

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON THE WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE

20 February 2009

Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.

For the United Nations, the pursuit of social justice for all is at the core of our global mission to promote development and human dignity. Last year's adoption by the International Labour Organization of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization is just one recent example of the UN system's commitment to social justice. The Declaration focuses on guaranteeing fair outcomes for all through employment, social protection, social dialogue, and fundamental principles and rights at work.

Tragically, social justice still remains an elusive dream for an appallingly large portion of humanity. Extreme poverty, hunger, discrimination and the denial of human rights continue to scar our moral landscape. The global financial crisis threatens to worsen these ills further still.

This year marks the first observance of the World Day of Social Justice proclaimed in 2007 by the United Nations General Assembly. The observance is meant to underscore the importance of social justice as an ethical imperative that should guide all our work.

Global stability and prosperity depend on ensuring that people enjoy acceptable levels of well-being and equality of opportunity. The absence of social justice for all should be an affront to us all. On this inaugural observance, let us renew our commitment to the principles of social justice and the vigorous pursuit of strategies and policies that will achieve it.