

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON UNITED NATIONS DAY

24 October 2016

This year's observance of United Nations Day occurs at a time of transition for the world and for the United Nations.

Humanity has entered the era of sustainability – with a global commitment to fulfil the great promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this, the Organization's 71st year, we have 17 goals to propel us towards a better future for all on a healthy planet.

The world is also moving at long last beyond the mindset which viewed the burning of fossil fuels as the path to prosperity. At a time of record heat, Member States have embraced the Paris Agreement on climate change in record time. This landmark measure will enter into force on 4 November. Across that historic threshold lies our best chance for greener, cleaner, low-carbon growth.

The United Nations is also in transition, from its eighth Secretary-General to the ninth. I have been honoured to serve “we the peoples” for the past ten years. Together, we have put in place some solid foundations for shared progress – which we must build on by working even harder to empower women, engage youth and uphold human rights for all. But we have also suffered enormous heartbreak -- including unresolved conflicts causing immense suffering throughout the troubled Middle East, South Sudan, the Sahel and beyond. On these and other frontlines of violence and disaster, courageous UN staff continue to rise to the occasion and respond to the plight of the vulnerable.

I thank people across the world for their support -- and urge all to give their full backing to Secretary-General-designate Antonio Guterres in continuing our global mission of peace, sustainable development and human rights.