**U N I T E D N A T I O N S**  **N A T I O N S U N I E S**

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE FOR THE**

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE**

**21 September 2022**

Peace is a noble and necessary pursuit, and the only practical pathway to a better, fairer world for all people.

Yet in too many places, in too many contexts, we are failing the cause of peace.

The theme of this year’s International Day of Peace — “End Racism, Build Peace” — reminds us of the many ways racism poisons people’s hearts and minds and erodes the peace we all seek.

Racism robs people of their rights and dignity. It inflames inequalities and mistrust. And it pushes people apart, at a time when we should be coming together, as one human family, to repair our fractured world.

Instead of fighting each other, we should be working to defeat our true enemies: racism, poverty, inequality, conflict, the climate crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

We should tear down structures that sustain racism, and lift up human rights movements everywhere.

And we should drown out the vicious voices of hate speech with a united and sustained cry for truth, understanding and mutual respect.

On this important day, a time to observe 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire, we renew our call for all people to do more than lay down their weapons.

We call on them to re-affirm the bonds of solidarity we share as human beings and get down to the business of building a better, more peaceful world.

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