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## **Time to make right to development a reality for all, UN officials stress**



High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay

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Top United Nations officials today stressed the need to make the right to development a reality for everyone, everywhere, and to ensure that it brings about a real difference in the daily lives of billions around the world who continue to live in want and in fear.

“The fact that almost three billion people live in poverty and that 20 per cent of the world’s people hold 70 per cent of its total income means that we have not kept our promises,” said High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay.

“It is time to make the right to development a reality for all,” she stressed at an event at UN Headquarters to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development.

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Development is declared a right that entitles “every human person and all peoples to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized,” according to the Declaration.

After it was adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 1986, the Declaration was re-affirmed many times, including at UN conferences on the environment and on human rights, as well as in the global anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)).

Ms. Pillay stressed that development is a human right and the right to development belongs to all.

“The anniversary stands in the uneasy light of the fact that for millions, development remains in the realm of rhetoric. We must respond to the aspirations of those who live at the margins, both locally and globally.”

She also stated that the right to development responds to contemporary challenges, and stressed the need to act together to incorporate the right to development across institutions and across layers of governance.

[Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon [noted](#) that the Declaration gave hope to millions of people around the world. “It brought all human rights together. And it centred development around people.

“On paper, the Declaration lived. In practice, it languished.”

He stressed that now is the time to realize the Declaration’s ideals so that people can live with dignity.

“Now is the time to invest in development,” he said. “We must invest in people, especially women and youth. They make up more than two-thirds of the global population. But they have more than numbers. Women and youth have the ability and energy to drive progress.”

Mr. Ban added that in a world marred by violence and war, it should be remembered that development is the path to peace.

“At the same time, as the Declaration shows, peace is a path to development,” he said, noting that disarmament, economic issues and human rights are all crucial for development.

Also addressing the event, General Assembly President Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser said that many of the global challenges seen today can be addressed by the implementation of the right to development, “confirming its renewed significance in this era of profound change.”

He added that the right to development resonates with the four main priority areas of focus he has outlined for the current Assembly session, including sustainable development.

“It is time to realize the Declaration on the Right to Development,” he stressed.

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