

SECOND UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY (2008 – 2017)

In December 2007, the General Assembly proclaimed the Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2008-2017), reiterating that eradicating poverty was the greatest global challenge facing the world.

One of the major achievements during the First Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) was the commitment of the global community to the international development goal to halve income poverty by 2015, a commitment that was first made at the twenty fourth special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and subsequently re-affirmed at the Millennium Summit. By the end of the First Decade, although some regions experienced poverty reductions, in many countries poverty had been on the rise.

The Second Decade aims to support, in an efficient and coordinated manner, the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. It stresses the importance of reinforcing the positive trends in poverty reduction in some countries and seeks to extend such trends to benefit people worldwide.

For further information on the Second Decade for Poverty Eradication visit:

- www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/poverty

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2015

- 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- 2 Achieve universal primary education
- 3 Promote gender equality and empower women
- 4 Reduce child mortality
- 5 Improve maternal health
- 6 Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- 7 Ensure environmental sustainability
- 8 Develop a global partnership for Development

For further information on the Millennium Development Goals visit:

- www.un.org/millenniumgoals/
- www.undp.org/mdg/
- www.worldbank.org/mdgs

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17 October

**International Day for the
Eradication of Poverty**



United Nations

“We must not fail the billions who look to the international community to fulfil the promise of the Millennium Declaration for a better world.”

—United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon—

17 OCTOBER

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

In resolution 47/196 adopted on 22 December 1992, the General Assembly declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, to be observed beginning 1993. Member States were invited to devote the Day to present and promote, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities on the eradication of poverty and destitution. The General Assembly also invited inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to assist States, at their request, in organizing national activities for the observance of International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, paying due attention to the specific problems of the destitute.

The International Day plays an important role in raising public awareness and mobilizing all stakeholders in the fight against poverty. The Day presents an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty and a chance for them to make their concerns heard, as well as reaffirm our commitment to reducing extreme poverty and hunger.

BACKGROUND

On October 17 1987, about 100,000 defenders of human rights gathered together on the Trocadéro Plaza in Paris to honor victims of hunger, violence, and ignorance, to express their rejection of extreme poverty, and to call on mankind to unite to ensure the respect of human rights. On this day, the Commemorative Stone was also inaugurated to bear witness to the suffering and struggles of the poorest and to affirm that extreme poverty is a violation of Human Rights. The stone, which has remained at the center of all subsequent commemorations of this day, was the idea of Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of the International Movement ATD Fourth World. Since then, on the 17th of October each year, the poorest and all those who reject extreme poverty and exclusion gather throughout the world to express their solidarity and their commitment to ensure that everyone's dignity and freedom are respected. This is the origin of what used to be called “World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty”.

“Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty.”

—Father Joseph Wresinski—

THE COMMEMORATIVE STONE

The following text in honor of the victims of Extreme Poverty is engraved on the Commemorative Stone on the Plaza of Human



Rights and Liberties in Paris.

“17 October 1987 On this day, defenders of human and civil rights from every

continent gathered here. They paid homage to the victims of hunger, ignorance and violence. They affirmed their conviction that human misery is not inevitable. They pledged their solidarity with all people who, throughout the world, strive to eradicate extreme poverty.”

“We must not work for the poor, for disadvantaged families, but with these families. Without meaningful participation, no success is possible.”

—Cassam Uteem, former President of the Republic of Mauritius—

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR OCTOBER 17

On 17 October 2008, Mr. Cassam Uteem, former President of the Republic of Mauritius, and the International Movement ATD Fourth World launched the International Committee for October 17. The composition of the Committee is unique, with members coming from different backgrounds, including people with first-hand experience of extreme poverty, all committed together against poverty and exclusion.

For further information on the International Day visit:

- www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays
- www.overcomingpoverty.org/