



# SNDdeN@UN

*with hearts as wide as the world*

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur

Making Known God's Goodness

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*"Now is the time for ambition. I look forward to welcoming the first movers and doers to my Climate Ambition Summit in September. The world is watching - and the planet can't wait."*

– Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

## THE 78TH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY: HIGH-LEVEL WEEK



As in UN tradition, the month of September marks the start of a new year at the United Nations. World leaders traveled to the headquarters to take part in the annual High-Level debate. This year, they gathered from 19 to 23 and on 26 around the theme: *"Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity: accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals towards peace, prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all in the world" 2030*

Heads of State and government, as well as Ministers, spoke about how they saw today's global challenges to the advancement of peace, security, and sustainable development.

The Secretary General of the United Nations Antonio Guterres convened an [SDG Weekend](#) immediately preceding the General Assembly. The SDG Acceleration Day was on September 16 and the SDG Mobilization Day on September 17. Participating were all stakeholders: civil society, activists, different marginalized groups, experts, and other relevant stakeholders who came together to raise their voices. They reflected on ways to transform ambitious hopes into

actions. The discussions led to a declaration calling on the world to take action against poverty. The statement listed the urgent areas requiring immediate intervention, namely: climate change, economic inequality, social injustice and political reform necessary for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As is customary during the General Assembly, 136 heads of state and government, and 40 ministers took to the podium of the General Assembly. They majority of the countries condemned profit, hoarding, resource

extraction and exploitation, and the creation of militarized wars that keep some in wealth and others in violence and poverty. Presidents and delegates of heads of state have denounced, condemned, and criticized the fact that colonial and imperialist methods are still used today in relations between countries.

With regard to climate change and its consequences (global warming, threat to biodiversity, land degradation, and desertification), Belize's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, as well as a number of participants, highlighted the fact that commitments to official development assistance, sustainable development goals, climate action and the phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies have never been met. However, no exploiting or polluting country has expressed regret or promised reparation. Similarly, solidarity, the theme of the High-Level Week, was not reflected in the speeches of some governments, which were, on the contrary, distrustful. However, many shared their experiences of acts of solidarity with one another. They called for reform of the UN Security Council and international financial institutions and insisted on a significant commitment to the fight against climate change, authoritarianism, and inequality.



## SDG SUMMIT: NEW PHASE OF ACCELERATION OF THE SDGS



Recognizing ongoing conflicts, the climate crisis, and the ramifications of the pandemic as causes for delaying their ambitions to end extreme poverty and inequality, protect the planet, and guarantee prosperity and prosperity for all the peace. The President of the General Assembly convened a two-day summit of Heads of State, government representatives, civil society actors, and other stakeholders to assess progress towards achieving the SDGs, and to consider alternative strategies that can accelerate the ambitious

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dream of leaving no one behind. They issued a [political declaration](#) providing guidance to accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development for the remaining seven years leading up to 2030, the target year for the SDGs that were unanimously adopted by the 193 member states of the United Nations. By signing the document, the governments of the member states committed to:

1. Take the necessary steps to accelerate progress to achieve the 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
2. Achieve sustainable development and bring about prosperity shared by all by placing the poorest and vulnerable people at the heart of their policies and actions
3. Do everything possible to implement the 2030 Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the 2030 deadline, and to revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development.
4. Renew their commitment to multilateralism, to find new ways of working together, and to ensure that multilateral institutions evolve in step with the rapid changes that are occurring.
5. Act now, for current and future generations, by steering the world towards a sustainable and resilient path by 2030, leaving no one behind.

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## CLIMATE AMBITION SUMMIT

September 20 was dedicated to reflections on [climate ambition](#). The summit aimed to encourage national governments to accelerate the pace and scale of a just transition to a more equitable global economy, based on renewable energies and resilient to climate change. It also focused on finding ways to respond rapidly to the accelerating climate crisis, which is causing a number of disasters around the world. Three days before the summit, on September 17, a major march marking the end of Climate Action Week was organized by local and national organizations in New York.

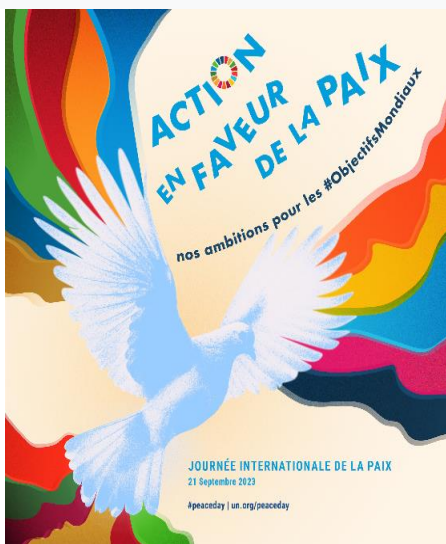


The Coalition of Religious for Justice (JCoR) joined the 75,000 participants in calling for an end to fossil fuels. Climate change is exacerbated by the continued use of fossil fuels, which emit large quantities of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air and water. Burning fossils warms the earth and produces pollution that poses a high risk to the health of humans and wildlife.

In 2015, concerned about climate change and its effects on all creation, Pope Francis published [Laudato Si'](#) ("Caring for our Common Home"), setting out the theological case for climate justice [laudatosiactionplatform.org](#). More recently, he had just published a second document, *Laudato Deum*, which constitutes a strong appeal that "the world that welcomes us is crumbling and perhaps approaching a breaking point." (LD2) This appeal requires an urgent response because the current crisis is getting worse by the day [laudate-deum](#). In the same vein, Pope Benedict XVI once stressed the need to consider climate change as a question of intergenerational justice.

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## PEACE WOULD GUARANTEE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



The United Nations General Assembly in 1981 declared September 21 as the International Day of Peace. Ever since its observance each year each year it has been dedicated to reflection on peace and the strengthening of its ideals.

This year's specific theme was [Action for Peace: Our Ambitions for the Global Goals](#), calling for a renewed commitment to action that recognizes our individual and collective responsibility for promoting peace. This is grounded in the recognition that promoting peace contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will create a culture of peace for all.

The UN Secretary-General António Guterres said: "Peace is needed now more than ever. War and conflict cause devastation, poverty, and hunger, and drive tens of millions of people from their homes. Climate chaos is everywhere. And even peaceful countries are plagued by glaring inequality and political polarization."

In this year 2023, when everything revolves around accelerating the implementation of the SDGs, he invited all the earth's inhabitants to greater efforts to achieve peace for all. "Let us commit ourselves to building, promoting and maintaining peace for all", he added; stressing that "peoples and the planet" are in crisis, and that peace was "the result of action, action to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and to ensure that no one is left behind". In particular, young people everywhere were called upon to join in and contribute to the building and consolidation of peace that will help achieve the goals of sustainable development. They were invited to join the UN's call to act for peace by fighting inequality, taking action against climate change, and promoting and protecting human rights.

The SDGs are a way of bringing us closer together and creating more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, free from fear and violence. We all want peace to reign everywhere. In this way, Mr. Guterres asserted that action is needed "to put an end to the war against our planet and against the gifts of nature", to defend and protect human rights and the dignity of every person, to defuse tensions and end conflicts using the timeless tools of diplomacy, dialogue and

collaboration, and to help the millions of people who suffer the horrors of war. Peace is not only a noble aspiration of humanity. It is also a call to action".

Discussions also focused on the importance of recognizing the role of civil society and guaranteeing its active participation in UN discussions.

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## SOCIAL PROTECTION: ESSENTIAL TO PEOPLE'S FREEING THEMSELVES FROM POVERTY

Article 22 of the Universal Declaration of [Human Rights](#) describes social security as a basic right. This right includes access to adequate and affordable health care and income security – for the elderly, the unemployed, the sick, the injured, the disabled, those in need of maternity care or other circumstances, and all situations of vulnerability, to ensure all people their basic dignity. Contrary to the Universal Declaration, the world today is more marked by the non-recognition of the rights of individuals and people. In some countries, even people who are employed in the formal sector are treated the same way as those who are in the informal sector. So, with regard to Social Security, in 2022, the [International Labor Organization](#) (ILO) documented that more than 90% of people who perform domestic work do not benefit from any form of social protection. Even when legally covered, only one in five domestic workers are covered in practice, the vast majority of them being employed informally.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the lack of social security coverage hit domestic workers especially hard. Although they were serving on the front line, often it was without adequate protective equipment. Many lost their jobs, or even their lives without being compensated because they frequently are excluded from national social security legislation.

Women are the most affected. According to the [report](#), 75 million domestic workers, of which 76.2% or 3/4 are women, make vital contributions to society by helping households to meet their most personal care needs. These gaps in social protection make women particularly vulnerable.



Credit photo ILO

The ILO aims to design benefit systems with international standards that suit the specificities of domestic work. This involves simplifying registration and payment procedures and developing appropriate financing mechanisms. The establishment of an economic system based on human rights is necessary, so that global resources and social protection not only benefit a few elites but that good working conditions and decent wages are guaranteed to all, including the domestic workers.

## INVESTING IN GIRL'S RIGHTS



Since the proclamation of the International Day of the Girl Child in 2011, every year on October 11, the planet has honored the girl child for her achievements. Around the world, girls are raising their voices to demand and defend their rights. This year's theme was: *"Investing in girls' rights: our leadership, our well-being"*. International Day of the Girl gives us the opportunity to reflect on the challenges girls face, and how we can help them meet those challenges.

to empower them and realize their rights. It's also an opportunity to raise global awareness of girls' well-being. Eleven days before this date, the Working Committee on the Girl Child organizes activities on different themes to enable more girls around the world to send their messages to the United Nations. This year, the offices of the Sœurs de NOTRE DAME de NAMUR, the SŒURS DE LORETTO, and the NGO AHAM EDUCATION co-sponsored the 5th day on the theme of the girl's right to a healthy, clean, and sustainable environment. Girls from schools linked to these three offices participated by seeing photos and video messages in which they expressed their wishes to live in a healthy, clean environment. They also identified the difficulties they face in accessing them. On behalf of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, messages from girls (enrolled in some of our schools) reached the United Nations from South Africa, Nigeria, and DR Congo. [Watch the video](#)

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## A WORLD CHALLENGE



October 17 is the day of recognition of people living in extreme poverty. This year, on this occasion, people gathered at the United Nations Garden to listen to the testimony of the struggles and achievements of those who at one time in their lives lived in poverty but emerged from it through their own efforts and determination. and also those who continue to fight with perseverance and courage. They also recounted

the difficulties they encounter in this struggle. This year's theme is *decent work and universal social security*. We all advocate for the implementation of this policy in all countries of the world. On this day, people living in poverty themselves have demonstrated

that poverty is not a choice but a condition imposed on them by the structures and their ability to help others get out of it if means are made available. their arrangements. In his [appropriate message](#), Secretary-General Antonio Guterres renewed his commitment to a world without poverty.



Credit photo UN

To go out of one's comfort zone, see people's reality, and try to do something that makes a difference.

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