

UN News Centre

Sat, 3 Aug 2013

International Day of Friendship an occasion to inspire peace, build trust –UN Chief



Two children in a Bronx, New York, school solidifying their friendship with a spontaneous expression of mutual understanding. UN Photo/Marcia Weistein

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30 July 2013 – Marking the [International Day of Friendship](#), United Nations [Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon](#) today urged the global community to use the potential of friendship to strengthen common bonds and inspire efforts for peace and sustainable development.

“The *International Day of Friendship* is an important opportunity to confront the misunderstandings and distrust that underlie so many of the tensions and conflicts in today’s world,” the Secretary-General said in his [message](#) for the Day.

He added that the Day – marked for a third time since it was created in 2011 - is a “reminder that human solidarity is essential to promoting lasting peace and fostering sustainable development.”

Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defences of peace must be constructed.

This year, the Day falls amid the 1,000 days of action to reach the 2015 deadline for the eight anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Ranging from providing universal primary education to halving extreme poverty rates, the MDGs embody basic human rights and have been universally agreed upon by all world leaders.

In his message, Mr. Ban urged the international community to “cultivate warm ties that strengthen our common humanity and promote the well-being of the human family”.

The UN Charter proclaims that one of the Organization’s purposes is “to develop friendly relations among nations,” words that also appear in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The constitution of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also stressed the need for peace based not only on the political and economic arrangements of Governments, but on the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind.



Three children in Akko, Israel, draw together and smile for the photographer’s camera. (UN Photo/John Isaac)



Children in Gaza participating in the Summer Games 2011. (UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan)



Two of the participants at the International Day of the World's Indigenous People at the United Nations, New York. (UN Photo/Evan Schneider)



A view of indigenous children from the Embera people in Rio Suchio, Colombia, displaced by armed conflict. (UN Photo/Mark Garten)



Children at Delmas 33 camp for displaced Haitians in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, play inside a clean, safe area designated by independent organization Save the Children. (UN Photo/Sophia Paris)



Two participants in International Friendship Run in New York in 2003. (UN Photo/Evan Schneider)



Chinese and U.S. military bands take their Friendship Tour to UN Headquarters, New York, in 2011. (UN Photo/Paulo Filgueiras)



3,500 Gaza school children aim to break a Guinness World Record, playing games with 175 giant coloured parachutes, at the Khan Younis Stadium. (UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan)



Gaza School Children celebrating their final day in the year's Summer Games. (UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan)



Delegates at Global Model UN in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2009. (UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré)



Children play with garbage in Phnom Penh's Stung Meanchey slums. (UN Photo/Kibae Park)

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“Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that defences of peace must be constructed,” the UNESCO constitution reads.

The [resolution](#) creating the *International Day of Friendship* was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in May 2011 in recognition of the fact that friendship can contribute to the efforts of the world community to promote dialogue among civilizations, solidarity, mutual understanding and reconciliation.

The resolution invites all UN Member States, bodies of the UN system and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, to observe the Day in accordance with the culture and other appropriate circumstances or customs of their local, national and regional communities, including through education and public awareness-raising activities.

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