to promote new technical developments in areas such as refrigerants, lighting, insulation, etc. Consumers should play a more decisive role in achieving energy efficiency targets, e.g. by refurbishing buildings and through district heating and cooling schemes, say MEPs, noting that energy-efficient renovation of existing buildings should be a priority to help energy-poor residents. They advocate setting specific energy efficiency targets for residential buildings. The resolution on energy efficiency was passed by 253 votes to 193, with 4 abstentions, whereas that on renewable energy was passed by 444 votes to 103, with 23 abstentions.

Next steps

These recommendations will feed into upcoming legislative proposals on the EU energy union.

JUSTICE AND HOME AFFAIRS

International divorces: new rules on whose courts settle property disputes

New rules for deciding which country's courts should settle property disputes in divorce or death cases involving international couples or registered partnerships were approved by MEPs on Thursday. These rules should end parallel proceedings – costing around €1.1bn annually – in various member states whose courts have to settle such property disputes. They will apply in 18 EU countries which were willing to join this “enhanced cooperation” initiative.

The two regulations, one on matrimonial property regimes and the other on the property consequences of registered partnerships, determine which court has jurisdiction and which law applies in proceedings concerning the property of international couples. They will also facilitate the recognition and enforcement of a judgment given in one member state on property matters in another member state. The regulation on matrimonial property regimes was approved by 498 votes to 58, with 35 abstentions, and the regulation on property consequences of registered partnerships was adopted by 490 votes to 68, with 34 abstentions. The institutions of marriage and partnership nonetheless remain matters that are defined by the national laws of the member states. The regulations include a series of safeguards to ensure respect for national legal systems. For example, nothing obliges participating member states whose law does not recognise the institution of a registered partnership either to provide for it, or to assume jurisdiction for such partnerships.

TAXATION

Ending EU citizens' bank secrecy in Monaco

An EU deal with Monaco, which will make it harder for EU citizens to hide cash from the tax man in bank accounts there, was endorsed by Parliament in a vote on Thursday. Under the deal, the EU and Monaco will automatically exchange information on the bank accounts of each other's residents, starting in 2018 for information collected since 1 January 2017.

The EU and Monaco signed an agreement on 22 February 2016 to clamp down on tax fraud and tax evasion. The information to be exchanged includes not only income, such as interest and dividends, but also account balances and proceeds from the sale of financial assets. The formal signature is foreseen before the summer break as soon as the Council will have authorised it. The agreement ensures that Monaco will apply stricter measures, equivalent to those in place within the EU since March 2014. The agreement also complies with the 2014 global standard on the automatic exchange of financial account information promoted by the OECD. Tax administrations in EU member states and in Monaco will be able to:

- identify correctly and unequivocally the taxpayers concerned,
- administer and enforce their tax laws in cross-border situations,
- assess the likelihood of tax evasion being perpetrated, and
- avoid unnecessary further investigations.

International days

International Day of Yoga

(21 June 2016)

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for the International Day of Yoga, observed on 21 June: Yoga is an ancient physical, mental and spiritual practice that originated in India and is now practised in various forms around the world. The word 'yoga' derives from Sanskrit and means to join or to unite, symbolizing the union of body and consciousness. Yoga balances body and soul, physical health and mental well-being. It promotes harmony among people, and between ourselves and the natural world. Recognizing its universal appeal, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 21 June as the International Day of Yoga. This year's observance of the International Day of Yoga highlights the important role healthy living plays in the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted last year by all 193 United Nations Member States. As exercise, yoga has multiple benefits. Physical inactivity is linked with a number of non-communicable diseases, such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, which are among the leading causes of illness and death worldwide. By improving fitness, teaching us how to breathe correctly, and working to diminish stress, yoga can help to cultivate healthier lifestyles. Practising yoga can also help raise awareness of our role as consumers of the planet's resources and as individuals with a duty to respect and live in peace with our neighbours. All these elements are essential to building a sustainable future of dignity and opportunity for all. On this International Day of Yoga, I urge everyone to embrace healthier choices and lifestyles and to commit to unity with our fellow human beings, regardless of ethnicity, faith, age, gender identity or sexual orientation. Let us celebrate this Day — and every day — as members of one human family sharing one common, precious home.

International Widows' Day

(23 June 2016)

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message on International Widows' Day, observed on 23 June: There are some 259 million widows around the world, and nearly half are living in poverty. Widows are often stigmatized by their families and communities. Many suffer discrimination based on age and gender. Some have lived lives marked by physical and sexual abuse. Older widows often have few economic assets, after a lifetime of hard but unpaid work. Even in developed countries, the value of women's pensions can be some 40 per cent lower than men's. Younger widows face other challenges, as heads of households with child-care responsibilities and very limited economic opportunities. The 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, with its pledge to leave no one behind, has a particular resonance for widows, who are among the most marginalized and isolated. On International Widows' Day, let us pledge to make widows more visible in our societies, and to support them in living productive, equal and fulfilling lives.

International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

(26 June 2016)

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message for the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, observed on 26 June: Today is the first International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking since the adoption last year of the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 3 calls on countries to strengthen the prevention and treatment of narcotic drug abuse, end AIDS and combat hepatitis. Goal 16 is designed to help to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies and institutions that can address illicit drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism. The Sustainable Development Goals also informed the deliberations of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem in April. They support the founding principle of the International Drug Control Conventions, which is to ensure the health and well-being of humankind. This requires a balance between interrupting drug supply and preventing and treating the harmful impact of drugs on people's health. Addressing the world drug problem demands a considered and unified response by Governments. The illicit trade in drugs fosters transnational organized crime networks, systemic corruption and widespread violence. It is also a major public health menace. Millions of people are directly affected, especially the poor, vulnerable women and children, and those living in fragile communities. The challenges posed by the world drug problem require a global response that is simultaneously effective, compassionate and humane. At the April Special Session on the World Drug Problem, tangible progress was made in promoting alternatives to incarceration, fortifying human rights commitments, strengthening the focus on illicit financial proceeds and tackling corruption. On this International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, I call on countries and communities to continue to improve the lives of everyone blighted by drug abuse by integrating security and public safety with a heightened focus on health, human rights, and sustainable development.

International Day in Support of Victims of Torture

(26 June 2016)

Following is UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's message on the International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, observed on 26 June: Around the world, in every region, men, women and children are still being tortured by non-State actors and under direct State policy. Despite its absolute prohibition under international law, this dehumanizing practice remains pervasive, and most disturbingly, is even gaining acceptance. The law is crystal clear: torture can never be used at any time or under any circumstances, including during conflict or when national security is under threat. On this International Day in Support of Victims of Torture, we express our solidarity with and support for the hundreds of thousands of victims of torture and their family members throughout the world. The Convention against Torture, ratified to date by 119 United Nations State Parties, stipulates that States have to ensure that a victim of torture under their jurisdiction obtains redress, including the means for as full rehabilitation as is possible. When States neglect their obligation to prevent torture, and fail to provide torture victims with effective and prompt redress, compensation and appropriate forms of rehabilitation, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture is a lifeline of last resort. Established by the United Nations General Assembly 35 years ago, the Fund supports hundreds of organizations that provide legal, social, psychological and medical assistance to some 50,000 victims every year.

The Fund requires a minimum of \$12 million in annual voluntary contributions. I strongly urge States to stand by victims by supporting this United Nations Fund and to remain fully engaged in the fight against torture and impunity. Assisting victims of torture and stopping this crime will benefit whole societies and help provide a future of safety and dignity for all.

Unipax

Global revolution

Multimedia Project to set up a New Humanism

The Author of this project is Orazio Parisotto (Past President and Founder member of UNIPAX), thanks also to the essential contribute of the Master Silvio Amelio, weighty sculptor and humanist responsible of the "Artists for the Peace" Department of the Unipax and also its Ambassador at UN.

Orazio Parisotto and Silvio Amelio launch an important social-cultural and ethical initiative, with the cooperation of the UNIPAX, that involves more than 100.000 associations, institutions, famous bloggers and opinion leaders from all the Countries.

This social-cultural initiative draws attention to the problems and the emergencies of the humanity, also thanks to the young people, worried about them future, who ideally address their requests to the Head of Government of all world.

The main work of this project consists in a interactive book named "The Global Revolution for a New Humanism".

The book is also available in e-book size. Unipax backs the promotion of the book, trough the collection of the adhesions, sharing and participations to the proposals and initiatives launched towards the Book. The aim of the book is to provide incentives in order that a peaceful revolution (Gandhi style) could be launched trough a general project that prefigures a "New Democratic Institutional Architecture", a "New International Ethical Economy" and a "Worldwide Regulation for the Civil Cohabitation" at the international level, specifying the "Ways Out" from the global crisis.

The general project aims to involve about 100.000 NGO and other organisms committed in the safeguard of the human rights and of the peace at international level, the project will be presented to the Head of the Government with a maxi petition (developed in 10 points).

The aim of the maxi petition is to ask concrete answers to cope with the problems that trouble the humanity and in particular the problems connected with the environmental safeguard, the social justice, the crazy arms race, the dangers produced by the use of the new technologies, the promotion of the culture.

The achievement of the "Artistic Cultural Current of the New Humanism" is part integrant of this project. The artists, the men of culture and the leaders of the associations of the social utility (that with their commitment are already contributing, as peacemakers, for change) will arrange this Document. Together with the young people, they can define a "Artistic cultural Decalogue of the New Humanism" that if properly widespread may launch the creative imagination of the men of good will from all over the World and from every culture.

It's a multimedia global project which aims to provide to the citizens and specially to the young people, the "ways out" from the current difficulties and new hopes for a better future demanding also their direct cooperation.

The entire project will be promoted with a multimedia advertisement during 3 minutes and will be backed by a Documentary-movie during about 30 minutes.

All will be carried out in two languages (Italian and English).