



Remarks By:

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On the Occasion of

**The Commemoration of the 73rd
Anniversary of the United Nations
(UN Day 2018)**

**24 October 2018
Windhoek**

Catherine Vries, the Senior Education Officer for the Directorate of Programme and Quality Assurance, Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture;

Distinguished Invited Guests;

UN Country Team Members and UN Colleagues;

Members of the media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2018 celebration of United Nations Day, commonly referred to as UN Day.

This commemoration marks the 73rd anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter¹. With the ratification of this founding document, the United Nations officially came into being.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For 73 years, the United Nations has been working to protect human rights for all and ensure peace across the globe. Here in Namibia, the UN also has a long-standing history, having served as a trusted partner dating back to the time of independence.

Since then, Namibia has made great strides in line with national and international development agendas in ensuring that no one is left behind. Namibia ranks:

- 43rd in the world for peace²;
- 26th in the world and 2nd in Africa in terms of press freedom³; and
- 5 in Africa in terms of good governance⁴ and gender parity in parliament⁵;

On top of this, Namibia has effected one of the fastest reductions in poverty on the continent and has managed to reduce inequality while growing its gross national income (GNI)⁶.

¹ The Charter entered into force in 1945.

² [2018 Global Peace Index. Institute for Economics and Peace. <https://bit.ly/2kUjV4o>] Namibia jumped up seven places from 50th in 2017.

³ Reporters Without Borders, World Press Freedom Index <https://rsf.org/en/ranking/2018#>] *** In 2016, Namibia ranked 17th globally and 1st in Africa for press freedom, dropping several spots in 2017 to 24th, yet holding the 1st in Africa title. This year, Ghana took the 1st in Africa title.***

⁴ Ibrahim Index of African Governance. 2017 IIAG Namibia Scores, Ranks & Trends. <http://bit.ly/2CrKX9J>

⁵ [Inter-Parliamentary Union and UN Women. Women in Parliament: 2017. <http://bit.ly/2g4Z2RC>]

⁶ [World Income Inequality Database (latest data, 2010)]

However, ladies and gentlemen,

Namibia continues to face challenges;

- Less than a quarter of Namibian children are enrolled in an early childhood development (ECD) programme⁷;
- There is an increasing burden on the health sector of non-communicable diseases and conditions, including cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases;
- There are serious concerns about violence against, abuse and maltreatment of older persons and in particular older women in Namibia⁸;
- Youth unemployment stands at close to 40%⁹;

For this year's celebration of UN Day, we have chosen to go out into the community to raise awareness of these issues. For this reason, we are here at the Humble Care Centre, and our UN colleagues are also visiting patients at Central Hospital Children's Medical Ward, engaging with the youth at the International University of Management (IUM) and spending time with senior citizens at the Katutura Old Age Home.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UN and has continued to significantly support the country in its fight against poverty and path towards sustainable development. Our partnership framework with the Government, the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF) 2019-2023, outlines our plan of action to ensure that we eradicate poverty and inequality. The Global Sustainable Development Goals are also clear, we must end poverty, protect the environment and ensure prosperity for all.

And to do this, we need the commitment of everyone. On this UN Day, I encourage you to stand #UnitedwithUNNamibia and speak about injustices you see in your community and to bring about the positive change you want to see.

Thank you. I will now read the remarks of Secretary General Antonio Guterres on the occasion of UN Day 2018.

⁷ Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA) and National Planning Commission (NPC). Namibia Intercensal Demographic Survey 2016 (NIDS). 24.6% (2016)

⁸ United Nations Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, Rosa Kornfeld-Matte. Press Conference, following her 10-day mission in Namibia. <https://bit.ly/2Cx9vI3>

⁹ Government of the Republic of Namibia (GRN). Fifth National Development Plan (NDP5). Chapter 3, p.50

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR UN DAY

24 October 2018

United Nations Day marks the birthday of our founding Charter – the landmark document that embodies the hopes, dreams and aspirations of “we the peoples”.

Every day, the women and men of the United Nations work to give practical meaning to that Charter. Despite the odds and the obstacles, we never give up.

Extreme poverty is being reduced but we see inequality growing. Yet we don't give up because we know by reducing inequality we increase hope and opportunity and peace around the world.

Climate change is moving faster than we are, but we don't give up because we know that climate action is the only path.

Human rights are being violated in so many places. But we don't give up because we know respect for human rights and human dignity is a basic condition for peace.

Conflicts are multiplying - people are suffering. But we don't give up because we know every man, woman and child deserves a life of peace.

On United Nations Day, let us reaffirm our commitment.

To repair broken trust. To heal our planet. To leave no one behind.

To uphold dignity for one and all, as United Nations.