On this International Mother Earth Day, all eyes are on the COVID-19 pandemic – the biggest test the world has faced since the Second World War.

We must work together to save lives, ease suffering and lessen the shattering economic and social consequences.

The impact of the coronavirus is both immediate and dreadful.

But there is another deep emergency -- the planet’s unfolding environmental crisis.

Biodiversity is in steep decline.

Climate disruption is approaching a point of no return.

We must act decisively to protect our planet from both the coronavirus and the existential threat of climate disruption.

The current crisis is an unprecedented wake-up call.

We need to turn the recovery into a real opportunity to do things right for the future.

I am therefore proposing six climate-related actions to shape the recovery and the work ahead.
First: as we spend huge amounts of money to recover from the coronavirus, we must deliver new jobs and businesses through a clean, green transition.

Second: where taxpayers’ money is used to rescue businesses, it needs to be tied to achieving green jobs and sustainable growth.

Third: fiscal firepower must drive a shift from the grey to green economy, and make societies and people more resilient.

Fourth: public funds should be used to invest in the future, not the past, and flow to sustainable sectors and projects that help the environment and the climate.

Fossil fuel subsidies must end, and polluters must start paying for their pollution.

Fifth: climate risks and opportunities must be incorporated into the financial system as well as all aspects of public policy making and infrastructure.

Sixth: we need to work together as an international community.

These six principles constitute an important guide to recovering better together.

Greenhouse gases, just like viruses, do not respect national boundaries.

On this Earth Day, please join me in demanding a healthy and resilient future for people and planet alike.

[END]

Video Link: https://s3.amazonaws.com/downloads2.unmultimedia.org/public/video/evergreen/MSG+SG+Intl+Mother+Earth+Day/MSG+SG+INTL+MOTHER+EARTH+DAY+17+APR+20+INTL.mp4
United Nations
PRESS RELEASE

Public support for international cooperation surges amid global upheaval

Data from 186 countries indicates overwhelming public support for international cooperation – with a significant increase since COVID-19 began spreading around the world. Collected through hundreds of conversations and an online survey, the data is part of the United Nations’ 75th anniversary initiative (UN75). Launched in January 2020, UN75 is the largest exercise mounted by the Organization to gather public opinion and crowdsource solutions to global challenges.

New York, April 20, 2020. As the whole UN system unites to tackle the coronavirus pandemic, the Organization is also scaling up its efforts to give voice to the global public through its 75th anniversary initiative (UN75). Launched in January, UN75 will run throughout 2020, to give all people the opportunity to shape global priorities by participating in a UN75 dialogue or completing a one-minute survey available at www.un75.online. [1]

Preliminary findings, based on data collected between 1 January 2020 and 24 March 2020, were published today [2] on www.un.org/en/un75/news-events:

1. An overwhelming majority—95%—of respondents agreed on the need for countries to work together to manage global trends, with a noticeable uptick from late February, as the upheaval caused by COVID-19 spread around the world. Support cut across all age groups and education levels. Ideas on strengthening international cooperation included more effective partnerships with civil society and the private sector, and greater involvement of women, youth, indigenous peoples and vulnerable groups in policymaking.

2. Climate and environment topped the list of issues that will most affect humanity’s future – with more than double the responses of any other issue. Conflict and violence came second, and health risks third, having risen sharply since early March.
3. The top five future priorities that emerged were: environmental protection, protection of human rights, less conflict, equal access to basic services, and zero discrimination.

“I look forward to our continued efforts to ensure a meaningful observance of the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization, and to use this milestone for reflection on the multilateral cooperation the world needs at this time, both in addressing the immediate pandemic and in achieving the longer-term goals for which the United Nations was founded.” – United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres

Notes

[1] Launched by the UN Secretary-General, the UN’s 75th anniversary initiative is markedly different from previous commemorations, with less emphasis on communicating the UN’s successes and a strong focus on listening to the global public, especially young people. Over the course of 2020, the UN75 team will gather public perspectives on global challenges and solutions on how to tackle them through a one-minute survey (in 53 languages) and dialogues – now overwhelmingly online – organised by partners across the world. This data will be complemented by representative polling; academic research; and media and social media analysis in some 70 countries. The results will be presented in September 2020, at the official commemoration of the UN’s 75th anniversary, after which UN75 will focus on how best to take them forward, with a final report to be published in January 2021.

[2] The data used was gathered between 1 January and 24 March 2020. During this period, 35,556 in 186 UN Member States took the one-minute survey online, in addition to 5,688 who participated through mobile applications. Over 330 dialogues took place in 87 UN Member States, with 56 summaries from 32 of them included in this preliminary analysis.

Read the UN75 Update in full at: https://www.un.org/en/un75/news-events
Join the UN75 conversation at: www.un.org/UN75
JOINT EU / FAO / OCHA / UNICEF / USAID / WFP NEWS RELEASE

Global Report on Food Crises reveals scope of food crises as COVID-19 poses new risks to vulnerable countries

Annual report on acute food security and nutrition published today

21 April 2020, Brussels/Rome/New York – Today an international alliance of UN, governmental, and nongovernmental agencies working to address the root causes of extreme hunger have released a new edition of their annual Global Report on Food Crises.

Key findings of the Global Report

The report by the Global Network Against Food Crises indicates that at the close of 2019, 135 million people across 55 countries and territories experienced acute food insecurity* (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above).

Additionally, in the 55 food-crisis countries covered by the report, 75 million children were stunted and 17 million suffered from wasting in 2019.

This is the highest level of acute food insecurity* and malnutrition documented by the Network since the first edition of the report in 2017.

Additionally, in 2019, 183 million people were classified in Stressed (IPC/CH Phase 2) condition -- at the cusp of acute hunger and at risk of slipping into Crisis or worse (IPC/CH Phase 3 or above) if faced with a shock or stressor, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

More than half (73 million) of the 135 million people covered by the report live in Africa; 43 million live in the Middle East and Asia; 18.5 million live in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The key drivers behind the trends analysed in the report were: conflict, (the key factor that pushed 77 million people into acute food insecurity), weather extremes (34 million people) and economic turbulence (24 million).
Note to editors

* Acute food insecurity is when a person’s inability to consume adequate food puts their lives or livelihoods in immediate danger. It draws on internationally accepted measures of extreme hunger, such as the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) and the Cadre Harmonisé. It is more severe than / not the same as chronic hunger, as reported on each year by the UN’s annual State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report. Chronic hunger is when a person is unable to consume enough food over an extended period to maintain a normal, active lifestyle.

The report by the Global Network Against Food Crises, along with key findings, statements by partners, and multimedia products unpacking its contents are now available at:

- The Food Security Information Network (FSIN)’s platform: www.fsinplatform.org

About the Global Network

The Global Network against Food Crises seeks to better link, integrate and guide existing initiatives, partnerships, programmes and policy processes to sustainably address the root causes of food crises.

The Global Report on Food Crises is the flagship publication of the Global Network and is facilitated by the Food Security Information Network (FSIN). The Report is the result of a consensus-based and multi-partner analytical process involving 16 international humanitarian and development partners (in alphabetical order): the Comité Permanent Inter-Etats de Lutte contre la Sécheresse dans le Sahel (CILSS), the European Union (EU), the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Global Food Security Cluster, the Global Nutrition Cluster, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Global Support Unit, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), Sistema de la Integración Centroamericana (SICA), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations
World Food Programme (WFP) the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR).

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