

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE TO THE ATHENS DEMOCRACY FORUM
15 - 18 September 2018

I send warm wishes to the Athens Democracy Forum as you gather again in the birthplace of democracy to observe this International Day, in cooperation with the United Nations Democracy Fund.

Let me also commend the City of Athens for bestowing this year's Athens Democracy Award upon Joaquim Chissano, my friend and comrade in the struggle for democracy for more than four decades.

Democracy is showing greater strain than at any time in decades. That is why this International Day should make us look for ways to invigorate democracy and seek answers for the systemic challenges it faces.

This means tackling inequality, both economic and political. It means making our democracies more inclusive, by bringing the young and marginalized into the political system. It means making democracies more innovative and responsive to emerging challenges.

Working for a future that leaves no one behind requires us to consider essential pressing questions. For example, what impact will migration or climate change have on democracy in the next generation? How do we best harness the potential of new technologies while avoiding the dangers? How do we build better governance so that democracy delivers better lives and fully meets the public's aspirations?

On this International Day of Democracy, let us commit to joining forces for the future of democracy.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'António Guterres'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

António Guterres