

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE FOR THE 100-DAY COUNTDOWN
TO THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE
13 JUNE 2017**

Upon taking up my duties as Secretary-General in January of this year, my very first act was to issue an appeal for peace -- a call on citizens, governments and leaders everywhere to put peace first.

The International Day of Peace, observed every year on 21 September, embodies our shared aspiration to end the needless suffering caused by armed conflict. It offers a moment for the peoples of the world to acknowledge the ties that bind them together, irrespective of their countries of origin. It is a day on which the United Nations calls for a 24-hour global ceasefire, with the hope that one day of peace can lead to another, and another, and ultimately to a stilling of the guns.

Yet there is more to achieving peace than laying down weapons. True peace requires involves building bridges, combating discrimination and standing up for the human rights of all the world's people.

That is why this year's theme for the International Day of Peace is: "Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All", focusing in particular on the plight of refugees and migrants throughout the world. Our obligation as an international community is to ensure that everyone forced to flee their homes receives the protection to which they are entitled under international law. Our duty as a human family is to replace fear with kindness.

Over the next 100 days, let us remember that millions of vulnerable members of our society, many of whom have lost everything, need our understanding and assistance. Let us strategize together about what we can do to help them. Let us recognize the many ways in which they contribute to and strengthen their host countries and communities. And let us redouble our efforts to address the root causes of conflict, advance our work for the Sustainable Development Goals, and heighten our emphasis on preventing violence in the first place.

By opening our hearts, joining hands and reaching out to refugees and migrants, we can move closer to attaining peace, prosperity and protection for all.