

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
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MESSAGE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

New York, 10 December 2021

Our world is at a crossroads.

The COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and the expansion of digital technology into all areas of our lives have created new threats to human rights.

Exclusion and discrimination are rampant.

Public space is shrinking.

Poverty and hunger are rising for the first time in decades.

Millions of children are missing out on their right to education.

Inequality is deepening.

But we can choose a different path.

Seventy-three years ago today, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The principles set out in this simple Declaration remain the key to realizing all human rights – civil, economic, cultural, social, and political – for all people, everywhere.

Recovery from the pandemic must be an opportunity to expand human rights and freedoms, and to rebuild trust.

Trust in the justice and impartiality of laws and institutions.

Confidence that a life of dignity is within reach.

Faith that people can get a fair hearing and resolve their grievances peacefully.

The United Nations stands for the rights of every member of our human family.

Today and every day, we will continue to work for justice, equality, dignity and human rights for all.

Happy Human Rights Day.