

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE ON WORLD DAY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE
20 February 2010

On the World Day of Social Justice, we recognize the importance of tackling poverty, exclusion and unemployment, in order to promote solidarity, harmony and equality of opportunity within and between societies.

On this day, which is being marked for only the second time, we reflect on the importance of social justice in our efforts to forge a more stable, equitable and secure world. The pursuit of social justice for all is at the core of the United Nations' mission to promote development and human dignity. The Social Protection Floor Initiative, launched in 2009, is a UN system-wide effort to promote common priorities and solutions, to ensure basic social guarantees for all.

Social justice is based on the values of fairness, equality, respect for diversity, access to social protection, and the application of human rights in all spheres of life, including in the workplace. As we face the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis, which has led to significant increases in unemployment and poverty and is straining social integration, these principles are more important than ever.

The world's major economies are beginning to emerge from this global downturn. We must ensure that the world's people do so too. The Millennium Development Goals are one of the UN's key means of bringing social justice and development together to benefit the poorest and most vulnerable. We are two-thirds of the way towards the deadline and we are planning a major push this year, centred on the MDG summit in September, to get countries back on track to achieve these vital goals.

Let us take this opportunity on the World Day of Social Justice to renew our commitment to this important cause and to recognize that while progress has been made, much more needs to be done. Lack of social justice anywhere is an affront to us all.