

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER DAY
5 December 2011

Beginning with the words “We the peoples”, the United Nations Charter reminds us that crafting solutions to global challenges is a job not only for Governments, but for people, communities and civil society.

On International Volunteer Day, we recognize the dedication of volunteers, their admirable spirit of service, and their wide-ranging efforts to promote the goals of the United Nations.

With the world population having surpassed seven billion this year, we must tap every person’s potential to help others. Everyone *can* make a difference. Volunteering matters.

All over the globe, millions of volunteers are helping to advance sustainable development and peace. This engagement takes many forms: volunteering organizations, individuals working on their own in their communities, and service with us and our partners as UN Volunteers.

This year’s first-ever *State of the World’s Volunteerism Report* showcases the impact that volunteers have made. I congratulate the UN Volunteers programme and commend the many millions of volunteers working for sustainable development, humanitarian assistance, environmental preservation, and progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

With passion and commitment, they are helping to show how volunteering can change the world. As we mark International Volunteer Day, I encourage policymakers to do even more to support and welcome volunteerism, and I urge everyone to consider what they can do to join the movement.

BAN Ki-moon