

Media Update

15 November 2016

UNIC

Media Advisory

We the Peoples, We the Arts Award Ceremony

Promoting Zero Hunger through Visual Arts

When: *Friday, 18th November at 15:00 hrs* (Refreshments to follow)

Where: Swiss Ambassador's Residence Islamabad

What: You are cordially invited to the award ceremony of the art competition "We the Peoples, We the Arts". Young artists enrolled in art colleges of Pakistan were invited to illustrate the theme of "Zero "Hunger" through visual arts: three winners will be announced by an international jury at the official opening of the exhibition.

Who:

- H.E. Marc P. George, Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan
- Stefanie Burri, Head of Cooperation Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- Alexie Glass-Kantor, Chair of the Jury, Executive Director, Artspace Sydney and Curator of Encounters Art Basel Hong Kong
- Vittorio Cammarota, Director, United Nations Information Centre
- Visual arts students from NCA Lahore, NCA Rawalpindi, Karachi University, Peshawar University, Indus Valley.

Background: This year, the Embassy of Switzerland is celebrating the 50th year of its cooperation with Pakistan through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). To mark this occasion, the SDC joined forces with United Nations Information Centre to promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan through visual arts. Young artists studying at five art schools of Pakistan participated in a competition to highlight the SDG on "zero hunger" in categories of sculpture, painting and miniature painting. A jury comprising Swiss and international art experts, the Embassy of Switzerland and the United Nations selected a winner for each category. All entries have been judged using the same criteria: creativity, composition, theme and technique. The SDGs were set by the UN member countries to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all over the next 15 years.



Entry instructions for media:

Please convey your vehicle detail. It is requested to bring your original NADRA CNIC or passport with you.

Media personnel carrying electronic equipment (cameras all types etc.) shall make their way into diplomatic enclave from gate number 5, which is located near Quaid-i-Azam University main gate.

For access to the event contact:

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United Nations

Op-Ed

International Day for Tolerance 16th November 2016

Cherishing Diversity

When Pakistan was created, Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a state that would be a home to all people, irrespective of their race, religion, or cast. He said, "You may belong to any religion, caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the state". When the UN was created, among the first words in the charter were that, people of the UN were "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours". Mr. Jinnah and the founders of the UN recognized that a tolerant society is an important pre-condition for human development in a society. Since the 1940's both in Pakistan, and the world, tolerance of others has grown – but sadly progress has been inconsistent whether in terms of attacks on cultural heritage, such



as at Bamian, in Afghanistan, or on religious tolerance as shown most recently and horribly in the 14 November attack on hundreds at the Shah Noorani Shrine.

An important example of progress is that on the day of its fiftieth anniversary, 16 November 1995, UNESCO's Member States adopted a Declaration of Principles on Tolerance. Among other things, the Declaration affirms that tolerance is neither indulgence nor indifference. It is respect and appreciation of the rich variety of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. Tolerance recognizes the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. People are naturally diverse; only tolerance can ensure the survival of mixed communities in every region of the globe.

As we mark the 21st Anniversary of the International Day for Tolerance, we owe it to our children to pause, and with considerable modesty to reflect on how far we have come and what future we are building for our generations especially with regards to respect for diversity and variety in religion, culture, ethnic backgrounds and so on.

At the macro level, fighting intolerance requires respect for rule of law. Each Government is responsible for enforcing human rights laws, for banning and punishing hate crimes and discrimination against minorities, no matter who they are committed by: individuals or groups. By ensuring that people have equal access to courts, human rights commissioners or ombudsmen, we safeguard that they won't resort to violence to settle their disputes. The establishment of the Pakistan National Human Rights Commission, is a step in the right direction.

It goes without saying that fighting intolerance requires education; in order to shape individual attitudes. Intolerance is often a consequence of ignorance and fear: fear of the unknown, of the other cultures, nations and religions. These notions are taught and learned at an early age, therefore it is vital that we make greater efforts to teach our children about tolerance and human rights, and about different ways of life. This can be done, and in fact we have seen it being done well in Pakistan, starting from Early Childhood Education. It is also important that we take a holistic approach to education - it must be reach all people of all ages; it should take place everywhere: at home, at the workplace, in schools, in the marketplace etc.

By countering influences that lead to fear and exclusion of others, we should educate our young people and help them develop the capacity to exercise



independent judgement, critical thinking and ethical reasoning. Internalizing this important value is absolutely critical for us to be good teachers for our youth so that they realize the dangers of intolerance and are able to confidently work towards nurturing a community that is inclusive, positive and healthy.

In Pakistan, UNESCO works with the youth and local community to sensitize them and to promote a culture of peace, tolerance and social cohesion through a number of initiatives. These include, but are not limited to: training workshops, capacity building sessions, poetry competitions, street theatre, radio dramas on peace, and developing Teachers' Resource Kits. These programmes are geared towards building the capacity of teachers to spread the word on intercultural tolerance, critical thinking and promote peaceful coexistence among youth and the local communities. Other members of the UN country team complement this through work in schools, communities and with Government.

Most often we play the blame game and think the deterioration in our social fabric is a result of what other people are doing and has nothing to do with us. But intolerance in a society is the sum-total of the intolerance of its individual members. Bigotry, stereotyping, stigmatizing, insults and racial jokes are examples of individual expressions of intolerance to which some people are subjected daily; Women, religious minorities, people with disabilities, or just about anyone holding a starkly different opinion, for instance. Intolerance breeds intolerance. It leaves its victims in pursuit of revenge. In order to fight intolerance, individuals should be aware of the link between their behavior and the vicious cycle of mistrust and violence in society. Each one of us should begin by asking: am I tolerant? Do I stereotype people? Do I reject those who are different from me? Do I blame my problems on 'them'?

When confronted with an escalation of intolerance around us, we must not wait for governments and institutions to act alone. We are all part of the solution. We should not feel powerless for we actually possess an enormous capacity to wield power. Nonviolent action is a way of using that power- the power of people. The diversity of our world's many religions, languages, cultures and ethnicities should not be a pretext for conflict, but is an invaluable treasure that can and should enrich us all.

By

Mr. Neil Buhne, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Pakistan
Ms. Vibeke Jensen, UNESCO Representative to Pakistan

UN Women

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Dear editors, reporters, anchors of news organizations, bloggers:

I am writing to you with a personal invitation from UN Women. On 25 November, the United Nations and civil society commemorate the International Day to End Violence against Women. That same day, we kick off 16 days of global activism, until 10 December, to halt this gross violation of women's human rights that affects at least 1 in 3 women and girls globally. It is a pandemic that we must stop. To do so, we need everyone's help.

The global initiative 'Orange the World: End Violence against Women and Girls' is led by UN Women on behalf of the UN Secretary-General's global campaign UNiTE to End Violence against Women. The colour orange has been chosen for the issue to symbolize a brighter future without violence against women. During the 16 days of activism, events are being organized in all parts of the world.

This year, from the Mayor's Gracie Mansion and City Hall in New York City to the European Commission Headquarters Building in Belgium and the Parliament building in Uganda, buildings and landmarks around the world will be lit in orange. Marches and rallies will mobilize women and men to demand an end to violence against women in countries from Pakistan to Papua New Guinea and Brazil.

Everyone has a role in the efforts to end violence against women. I invite you to join us this year as an important influencer of public awareness



and opinion.

Please demonstrate your support and tell your audiences and readers that this issue is of personal importance to you. If you are a TV journalist, encourage your channel to bring your viewers news and interviews on the issue, and complement it symbolically by turning the newsroom orange or by wearing an orange piece of clothing on 25 November. If your medium is print, present your stories on this subject under an orange banner. If you are on the radio, make sure you highlight the urgency of ending this pandemic that affects a billion women worldwide. If you are at a public event, wear orange and tell people why you are doing so.

Your editorial focus on ending violence against women and girls will inform your large audiences, point to successful approaches to end the violence, and provide advice and support for survivors.

At UN Women, we stand ready to assist if needed. We can facilitate interviews with experts, provide data and statistics, or point you to exemplary initiatives. You and your organization may wish to draw on the content for the 16 Days that is produced by UN Women, available on the website in the coming weeks, at <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women>

I hope we can count on your support for this cause, and partner with us in the global effort to end violence against women and girls. Do not hesitate to get in touch with our media colleagues (Oisika Chakrabarti oisika.chakrabarti@unwomen.org; Sharon Grobeisen sharon.grobeisen@unwomen.org; Maria Sanchez maria.sanchez@unwomen.org; and Zina Alam zina.alam@unwomen.org) if you have questions.

Together we can end violence against women and girls.

Yours sincerely,

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

