

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE ON WORLD POPULATION DAY**

**11 July 2022**

This year's World Population Day falls during a milestone year, when we anticipate the birth of the Earth's eight billionth inhabitant.

This is an occasion to celebrate our diversity, recognize our common humanity, and marvel at advancements in health that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality rates.

At the same time, it is a reminder of our shared responsibility to care for our planet and a moment to reflect on where we still fall short of our commitments to one another.

Amidst COVID-19, the climate crisis, wars and conflicts, humanitarian emergencies, hunger and poverty, our world is in peril.

We still live in a world of vast gender inequality – and we are witnessing renewed assaults on women's rights, including on essential health services. Complications related to pregnancy and childbirth are still the leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19.

Reaching a global population of eight billion is a numerical landmark, but our focus must always be on people.

In the world we strive to build, 8 billion people means 8 billion opportunities to live dignified and fulfilled lives.

When we act on our shared values, we contribute to our common future.

Let us work together towards greater equality and solidarity to ensure that our planet can support our needs and those of future generations.

Let us protect human rights and the ability of all individuals to make informed choices about whether and when to have children.

And let us renew our promise to fully implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for a sustainable and inclusive future for all eight billion of us, leaving no one behind.

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