

Summary

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UN Secretary-General: Message on the occasion of the International Volunteer Day (5 December 2019)

On the occasion of the International Volunteer Day (IVD), UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stressed that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development urged everyone to build a fair, equal, tolerant, an open and free from the social barriers world where the needs of the most vulnerable groups are met. He also mentioned that the theme for the celebration of IVD in 2019 was “Become a Volunteer in the Name of the Inclusive Future” and was intended to draw attention to the fact that volunteers can contribute in building a more inclusive and equal society.

UNIC-UNA / UN is bracing for its 75th anniversary

The world will mark the UN's 75th anniversary by organizing a series of celebratory activities, including an initiative named Dialogues “UN75”, a global discussion centered on the role of international cooperation in the process of building a better future for all. In the Russian Federation, the major coordinating role is assigned to UNA-Russia. The UN's 75th anniversary provides a perfect opportunity to draw the attention of Russian public to such important aspects of the UN work as peace and security, to name a few.

OHCHR / Corporate responsibility in respect for human rights

In November 2019, a seminar for business representatives titled “Peer Learning Series” was held for the first time in Russia. The seminar was initiated by OHCHR with a view to increasing cooperation with the local business community on issues of respect for human rights. The meeting was attended by representatives of a diverse spectrum of companies. The participants discussed questions related to motivation driving respect for human rights by commercial entities, responsibilities of the public and private sector, risk assessments, examples of good practices, etc. Business representatives spoke highly of the initiative and of the need to continue along similar lines in future.

OHCHR / Activism against gender-based violence

On 25 November 2019, a meeting of the UN thematic group on gender issues was held at the UN House in Moscow. The meeting focused on the International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women and the Secretary-General's campaign titled “16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence”. Representatives of various organizations, including UN agencies, NGOs, lawyers, scholars, medical workers and many others, contributed to the discussion. Special attention was given to the challenges faced by women who experienced different manifestations of gender-based violence.

ILO / Russia joins the ILO Youth Employment Programme

On 30 October 2019, Vsevolod Vukolov, Russian Deputy Labour and Social Protection Minister, and Andre Bogi, Director of the ILO Department of Human Resources, signed in Geneva a memorandum, according to which Russia will finance five professional ILO posts. Russia has joined the Programme for the first time over 40 years of its existence.

ILO / Common task: Social security enhancement

Organized as part of the internationally observed Social Security Week (25-28 November 2019), a special conference in Geneva brought together more than 300 participants from different countries. Russian Deputy Minister of Trade and Social Security Andrei Pudov emphasized that during 100 years of its existence, the International Labour Organization has consistently promoted workers' interest, and Russia confirms readiness to implement its commitments before the ILO in full.

UNAIDS-UNESCO IITE / Telling the truth

On the eve of the World AIDS Day, social network “Odnoklassniki” together with UNAIDS and UNESCO IITE organized live stream to support a campaign titled “#Despite.” The stream featured 15 video stories by women living with HIV, telling their life stories and challenges they faced. Several famous pop singers and actresses, such as Zara, Irina Aksenova or Irina Starshenbaum, took part in this activity.

UNESCO IITE / Gaining knowledge anywhere in the world

From 25 to 29 November 2019, the 2nd International Exchange Programme hosted by the UNESCO IITE and co-hosted by the government of St. Petersburg, the St. Petersburg State University of Aerospace Instrumentation (SUAI), Herzen University and Dobot, took place in St. Petersburg and Moscow. This event coincided with the XIV International Festival for Students & Teachers-Wind of Changes of UNESCO IITE Week. The International Exchange Programme enabled Russian and Chinese students to participate in a series of education programmes, including the Russia Invitational Competition while immersing themselves in the culture of some of Russia's most exciting cities.

WHO / Contributing to modernizing Russian health system

An enlarged meeting of the Bureau of the State Council chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin and dedicated to the ongoing modernization of the health system in Russia took place on 31 October in the city of Kaliningrad. Major challenges facing the country's health system were discussed, including lack of medical staff, long queues in clinics, outdated equipment, low client satisfaction, with WHO experts showcasing the health system in Europe, highlighting existing patterns in local clinics and the possibility of transfer from the current polyclinic model to the one used in most European countries.

WHO / Working on suicide and self-harm monitoring and prevention

From 28 to 30 October 2019, a WHO-sponsored technical meeting took place in the city of Stavropol to convene key stakeholders in building capacity in suicide and self-harm monitoring and prevention in Russia. Participants included representatives from various government sectors at subnational level, including the education and health sectors; leading psychiatrists from selected federal districts; representatives from the Serbsky Centre; and a joint WHO team. The discussion focused, among other subjects, on trends in suicide prevention in the WHO European Region and globally; the suicide and self-harm burden in Russia; existing suicide and self-harm surveillance and prevention systems; next steps for further development and integration of the suicide and self-harm monitoring and prevention systems.

UNIC / Round table to mark the International Day of Persons with Disabilities

On 3 December 2019, UNIC Moscow and the Joint Russia-OHCHR project hosted, on the premises of UN House in Moscow, a traditional round table in observance of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. The topic of the discussion was “The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Key Areas of Coverage of Disability Issues in the Media and on Social Networks.” Among those attending and addressing the round table were State Duma deputy Mikhail Terentiev and Dmitry Rebrov from the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as electronic and print media correspondents.

UNIDO / Project to enhance environmentally sound management in Russia

Russia signed the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants in 2004 and then ratified it in 2011. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNIDO started a project titled “Environmentally sound management and final disposal of PCBs at the Russian railroad network and other PCBs owners” due to the fact that Russia has encountered some difficulty in fulfilling its obligations in line with the Convention. Key areas of the project include the establishment of the institutional legal and human capacity for the purpose of initial implementation and further functioning of the environmentally-sound regulatory system in the field of PCBs utilization; inventory of equipment and waste polluted with PCBs in Russia; environmentally safe regulation and utilization of equipment and waste polluted with PCBs.

OHCHR / Rachid Alouach: “Human rights are sensitive matter that requires a sophisticated approach”

Rachid Alouach has been with the UN for 20 years, starting his career in UNDP. He was the one to witness the creation of OHCHR office in Russia. He became head of the office in 2016. In an interview, Rachid Alouach recounts his experience working in the OHCHR office. He mentions some successful projects, including collaboration with the Ombudsmen, organization of major activities such as the Human Rights Master programmes, various seminars and conferences with international experts, contribution to the Stalker International Film Festival on Human Rights, etc.