



# UNANIMA International News from the UN and Around the World

OCTOBER 2023 NEWSLETTER  
Edition 23



## Executive Director's Reflection

Friends,

Greetings from the UNANIMA International office in New York where we've had a very busy few months at the United Nations, with the High-Level Political Forum, the SDG Summit, and the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. All of these sessions gave us a glimpse into our world in 2023.

As we know, the world is facing many crises involving climate change, economic uncertainty, food shortages, and energy crises. These current crises are hitting the most vulnerable the hardest, through no fault of their own. Both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the World Summit for Social Development are committed to seeking lasting solutions to eradicating poverty and homelessness, creating full employment and decent work for all, and building more inclusive societies.

This year marks the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Day to Overcome Extreme Poverty, and the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. In the past week we had the UN

Secretary General present the results of the progress report on Inclusive Policies and Programs to Address Homelessness to the General Assembly. UNANIMA International were involved with the report, highlighting the unique needs of Women, Children and Girls.

Our advocacy efforts continue as we explore the meaning of social justice as it relates to all the above issues. For UNANIMA International, social justice issues include the inclusion of climate change in specific groups and homelessness. As UI we will continue our exploration of what a “just” society would look like, and the injustices people face because of race, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

What all of us are seeking is social justice, which is just and equitable, valuing diversity, providing equal opportunities for all people, and ensuring fair allocation of resources and support for their human rights.

We are always full of gratitude for the support we receive from our UI Membership community and our colleagues in Civil Society and our NGO communities. We continue to bring the voices of the furthest left behind in our world to the United Nations and other places of power.

Sincerely,  
Jean

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## What's Happening at the UN



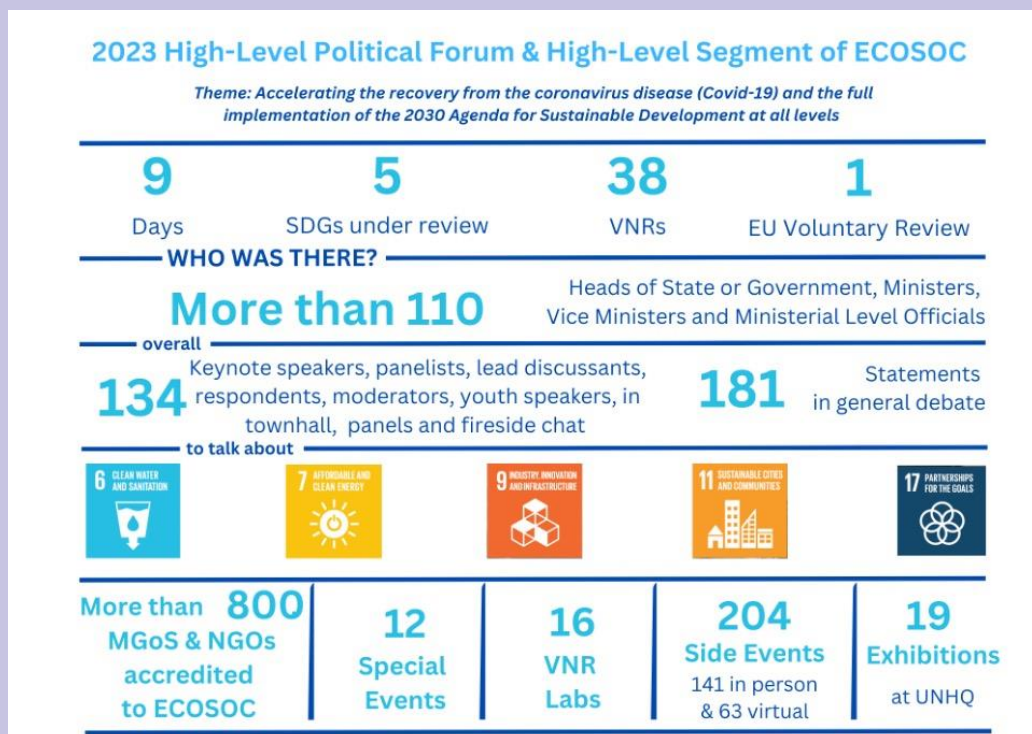
### HLPF

The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) was held from Monday, July 10, to Wednesday, July 19, 2023, under the auspices of the [Economic and Social Council](#) at the United Nations in New York. This year the forum's theme was "Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and

the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”. The busy event program (highlights in the graphic) included a three-day high level ministerial segment, in addition to the final day’s ECOSOC segment.

Importantly, it gave space for participants to come together once again in person to further discuss effective and inclusive recovery measures to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and explore actionable policy guidance for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the SDGs at all levels. Focused on the SDGs highlighted in the graphic below, the HLPF in July also supported the mid-term review of the implementation of the SDGs and the preparations for the 2023 SDG Summit this September.

Throughout the Forum, UNANIMA International stayed true to our cause of advocating for Women and Children, especially those experiencing homelessness and displacement. Part of this was the sharing of our publications and helping to educate Member States, the Private Sector, and other Civil Society members on the intersections of Homelessness and the SDGs. In addition to attending the High-Level meetings, we also took part in and attended various side and parallel events. You can find out more about our movements on our social media. If you’d like to read or watch more on the forum or see if your country presented a Voluntary National Review, Follow this link! <https://hlpf.un.org/2023>



## Expert Group Meeting in Preparation for CSocD62

The priority theme for the sixty-second session of the Commission for Development (CSocD62) is: “Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication.” CSocD 62 will be held from February 5-14, 2024, in Conference Room 4 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Commission will also commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family.

## Global Peoples Assembly

The Global People's Assembly (GPA) 2023 took place on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> in New York. A civil society initiative, the event was part of the UN SDG Summit and the UN General Assembly proceedings. Starting in 2019, the GPA is the culmination of community and national People's Assemblies in 35+ countries. Each brings together representatives of marginalized and excluded groups, as well as civil society advocates that have been the boots on the ground, so that they can share their experience and knowledge of monitoring and discussing the SDG implementation.



As a wider network, the assembly's objective is to bring civil society together and ensure that governments uphold their commitments, including the overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs: to Leave No One Behind. The GPA initiative has continued to grow in participants and strength. The event in NYC brought together the "people's" representatives from around the world to network and formulate a strong cohesive voice at the SDG Summit for the midpoint of Agenda 2030.

Executive Director of UI, Jean Quinn, DW, joined around 300 in person and another 1800+ online attendees at the assembly on behalf of UNANIMA International. Along with other participants she had the opportunity to discuss and coordinate advocacy efforts in response to structural drivers for social, environmental, and economic injustice, and a just transition towards ending inequalities for all and achieving the 2030 agenda.

The assembly is currently co-organized by 40 civil society networks with an open-door policy inviting anyone and everyone to be part of it. To learn more, read the concept note [here](#), and the Global People's Assembly 2022 Declaration [here](#).

## United Nations SDG Summit

The 2023 SDG Summit took place on September 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 in New York. Marking the half-way point to the deadline set for the 2030 Agenda, the Summit aimed to respond to the impact of countless intersecting crises facing the world and give high-level political guidance on transformative and accelerated actions. While we have made progress in some areas, there is no denying that there is a long way to go if we are to achieve the SDGs. Seven years on from their establishment, the Summit formally recognized the importance of, and marked the beginning of, a new phase of accelerated progress towards this. With leaders coming from around the globe, the Summit was the centerpiece of the High-Level week of the General Assembly.

UNANIMA International delegates had the opportunity to attend both the UN and side events both in person and virtually throughout the Summit. We added to the global conversation on how to best accelerate action and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the time we have left until 2030. Among many key outcomes and conversations, was the agreement that in order to achieve the 2030 agenda we must work together, and that civil society has an important role to play. We also contributed through the facilitation of our parallel event: "Rethinking Multilateralism: Responding to Interconnected Crises from the Lens of the 'People' SDGs, Partnerships, and Civil Society".



**“Only 15 per cent of the targets are on track, many are going in reverse. Instead of leaving no one behind, we risk leaving the SDGs behind”**



## **UNANIMA International Event - UNGA78 High-Level Week Parallel Event "Global Homelessness and the Path Forward: An Overview of the Issue and its Place on the UN General Assembly's Agenda"**

The 78th session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA78) marked a momentous occasion for people with lived experience, and advocates to end homelessness globally. After first being addressed in the UN space at the 58th Commission for Social Development in February 2020, UNGA78 was the first official General Assembly where the issue of Homelessness was formally addressed within its agenda.

The release and presentation of the Secretary General's recent report: "Inclusive Policies and Programs to Address Homelessness," was the first of its kind. It discusses the challenges faced by disadvantaged groups, and provides a review of the progress, gaps, and challenges in addressing homelessness, the emerging and converging issues, and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The report notes that while knowledge around the issue is improving, substantial efforts are still needed. Along with our co-sponsors, UNANIMA International was ecstatic to be able to host an event in recognition of this report, and the advocacy and commitment to ending homelessness that led to it.

UNGA78 High-Level Week  
Hybrid Parallel Event

**UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL**

### **Global Homelessness and the Path Forward:**

**An Overview of the Issue and its Place on the UN General Assembly's Agenda**

**Thursday, September 7, 2023**  
10:00am EST | Baha'i International Community

In the coming weeks, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will present a report on homelessness to the 78th session of the UN General Assembly on the progress and challenges related to homelessness (A/RES/76/133). Staying true to our mantra, "don't talk about us, without us," this parallel event will provide a space to hear from thematic experts, Member States, civil society, and individuals with a lived experience in an open dialogue setting. It will give those interested in the issue of homelessness the opportunity to discuss the drivers, good practices from various state and non-state stakeholders, policy recommendations, and what the path forward is for addressing homelessness within the UN system. Together, we must ensure that the momentum achieved on homelessness continues so that the hidden homeless will no longer be left behind.

**REGISTER [HERE](#)**

#### **SPEAKERS**

- **Moderator: Jean Quinn, DW**, Executive Director of UNANIMA International
- **Ms. Vero Henintsoa Andriamiarisoa**, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Madagascar to the UN
- **MaryAnn Dantuono**, NGO Representative of the International Association of Charities to the UN
- **Representative from UN-Habitat (TBC)**
- **Dr. Ifeyinwa Ofong**, NGO Representative of WorldWIDE Network Nigeria to the UN
- **Hantamalala Rafalimanana**, United Nations Focal Point on Housing (TBC)
- **Freek Spinnewijn**, Director of FEANTSA
- **Maryann Broxton**, Main Representative to the UN for the International Movement ATD Fourth World

Staying true to our mantra at UNANIMA International, “don’t talk about us, without us,” this parallel event provided a space to hear from thematic experts, Member States (specifically, Madagascar), UN Habitat, UN DESA, several civil society experts, and individuals with a lived experience of homelessness. The open dialogue setting gave speakers and the 90+ attendees an opportunity to discuss the drivers, good practices from various state and non-state stakeholders, policy recommendations, and what the path forward is for addressing homelessness within the UN system into the future.

Among the many engaging panelists was Hanta Rafalimanana, a thematic expert from UN DESA, who spoke on the challenges faced by disadvantaged social groups in respect to homelessness, and walked us through the recommendations made by the Secretary General’s report. While each speaker brought with them a unique expert opinion, there was a common sense of relief that the issue of Homelessness is receiving recognition at the UN and globally. Thus, there was also a renewed enthusiasm for continued advocacy to ensure it remains on the agenda into the future. In conclusion, Jean Quinn, DW eloquently summarized the speakers remarks, stating that “Together, we must ensure that the momentum achieved on homelessness continues so that the hidden homeless, especially women and children, are no longer be left behind.” If you would like to watch the event again, please visit this [link](#). To view the concept note, click [here](#)!

## UNANIMA International Event - Rethinking Multilateralism: Responding to Interconnected Crises from the Lens of the ‘People’ SDGs, Partnerships, and Civil Society



UN SDG Summit 2023  
Hybrid Parallel Event

### Rethinking Multilateralism:

Responding to Interconnected Crises from the Lens of the ‘People’ SDGs, Partnerships, and Civil Society

Thursday, September 14, 2023

10:00am EST | Baha’i International Community (TBC)

At the midpoint of the SDGs, we find ourselves at a critical juncture. Development and the distribution of resources is starkly uneven, the COVID-19 pandemic and effects of the climate crisis have uprooted and disrupted whole communities. Political will, trust in public institutions, and the very spirit of collaboration that led to the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals has reached new lows. A recommitment to the SDGs and their targets is needed now more than ever. UNANIMA International is hosting this event in parallel to the SDG Summit and aims to have attendees rethink conceptions of from a variety of perspectives. Panelists will contribute their expertise and recommendations related to the ‘People’ and ‘Partnership’ SDGs (Goals 1 – 6 and 17).

#### Speakers:

- **Moderator - Kirin Taylor**, Ph.D candidate in Political Science, Syracuse University
- **H.E. Ambassador Fergal Mythen**, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN
- **Dr. Despoina Afroditi Milaki**, International Presentation Association NGO Representative at the UN
- **Winifred Doherty**, Main NGO Representative to the UN for the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
- **Marissa Plouin**, OECD Housing and Social Affairs Policy Analyst
- **Jesús Salcedo Villanueva**, World Urban Forum Coordinator at UN-Habitat (TBC)
- **Liliane Nkuzimana**, UN Representative for the Baha’i International Community



Register  
HERE

The work of the United Nations and the international community has reached a significant milestone this year—we have arrived at the midway point of the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In celebration of this, on September 14, UNANIMA International and our co-sponsors facilitated a virtual parallel event alongside the UN’s SDG Summit. Titled “Rethinking Multilateralism: Responding to Interconnected Crises from the Lens of the ‘People’ SDGs, Partnerships, and Civil Society”, the event explored and gave space for speakers and attendees to rethink conceptions of multilateralism from a variety of perspectives. Speakers included the Ambassador of Ireland to the UN, an OECD Housing and Social Affairs Policy Analyst, as well as an extensive range of civil society experts who gave their perspective on the event theme in relation to the ‘People’ and ‘Partnership’ SDGs (Goals 1 – 6 and 17).

Among the many esteemed speakers at the event was H.E. Ambassador Fergal Mythen of Ireland, who was also co-chair of the SDG Summit. During his address he stressed the importance of multilateral, inclusive, and cohesive action, and clearly stated his support for the inclusion of civil society and the vital role we play in this process. While each speaker brought a unique perspective to the event, there was a distinct recognition across the board of the challenges we face as a global community, but also a sense of renewed hope heading



into the second half of the 2030 agenda. The event concluded with several engaging questions from some of the 80 participants directed at the individuals and wider panel.

If you'd like to watch the event again, please visit this [link](#). To view the concept note click [here](#)!



## 78th United Nations General Assembly



Representatives from around the world gathered in New York for the United Nations 78th General Assembly (UNGA78) in September for a week of intensive diplomacy marked by speeches, commitments, pledges, and calls to action. Attended by Government leaders, activists, youth, celebrities, business executives, religious leaders, civil society and concerned citizens, this year's UNGA included a diverse range of perspectives coming together to form six days of debate, dialogue and decision-making on challenges and opportunities spanning the global agenda.

Among the many issues discussed, participants exchanged ideas and engaged in conversations on the climate crisis, conflict, pandemics, poverty, and other threats, while also raising questions on emerging developments, including the rise of Artificial Intelligence and homelessness. This year's UNGA faced several challenges for the organization, including increasing power divisions, a shrinking space for multilateral cooperation, and the United Nation's increasingly uncertain role in managing international peace and security. However, there was a distinct recognition that the global community, with guidance from the UN,

has the potential to continue making a largely positive impact.

One key component in overcoming some of these challenges is the need for the UN's leadership and Member States to develop new strategies for mobilizing the UN's strength in dealing with the global and local issues at hand. As Antonio Guterres noted in his opening address, "The women and men of the United Nations are determined in our efforts to address today's cascading crises and set humanity on a new path to peace, stability and prosperity."

Among the many highlights of the General Assembly this year, was the evident positive transition and push for gender equality in leadership globally. With the highest number of female leaders in attendance to date, the UNGA general debate boasted a total of 21 women representing their countries! You can watch this debate, the opening session, and other UNGA78 videos and sessions via this [link](#)

# NGO Committee Updates

## The NGO Committee for Social Development



Along with supporting many events during the UNGA, HLPF and SDG Summit, NGO CSocD's grassroots subcommittee is in the process of collating and releasing their most recent survey results. Additionally, NGO CSocD is now ramping up preparations for the 62nd Commission for Social Development, which will take place in February 2024. The theme will be "Fostering social development and social justice through social policies to accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to achieve the overarching goal of poverty eradication". You can check out the committee's newly improved website here: <https://ngosocdev.org>

## The Working Group to End Homelessness

Recently the WGEH has been celebrating and promoting the sharing of the Secretary General's Report on "Inclusive Policies and Programs to Address Homelessness" through their significant social media release, as well as in person advocacy in the UN space. In addition to co-sponsoring several events, the WGEH also hosted a parallel event for the 78th General Assembly titled, "A Future We Want: A Home for All".



## Grassroots Stories



## Retired Sisters of The Assumption Bringing Compassionate Presence To Immigrants In Massachusetts, USA

The State of Massachusetts in northeastern, USA, is well known for welcoming newcomers and assisting them on the path to wellbeing and integration into the fabric of the Commonwealth. Even so, with the continuous new surge of immigrants overwhelming the state's aid network, it takes an effort on everyone's part to help immigrants meet the challenges ahead. Sensitive to the "signs of the times", a few retired Sisters of the Assumption, each in her own way, are trying to answer the call to be a compassionate presence nurturing the hope of newcomers to this country.



Sister Irene Martineau, SASV, just celebrated 65 years of religious life. After many years as a teacher and school principal, she continues to serve in a parish in Lowell, MA. In this multicultural city of 100,000 residents where 69 different languages are spoken, Sister Irene has found a way to build up a support network providing encouragement and assistance in finding food, clothing, suitable housing, education and even jobs for many immigrant and impoverished families in the area.

Sister Rita St Onge, SASV, a lifelong educator, now resides in an assisted living facility in Marlboro, MA. When she noticed that some employees in the building had difficulty speaking English, her heart went out to them. She is now teaching English to two Spanish speaking immigrant workers. She meets with these hard-working staff members during their scheduled shift breaks. Even as her students are enjoying the gift of being able to speak English more confidently, so too is Sister Rita relishing her intercultural experience with her new friends.

Sister Janice Belanger, SASV, lives in a retirement colony in Worcester, MA. A former missionary, having worked for many years in Latin-America, Sr. Janice was asked to help with translating for immigrants at a free medical clinic in Shrewsbury, MA. Most Tuesday evenings she meets with Brazilian immigrants at the clinic. For Sr. Janice, it is a privilege to be able to help these immigrants tend to their health needs. In doing so, she hopes to be able give back some of the generous and joy filled hospitality she herself once received from the Brazilian culture.

Submitted by Sister Janice Belanger, SASV

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## Cabrini Center - Pagirinya Settlement, Uganda



After almost 4 years in Uganda we, Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cabrini Sisters, as we are known around here, got a house for our work with women's group. Having fixed it, the opening day come on 31st of March,

with the presence of our Regional Superior, Sr. Diane Dalle Mole, Mr. Bongani Kumalo, who is helping us to structure our mission, The Scalabrini Priests, Fr John and Fr Walter, who blessed the place, and the representatives from all women's Groups with their Coordinator, Arizio Tospita and many invited people.

As Catechists, Head- Teachers we, officially opened our new space dedicated to our most dear Mother Cabrini. This space is mainly to develop a Project we took over in partnership with JRS (Jesuit Refugees Service) sponsored by Conrad Hilton Foundation, whose target is to empower 200 women with some training skills in order they can increase their income for their family and for education for their children. We started with 214 women, and we concluded the first part of the project in June, with 208 women (six of them went back to South Sudan).

Besides their economic activities, such as: Bed sheets and table clothes embroideries, making rosaries, Tailoring, making bar and liquid soap, they were trained in Business, they accompanied weekly by a Counsel and will start adult literacy for those who don't know write and read. All the groups have already registered as Association in the District and opened their bank account to receive donation.

More than what they have achieved financially, in their relationship among the groups. Pagirinya Settlement is composed by many tribal groups who tried to gather together according to their tribes, and they didn't know each other. Cabrini Center became a "place of unity" where all groups belong to a South Sudan as a Nation, living in Uganda, searching for a better way of life. It was beautiful the stories we heard at the evaluation time, at the end of June:

"Before Sisters arrived here, we didn't know other people from other chapels. Each chapel lived in its world knowing nothing that was going on in others. Now, we are friends, companions and we are very happy to be with others". (Mary Moya, St Madalene Chapel)

"I had never thought I was able to learn something new. I thought I was just able to raise children, going to the bush for firewood and grass to cover the house... but now, after being trained for 5 months I'm a tailor and this dress I'm wearing, I made it" and there was a proud of herself and her eyes were shining while she spoke. (Hanna, St Madalene Chapel)

"Before I came in to the women's group I was very aggressive. Everyone around my house was a bit afraid of me. I used to fight for nothing... now, with the group I've changed a lot. I'm friend to everyone, I'm happier... my neighbors are asking: what has happened with this lady? This is the results of what we learned here, not just professional, but how to be human being". (Nancy, St Kisito)

All these made all difference in our mission! Now, we start the 2nd part of our Project, with some small adjustments in order to give them more opportunities to grow as empowered women and also, financially. "All for the greater Glory of the Blessed Heart of Jesus





Representatives of the Groups training to make Liquid Soap



Making Bed Sheets



Tailoring Group



## UNANIMA International Leadership Meeting

UNANIMA International was privileged to have many of the leaders of our member congregations join us for a session of our 2023 September Board Meeting. With our Board Members in-person with us at Thomas Berry Place in New York, and congregational leaders and leadership teams joining us over Zoom, we discussed the future direction of UNANIMA International.

To begin, Executive Director, Jean Quinn, conducted a presentation about UNANIMA International, including our work and achievements at the United Nations, our focus on family homelessness and its intersecting issues, and our upcoming events and efforts to represent our grassroots members at the United Nations, where we advocate for those left furthest behind in our world. The floor was then opened up to questions and comments from our attendees.

Congregation leaders were very affirming of the work UNANIMA International has been engaging in, and discussion was had regarding the organization's future in terms of its focus and direction, its membership, and various Board modalities. It was wonderful to get such valuable input and discuss UNANIMA International with our broader member community. We hope to continue these discussions in the future!





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## Resources



### Links for more information:

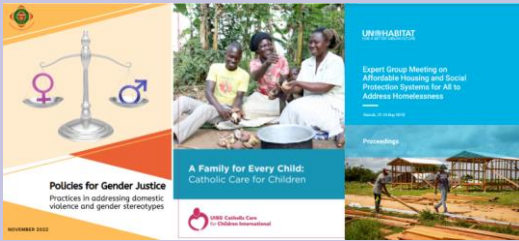
[Researching Internal Displacement](#)

[The Loss and Damage Collaboration](#)

[Loss and Damage and Displacement: Key Messages for the Road to COP28](#)

[UNANIMA International's World Homelessness Statement](#)

### Recently featured in:



## Our Publications:

Click on the images below!

**2nd October**

World Habitat Day

**5th October**

World Teachers Day

**10th October**

World Mental Health Day

**11th October**

International Day of the Girl Child

**16th October**

World Food Day

**17th October**

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

**24th October**

United Nations Day

**25th November**

International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

**1st December**

World AIDS Day

**10th December**

Human Rights Day

**18th December**

International Migrants Day

**25th December**

Christmas Day





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