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Ban calls for global economic model that promotes greater social justice



Photo: David Shankbone

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Calling on people to tap into the spirit of recent public protests worldwide against inequality, corruption, repression and a lack of decent jobs, [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today stressed the need for economic development to ensure greater social justice for everyone.

Mr. Ban, in a message marking World Day of Social Justice, which is observed on 20 February each year, said the “winds of change have swept across the globe” in the past year, with protests in numerous cities and countries.

“At the heart of this mass mobilization lies a call for social justice,” he said.

The Secretary-General said the UN Conference on Sustainable Development ([Rio+20](#)), which will be held in Rio de Janeiro in June, offers governments and policy-makers “a chance to rethink development strategies and business practices so that they point us toward a more sustainable and equitable future.”

He underscored that “sustainability depends on building markets that do a better job of spreading the benefits of development. It means meeting growing consumer demand for greener products and services. And it means laying the foundations for dignity, stability and opportunity for all.

“As we strive to make this transformation, we must integrate social inclusion into our policies and other efforts. Let us work together to balance the global economy and build a new social contract for the 21st century. Let us chart a development path that leads to greater social justice and the future we want.”

The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), which is also celebrating the Day, said it offered an opportunity to highlight the role of education on promoting sustainable development and social justice.

Education can serve as a catalyst for “a new responsible citizenship,” according to a press release issued by the agency, which cited the positive effects that education can have on reducing poverty, increasing access to jobs, preventing conflict between groups and building tolerance.

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