

Media Update

21 April 2015

United Nations

MEDIA ADVISORY

Speaker's Corner

24 April 2015, 9:30 – 12:30

National Book Day Festival, Pak-China Centre, Islamabad

Please Join us for a series of interactive debates on the activities of the United Nations in Pakistan

Programme

09:30-10:15 - Dialogue on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and launch of the Urdu translation.

10:30-11:15 - Climate Change: Pakistan at COP 21.

11:15-11:30 - UN 70: campaigns, special events and projects celebrating the 70th anniversary of the United Nations.

11:30-11:45 - Volunteerism in Pakistan and the role UN Volunteers.

11:45-12:00 - How the United Nations System operates in Pakistan: the ONE United Nations Programme.

12:00-12:15 - UNIDO: Sustainable and inclusive industrial development

12:15-12:30 – UNHCR: Hosting refugees and supporting local communities.

12:30-12:45 - UN WFP: Enhancing Pakistan's emergency preparedness and response capacity.

For more information: info.islamabad@unic.org



United Nations

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

International Mother Earth Day

22 April 2015

The word ‘mother’ holds great power. It evokes memories of the women who gave us life, nurtured us as infants and helped mould us into who we are today. The Earth is the ultimate mother – an astounding planet that has, since time immemorial, supported life in myriad forms. As humans, we outgrow the need for constant maternal care. But we can never outgrow our reliance on Mother Earth. As long as we live, we need air, water, fertile soil and the countless other gifts this planet bestows.

This dependence makes it all the more astonishing that we have allowed rapid and often unwise human development to disrupt so many of the delicate systems that have functioned harmoniously for millennia. We are increasingly aware of the damage our species has wrought – the pollution, the dwindling resources, the species of flora and fauna forever gone, the rush towards tipping points that may alter the way our planet functions. Even with this knowledge, we have yet to change our ways.

But we can change, and 2015 brings a critical opportunity to do just that. This year, the world aims to finalize the post-2015 sustainable development agenda and reach a new and meaningful universal climate change agreement. These processes have the potential to redefine our future for the better, by eradicating extreme poverty in all its forms and resetting our relationship with this planet and every living being it sustains.

But the big decisions that lie ahead are not just for world leaders and policy-makers. Today, on Mother Earth Day, I ask each one of us to be mindful of the impacts our choices have on this planet, and what those impacts will mean for future generations. Not everyone is able to make sustainable choices, but for those who can, simple decisions such as switching to energy-efficient lighting or buying only what you will consume – when accumulated across billions of people – can transform our world. The power to change begins with you.



As a global community, we have the opportunity to make 2015 a turning point in human history. This can be the year our children and grandchildren will remember as when we chose to build a sustainable and resilient future – both for Mother Earth and all those that development has until now left behind. Let us seize this historic opportunity together.

UNICEF

STATEMENTS

Statement by Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director, on attack in Garowe, Somalia

ROME/NEW YORK, 20 APRIL 2015 - “The horrific attack on our UNICEF colleagues today in northern Somalia is an assault not only on them but on the people they served. Our immediate thoughts are with the families of the four staff members who were killed and with those who were injured. All of us at UNICEF are deeply saddened, and deeply angered.

“Our colleagues dedicated their lives to working for the children of Somalia. They are not victims. They and those who were wounded are heroes. We mourn their loss and hope for the full recovery of the injured.

“Our continuing work for the most vulnerable children and their families in Somalia will be a fitting tribute to those we have lost.”

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UNICEF Pays Tribute to Colleagues Killed and Injured in Somalia Attack

NAIROBI, 21 APRIL 2015 - With great sadness, UNICEF can now release the names of the four colleagues who were killed in a horrific attack as they travelled to work yesterday in Garowe, northern Somalia.

Those who lost their lives were:

- Mr. Payenda Gul Abed, who had been coordinating UNICEF's polio immunization efforts in Garowe since May 2014.
- Ms. Brenda Kyeyune, who had managed social mobilization and communication initiatives in support of polio eradication in Somalia since 2014.
- Ms. Woki Munyi, who had been supporting UNICEF's education work in Somalia since 2007.
- Mr. Stephen Oduor, who had been undertaking vital administrative work for UNICEF Somalia since 2010.

These heroes were dedicated to building a better world for children – today, all of us at UNICEF honour their sacrifice.

Five other UNICEF colleagues are being treated for injuries sustained in the attack, and we hope for their speedy recovery.

Two local security personnel, unrelated to UNICEF, were also killed as a result of the attack, and four others injured.

Our thoughts are with the families of all who died, with those who were injured, and with all our staff who continue to work tirelessly in Somalia to support women and children.

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Step up action before more tragedies unfold in the Mediterranean

Authorities need to put best interests of children first, says UNICEF

NEW YORK, 20 April, 2015 - “Reports of tragedies on the Mediterranean Sea - leaving hundreds of people, including children, dead or missing – are becoming all too frequent and the human cost all too high.

“Two deadly incidents in just two days on the Mediterranean Sea stress the need for swift, collective and courageous action. Thousands have made perilous journeys to Europe - from men and women, sometimes entire families in search of safety and opportunities in Europe to teenagers and young children - fleeing brutal conflicts back home such as in Syria. At least 1,600 have died so far this year before even stepping foot on European soil.

“Children who find themselves on these journeys are exposed to abuse, exploitation and possibly death and, if they survive, are often placed in unsafe and unsuitable conditions and / or criminalized. This is in violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

“We ask that all actions are guided by the best interests of every one of these children, every step of the way. No matter their refugee or migrant status, children are to be cared for in a safe place - and not in a detention facility - with access to education, health, social and legal services with full implementation of existing safeguards especially for the most vulnerable.

“With the start of the warmer weather in Europe when numbers of migrants are likely to rise, decisive action could avoid more senseless deaths. This means following the EU’s existing safeguards for unaccompanied minors, strengthening search-and-rescue capacities to save and protect lives, prosecuting human traffickers, and tackling the root causes of migration in countries of origin - conflict, poverty and discrimination - to avoid more tragic losses.”

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