

Summary

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UN / Message of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust

The Holocaust was a colossal crime, stresses UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his message. At this time of sectarian tensions, mutual respect must be foremost in our minds. On this day, we recognize one of the most effective ways to stand up for human rights, fight xenophobia and prevent new genocides – and that is by educating new generations about the horrors of the Holocaust. Mr. Ban urges everyone to denounce political and religious ideologies that set people against people and calls to promote the universal values of the UN, and work together for a world of peace, security, social progress and dignity for all.

Editorial / 2016: Time to Start Implementing Sustainable Development Goals

Despite obvious progress in the process of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) world-over, many global and national demands have become even more challenging. That is why the UN adopted, in September 2015, a new set of tasks for the humanity, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for the next 15 years. SDGs is a convincing indication of importance of the social dimension of sustainable development and of the need to integrate economic, social and environmental aspects of human progress. SDGs fully conform with the earlier agreed principles and commitments, are based on international law and are in thorough compliance with the national characteristics, capabilities and priorities, with due regard to the goals already achieved, including the MDGs.

ILO / ILO Director-General: Growth is not the whole story

Addressing the first ever meeting of Ministers of Labour and Employment of the BRICS countries, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder warned that an adverse shock to the BRICS economies could unwind efforts in building a robust middle class in their countries. He argued that a high growth hardly guarantees decent work, inclusion and equity. Mr. Ryder emphasized the need for effective public investment in infrastructure and enterprise modernization, with a view to boosting job creation. The ILO head noted that small and medium-size enterprises are the “key providers of employment” and urged the BRICS countries to “build solid bridges and non-stop communications between training providers and enterprises.” He also recommended that pension systems for today’s working population be bolstered.

UNAIDS / Zero Discrimination

1 March is marked all over the world as Zero Discrimination Day. The Day is tailored to highlight the universal right to lead a fulfilling and dignified life, regardless of appearance, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. Low awareness of the HIV/AIDS-related matters often results in discrimination against HIV-positive people. In order to stop the spread of the epidemic, discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS must be stopped. The campaign’s symbol is a butterfly, widely recognized as a sign of transformation. Many celebrities have recorded a video message or taken photographs with the butterfly, including UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador Vera Brezhneva, world-famous Indian actress and UNAIDS International Goodwill Ambassador Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, popular Russian science commentator and naturalist Nikolai Drozdov and Toumani Diabat, the highly acclaimed musician from Mali and International Goodwill Ambassador.

UNHCR / Russia as country of asylum: Achievements and unresolved problems

By early 2016, more than one million refugees have arrived in the EU countries. During a comparable period of time, Russia has become a country of asylum for more than one million people from the south-east of Ukraine and about 7,000 people from other countries. The UNHCR Office in the Russian Federation monitors the situation of refugees and asylum seekers irrespective of their countries of origin. According to UNHCR, while the Russian government has earmarked impressive resources to protect and settle refugees from the south-eastern areas of Ukraine, asylum-seekers from other countries have found themselves in a considerably more complex situation. Quite a few security issues have not been resolved properly yet, affecting the image of Russia as a country of asylum.

UN Global Compact / Business as force for good

Last year, the UN celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Global Compact, the only UN programme for business. In the course of 2015, several countries organized an array of ‘UN Global Compact +15: Business as a Force for Good’ activities. The UN sees UNGC national networks as important platforms for the development of efficient ways to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. In this context, Global Compact Network/Russia has become a full-fledged participant in the discussion of international agenda under the UNGC and has acquired the highest status, advanced, according to a new ranking model of Russian networks. The article explores various aspects of GC Network/Russia activities and prospects.

WHO / WHO Collaborating Centres contribute to TB fight in Russia

Over the last five years, there has been a considerable progress in the area of TB fight across the WHO European region. Russia has spared no effort fighting the disease at the national level, which has resulted in high and steadily growing financing of anti-TB measures. In 2015, Russia carried out, for the third time, a 5-day seminar on TB fight. The seminar organized jointly by the WHO, Russian Health Ministry and Novosibirsk Tuberculosis Research Institute, explored the issues of detection, diagnosis and treatment of patients with drug-resistant TB.

UNDP / Energetic Energoteam

The UNDP/GEF Project ‘Building Energy Efficiency in the North-West of Russia’ has teamed with the Administration of Pskov region to contribute to establishing an energy management system across the region. The system implementation is likely to permit, among other things, to preserve energy resources of all types, identify excessive energy losses, prevent accidents, monitor compliance with the quality parameters and delivery mode for energy resources, etc. Such a project is being implemented in Russia for the first time ever.

UNESCO / Administration of Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and IITE UNESCO signed Memorandum of Cooperation

The Memorandum of Cooperation signed on 29 January 2016 between the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE UNESCO) and the Administration of the Republic Sakha (Yakutia) defines the directions of joint efforts to reach the goals of the ‘Regional Education Development Programme 2030,’ including the establishment of a sustainable system of professional development of educators and the design of new educational and post-graduate training programmes, as well as efficient regional education politics on the basis of ICT, open learning resources, mobile technologies and UNESCO recommendations. The Memorandum provides for continued implementation of the successful ‘Arctic Teacher’ project and for the launching of International Arctic School and ‘Music for Everyone’ projects.

Special Guest / Vladimir Kuznetsov, Director, UNIC Moscow

Vladimir Kuznetsov was appointed Director of UNIC Moscow, replacing Alexandre Gorelik, who had served in this position for the last 16 years. Mr. Kuznetsov is a Russian diplomat who has focused on UN-related matters since 2008: In 2008-2015, he served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Russia to the World Food Programme (WFP) in Rome, Italy.

In his interview, Mr. Kuznetsov estimated the current situation of UNIC Moscow as “flawless,” adding that he had no intentions to resort to any “cardinal changes.” “We will further develop communication channels using some cutting-edge technologies, as well as the Internet and social media,” he said while highlighting the importance of real-life communications.

Speaking about his formation as a professional diplomat, Mr. Kuznetsov named some people who were his “mentors” and sources of inspiration: his father Valery Kuznetsov, renowned politician, scientist and diplomat Evgeny Primakov and Ambassador Yuli Vorontsov.

Elaborating on the SDGs, the UNIC Director stressed the significance of the new world agenda that “reminds to the world leaders that the well-being of people should be measured by the real quality of their living, rather than by the abstract indicator of GDP per capita.” Mr. Kuznetsov also emphasized the crucial role of a consensus among countries that operate in an interrelated and interdependent world.