

United Nations Day special

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Goals more important than ever

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SECRETARY-GENERAL, THE UNITED NATIONS



Dear friends,
The 75th anniversary of the United Nations falls in the middle of a global pandemic. Our founding mission is more critical than ever.

To promote human dignity.
Protect human rights.

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Respect international law.
And save humanity from war.
When the pandemic hit, I called for a global ceasefire.
In our world today, we have one com-

mon enemy: the COVID-19.

Now is the time for a stepped-up push for peace to achieve a global ceasefire. The clock is ticking.

We must also make peace with our planet.

The climate emergency threatens life itself. We must mobilize the whole world to reach carbon neutrality — net zero emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.

A growing number of countries and companies have already pledged to meet this goal.

Around the world, we must do more to end human suffering from poverty, inequality, hunger and hatred — and fight discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender or any other distinction. The months of pandemic have seen a horrific rise in violence against women and girls.

We must build on progress. A remarkable global collaboration is under way for a safe,

affordable and accessible COVID-19 vaccine for all.

The Sustainable Development Goals give us an inspiring blueprint for recovering better.

We face colossal challenges. With global solidarity and cooperation, we can overcome them.

That's what the United Nations is all about.

On this anniversary, I ask people everywhere to join together.

The United Nations not only stands with you ...

The United Nations belongs to you and is you: "we the peoples."

Together, let us uphold the enduring values of the United Nations Charter.

Let us build on our advances across the decades.

Let us realize our shared vision of a better world for all.

We cannot take the UN for granted

DAVID M. MALONE
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For 75 years, the United Nations has been the principal international forum for inclusive discussion of global challenges.

But we cannot be sure that the U.N. will endure another

75 years — or even another 25. Worryingly, several great powers are behaving in increasingly reckless ways.

Japan's long-term prosperity hinges on continued global stability. Indeed, without stable international relations, we are all at risk. Nationalism, military adventurism, and clashing geostrategic visions undermine our security and sense of well-being, causing us to worry about the future of younger generations more than we did 30 years ago when the Cold War ended.

The U.N.'s Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs), which many in Japan identify with, offer hope for the future. But too often, the SDGs are used as a mere branding opportunity, without enough practical steps toward their core objective to "leave no one behind" and combat climate change. What the world needs is concrete action.

As a reminder of Japan's valuable global initiatives of the past, let us recall the immediate post-Cold War period when new ways of spreading security and prosperity were being crafted. The Nordic countries, the U.K., and Canada (my own country), among others, developed a concept of "human security" centered on individuals rather than states.

Japan supported this concept through international advocacy by the late and much-missed Sadako Ogata — and the international commission she co-chaired with the great Indian economist Amartya Sen — emphasizing that global economic development must lift populations well beyond the basics of survival.

Looking forward, Japan can intensify its support for global development by sharing insights from its own admirable univer-

sal health care system, which has done so much to keep Japan's residents among the healthiest and longest-lived in the world, including during the coronavirus pandemic. Do inhabitants of less prosperous countries deserve less? And what are we, individually and collectively, specifically doing to support such progress?

These exciting, though uncomfortable, questions force us to acknowledge the dismal living conditions endured by billions. A high level of national comfort and security is admirable. Still, in the face of growing global challenges to security, development, and environmental sustainability unmet by adequate responses from the world's nations, such national privilege can become disturbing, and ultimately abhorrent.

All governments should recommit themselves to the global solutions that will keep us safer as we emerge — hopefully soon — from the pandemic. And Japan, with its strong international credibility, can set an excellent example.

In the absence of commitment at the level of nations, the U.N. may well lose its core purpose and operational drive, leaving little for the public to identify with.



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres speaks during the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Sept. 22 at U.N. headquarters in New York. KYODO

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