International Day of Happiness
20 March 2019

What is the International Day of Happiness? It’s a day to be happy, of course! Since 2013, the United Nations has celebrated the International Day of Happiness as a way to recognise the importance of happiness in the lives of people around the world. In 2015, the UN launched the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that seek to end poverty, reduce inequality, and protect our planet – three key aspects that lead to well-being and happiness. Last year, the Smurfs rallied behind the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the International Day of Happiness.

The United Nations invites each person of any age, plus every classroom, business and government to join in celebration of the International Day of Happiness.

Background

The General Assembly of the United Nations in its resolution 66/281 of 12 July 2012 proclaimed 20 March the International Day of Happiness recognizing the relevance of happiness and well-being as universal goals and aspirations in the lives of human beings around the world and the importance of their recognition in public policy objectives. It also recognized the need for a more inclusive, equitable and balanced approach to economic growth that promotes sustainable development, poverty eradication, happiness and the well-being of all peoples.

The resolution was initiated by Bhutan, a country which recognized the value of national happiness over national income since the early 1970s and famously adopted the goal of Gross National Happiness over Gross National Product. It also hosted a High Level Meeting on "Happiness and Well-Being:
Defining a New Economic Paradigm” during the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

International Day of Nowruz
21 March 2019

MESSAGE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

“For more than 300 million people across the world, Nowruz is about new beginnings: the arrival of a new year; the first day of spring; the renewal of nature.

For all of us, it is a chance to reaffirm our commitment to peace, human rights and human dignity; to fostering dialogue and mutual respect; to protecting the planet and building a future that leaves no one behind.

The International Day of Nowruz is celebrated in a spirit of friendship, reconciliation and harmony. I offer best wishes to all who are marking this observance. May the Nowruz holiday serve as an inspiration to us all.”

A/RES/66/281


نو روز کا عالمی دن
21 مارچ 2019
"International Nowruz Day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly, in its resolution A/RES/64/253 of 2010, at the initiative of several countries that share this holiday (Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan.

Inscribed in 2009 on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity as a cultural tradition observed by numerous peoples, Nowruz is an ancestral festivity marking the first day of spring and the renewal of nature. It promotes values of peace and solidarity between generations and within families as well as reconciliation and neighbourliness, thus contributing to cultural diversity and friendship among peoples and different communities.

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
21 March 2019
Theme: Mitigating and countering rising nationalist populism and extreme supremacist ideologies.

Racist extremist movements based on ideologies that seek to promote populist, nationalist agendas are spreading in various parts of the world, fueling racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, often targeting migrants and refugees as well as people of African descent. In its recent resolution on eliminating racism, the United Nations General Assembly reiterated that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and have the potential to contribute constructively to the development and well-being of their societies. The resolution also emphasized that any doctrine of racial superiority is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous and must be rejected, together with theories that attempt to determine the existence of separate human races.

The Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, E. Tendayi Achiume, in her recent report on nationalist populism, analyzed the threat posed by nationalist populism to the fundamental human rights principles of non-discrimination and equality. She condemned nationalist populism that advances exclusionary or repressive practices and policies that harm individuals or groups on the basis of their race, ethnicity, national origin and religion, or other related social categories.

In her report on glorification of Nazism online, Ms. Achiume identified recent trends and manifestations of glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contribute to fueling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. She highlighted States’ obligations under human rights law to counter such extreme ideologies online, as well as the responsibilities of technology companies in the light of human rights principles.

Background

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is observed annually on 21 March. On that day, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws". Proclaiming the Day in 1966, the General Assembly
called on the international community to redouble its efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination (resolution 2142 (XXI)).

In 1979, the General Assembly adopted a Programme of activities to be undertaken during the second half of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/RES/34/24). On that occasion, the General Assembly decided that a week of solidarity with the peoples struggling against racism and racial discrimination, beginning on 21 March, would be organized annually in all States.

Since then, the apartheid system in South Africa has been dismantled. Racist laws and practices have been abolished in many countries, and we have built an international framework for fighting racism, guided by the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The Convention is now nearing universal ratification, yet still, in all regions, too many individuals, communities and societies suffer from the injustice and stigma that racism brings.

Racial discrimination

Racial and ethnic discrimination occur on a daily basis, hindering progress for millions of people around the world. Racism and intolerance can take various forms — from denying individuals the basic principles of equality to fuelling ethnic hatred that may lead to genocide — all of which can destroy lives and fracture communities. The struggle against racism is a matter of priority for the international community and is at the heart of the work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The United Nations has been concerned with this issue since its foundation and the prohibition of racial discrimination is enshrined in all core international human rights instruments. It places obligations on States and tasks them with eradicating discrimination in the public and private spheres. The principle of equality also requires States to adopt special measures to eliminate conditions that cause or help to perpetuate racial discrimination.

http://youtube.com/watch?v=H7W7NiuaUel
World Down Syndrome Day  
21 March 2019

Down syndrome is a naturally occurring chromosomal arrangement that has always been a part of the human condition, exists in all regions across the globe and commonly results in variable effects on learning styles, physical characteristics or health.

Adequate access to health care, to early intervention programmes and to inclusive education, as well as appropriate research, are vital to the growth and development of the individual.

In December 2011, the General Assembly declared 21 March as World Down Syndrome Day (A/RES/66/149). The General Assembly decided, with effect from 2012, to observe World Down Syndrome Day on 21 March each year, and Invites all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, to observe World Down Syndrome Day in an appropriate manner, in order to raise public awareness of Down syndrome.

For WDSD 2019, Down Syndrome International focuses on:

Leave no one behind: All people with Down syndrome must have opportunities to live fulfilling lives, included on a full and equal basis with others, in all aspects of society. The **2030 UN Agenda for Sustainable Development**, a global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity, pledges that “no one will be left behind”.

**Background**

**Down Syndrome**

Down Syndrome is a genetic occurrence caused by extra material in chromosome 21 that results in intellectual disability. It is not yet known why this occurs.

**Prevalence**

The estimated incidence of Down Syndrome is between 1 in 1,000 to 1 in 1,100 live births worldwide. Each year approximately 3,000 to 5,000 children are born with this chromosome disorder and it is believed there are about 250,000 families in the United States of America who are affected by Down Syndrome.

The quality of life of people with Down Syndrome can be improved by meeting their health care needs, which include: regular check-ups with health professionals to monitor mental and physical condition and to provide timely intervention be it physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, counselling or special education. Individuals with Down Syndrome can achieve optimal quality of life through parental care and support, medical guidance and community based support systems like inclusive education at all levels. This facilitates their participation in mainstream society and the fulfilment of their personal potential.
International Day of Forests
21 March 2019

https://youtu.be/Mt8N-sZPVuk

Forests are part of your life in more ways than you realize. When we drink a glass of water, write in a notebook, take medicine for a fever or build a house, we do not always make the connection with forests. And yet, these and many other aspects of our lives are linked to forests in one way or another. Forests, their sustainable management and use of resources, including in fragile ecosystems, are key to combating climate change, and to contributing to the prosperity and well-being of current and future generations. Forests also play a crucial role in poverty alleviation and in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Forests and Education – Learn to Love Forests

Every 21 March the United Nations raises awareness of the importance of all types of forests. This year the International Day of Forests promotes education to Learn to Love Forests. It underscores the importance of education at all levels in achieving sustainable forest management and biodiversity conservation. Healthy forests mean healthy, resilient communities and prosperous economies.

Background

Forests cover one third of the Earth's land mass, performing vital functions around the world. Around 1.6 billion people - including more than 2,000 indigenous cultures - depend on forests for their livelihoods, medicines, fuel, food and shelter.
Forests are the most biologically-diverse ecosystems on land, home to more than 80% of the terrestrial species of animals, plants and insects. Yet despite all of these priceless ecological, economic, social and health benefits, global deforestation continues at an alarming rate - 13 million hectares of forest are destroyed annually. Deforestation accounts for 12 to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

The International Day of Forests is held annually on 21 March to raise awareness of the importance of forests to people and their vital role in poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and food security. Sustainable management of all types of forests are at the heart of unlocking challenges of conflict-affected, developing and developed countries, for the benefit of current and future generations.

http://youtube.com/watch?v=zQkw6Ux7Fyg

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21 March

"جنگلات کا عالمی دن"