

# Media Update

1 October 2021

## UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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### MESSAGE ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF NON-VIOLENCE 2 October 2021

It is no coincidence that we mark the International Day of Non-Violence on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi.

For Gandhi, non-violence, peaceful protest, dignity and equality were more than words. They represented a guiding light for humanity, a map to a better future.

They also provide a template to address today's troubled times. Conflicts and climate change. Poverty and inequalities. Mistrust and divisions. All under the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, which continues to devastate people and economies alike.

The solution to these challenges is in our hands: solidarity. We need to recognize, as Gandhi did, that what unites us is far greater than what divides us. That peace provides the only pathway to a better future for all.

Addressing the challenges of our world means coming together as one human family, and embracing peace like never before.

We call on combatants around the world to lay down their arms and focus on defeating humanity's common enemy — COVID-19 — not one another. We urgently need to deliver lifesaving vaccines and treatment, and support countries in the long road to recovery ahead.

We need to intensify our work to reduce inequalities and end poverty.

We need a bold global plan of action to heal our planet.

Most of all, we need to renew trust in one another. Hatred, division, conflict and mistrust have had their day. It is time to usher in a new era of peace, trust and tolerance.

On this International Day of Non-Violence, let us heed Gandhi's message of peace, and get down to the business of building a better and more peaceful future for all.

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### MESSAGE ON WORLD HABITAT DAY 2021 4 October 2021

On this World Habitat Day, cities and towns across the globe are facing – and fighting – the dual crises of COVID-19 and climate change. Home to 4.5 billion people today, they are projected to grow by almost 50 per cent by 2050.

By mid-century, over 1.6 billion urban residents may have to survive through average summertime highs of 35 degrees Celsius.

This year's theme – 'Accelerating Urban Action for a Carbon-Free World' – highlights how cities and towns are at the core of climate action to keep the 1.5 degrees goal within reach.

Three-quarters of the infrastructure that will exist in 2050 has yet to be built. Economic recovery plans offer a generational opportunity to put climate

action, renewable energy, and sustainable development at the heart of cities' strategies and policies.

City leadership in using green materials and constructing energy-efficient, resilient buildings powered by renewable energy is essential to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. The benefits are enormous: less pollution and climate risk, more jobs, and better health and well-being.

As populations grow in emerging economies, demand for transport, which accounts for nearly 20 per cent of global carbon emissions, is multiplying. Cities are working to ensure that this demand is met by zero-emission vehicles and public transit. We need a global moratorium on internal combustion engines by 2040 at the latest to underpin these efforts.

On World Habitat Day, let us work together to harness the transformative potential of sustainable urban action for the benefit of our planet and all people.

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