



Press Release

OBV/659

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

HEADQUARTERS OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST POVERTY,

17 OCTOBER, TO BE PART OF GLOBAL MOBILIZATION

'Stand Up against Poverty' Event Will Seek to Break World Record

The recognition of people living in poverty as agents of change will be the focus of the 20th International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, to be observed on 17 October at the United Nations and around the world.

The observance at United Nations Headquarters will be part of global initiatives to raise public awareness on the issue. The international non-governmental organization ATD Fourth World, which was instrumental in the General Assembly's 1992 decision to proclaim the International Day, and its partners, will hold similar events in several countries around the world, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Bolivia to Thailand.

The event at Headquarters will also be part of the global "Stand Up and Speak Out against Poverty" campaign, with people across the world physically and symbolically standing up against poverty within 24 hours. The drive is organized by the Millennium Campaign, an inter-agency initiative of the United Nations, in collaboration with a range of non-governmental organizations, faith-based groups and social movements, including the Global Call to Action against Poverty and Guinness World Records. It is supported by United Nations information centres and country teams around the world.

At the United Nations, delegates and staff members will be asked to participate in the "Stand Up" event, in which 23.5 million people in more than 100 countries participated last year, setting a Guinness World Record. The organizers hope to break that record, with people all over the world standing up to remind their Governments of the commitments they undertook in the 2000 Millennium Declaration to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will participate in the observance, which will begin at 1 p.m. on the North Lawn. Also participating will be General Assembly President Srgjan Kerim; ATD Fourth World delegates -- Téléus Osnel of Haiti, Adonis Salas of the Philippines, Geneviève Gimelle and Gilda Menella of France and Bobby Page of New York City; the Permanent Representatives of France, Jean-Maurice Ripert, and of Burkina Faso, Michel Kafando; the Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, Kiyoko Akasaka; and Rachel N. Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, who will represent the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Mr. Ban will deliver his message for the International Day and, together with a person living in poverty, will lead delegates and staff members in reciting an anti-poverty pledge.

From 1:30 p.m. to 2:45 p.m., the observance will feature personal testimonies from people facing the challenge of extreme poverty every day and people committed alongside them. A choral work by Edward Ware, with lyrics by Nina Mankin, will be performed.

Following statements by Mr. Ripert and Mr. Kafando, Ms. Mayanja will present awards to five of the children who won the International Children's Art Competition on the theme "We Can End Poverty", organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Postal

Administration. Attending the ceremony will be Grace Tsang and Elisabeth Chun Ning Au of China, Rufaro Duri of Zimbabwe, Mariam Marukian of Armenia, and Bryan Jevoncia of Indonesia. Over 12,000 children took part in the competition, and the six winning designs will be issued as United Nations stamps in 2008.

At a panel discussion on "We Can End Poverty: Children as Agents of Change", to be held from 4:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m., children and young people will speak of their efforts to fight poverty. The panel discussion will be at the Church Center, 777 First Avenue.

The Headquarters observance is organized by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the Millennium Campaign and ATD Fourth World.

The General Assembly declared the International Day in 1992 (resolution 47/196), welcoming the fact that certain non-governmental organizations, on the initiative of the International Movement ATD Fourth World, had, in many States, observed 17 October as World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty. The observance aims to promote awareness of the need to eradicate poverty and destitution in all countries, particularly in developing countries. The theme for this year's observance is "People Living in Poverty as Agents of Change: 20th Anniversary of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty."

To people living in poverty, according to the latest report of the Secretary-General on the International Day, the observance represents "one day each year when their voices can be heard and they are given the opportunity to speak for themselves or on behalf of their communities about the adversities, obstacles and hardships they face every single day and the courage and resourcefulness it takes to deal with their extreme poverty".

According to the United Nations, some 980 million people still live in extreme poverty, or on less than \$1 a day.

For further information, please visit <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/IntlDay>. On the Stand Up campaign, see <http://www.standagainstopoverty.org>. On the ATD Fourth World campaign, see <http://www.oct17.org/en>.

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