

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE
ERADICATION OF POVERTY**

17 October 2013

This year's observance of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty comes as the international community is pursuing twin objectives: intensifying efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals, and formulating the next set of goals to guide our efforts after we reach the MDG target date of 2015. This post-2015 agenda must have poverty eradication as its highest priority and sustainable development at its core. After all, the only way to make poverty eradication irreversible is by putting the world on a sustainable development path.

We have much work ahead. While poverty levels have declined significantly, progress has been uneven. Our impressive achievement in cutting poverty by half should not blind us to the fact that more than 1.2 billion people still live in extreme poverty worldwide. Too many, especially women and girls, continue to be denied access to adequate health care and sanitation, quality education and decent housing. Too many young people lack jobs and the skills that respond to market demands. Rising inequality in many countries -- both rich and poor -- is fueling exclusion from economic, social and political spheres, and we know that the impacts of climate change and loss of biodiversity hit the poorest the hardest. All of this underpins the need for strong and responsive institutions.

We need to do more to listen and act for those whose voices often go unheard -- people living in poverty, and in particular among them indigenous people, older persons and those living with disabilities, the unemployed, migrants and minorities. We need to support them in their struggle to escape poverty and build better lives for themselves and their families.

If we are to realize the future we want for all, we must hear and heed the calls of the marginalized. For the last year, the UN has been doing just that by spearheading an unprecedented global conversation on the world people want. That dialogue must continue -- and lead to the active and meaningful inclusion of people living in poverty -- as we chart a course to ending poverty everywhere.

Together, we can build a sustainable world of prosperity and peace, justice and equity -- a life of dignity for all.