



The UN at 80 : A Living Legacy



On the eve of the **UN General Assembly (UNGA)** high level week in September, a commemorative memorial event of the **UN @ 80** was held in the General Assembly Hall. Entitled “**A Living Legacy**” it featured the newly installed President of the General Assembly, Annalena Baerbock of Germany, only the fifth woman to hold that role, the Secretary General and inspiring testimonies from four women who currently hold senior roles in the UN. A short documentary film traced the evolving story of a UN born from the ashes of war in 1945, with the determination to choose cooperation over conflict, in a continuing search for an elusive peace for humankind. The film focused on the story of the United Nations; - its people, its milestones, and the impact it has had on the world over the past eight decades. At the same, speakers acknowledged the need for reform in facing new and emerging challenges of the world today. ➡ Watch a [short video](#)



The world in 2025 is very different from 1945. Conflicts, environmental crises, and global disruptions demand solutions beyond the power of any single nation to resolve them. Global governance faces serious challenges: great-power tensions, underfunding, vetoes, limited enforceability of international law, and structural gaps, making this a pivotal moment for global governance. On **September 17**, the UN **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)** organized a one-day, high-level brainstorming session on **UN Charter Reform**. *What are the changes needed to shape a UN that is fit for purpose in the 21st century?* Speakers included former presidents of the General Assembly, global leaders, academics, and policymakers. ➡ [Read more](#) about UN reform.

Briefs from UNGA



The UN @ 80 initiative

Launched by the UN **Secretary General, Antonio Guterres** in March 2025 the **UN@80** a system-wide reform initiative, intended to strengthen the UN's response to global challenges while making it more efficient and cost effective. Given the dramatic changes that have occurred in the world order since 1945 it is not surprising that changes are needed to make it fit for purpose in the 21st century. The strategy was endorsed by the **UNGA** in July and the reform proposals to streamline the UN's systems and programmes are included in the report “**Shifting Paradigms**” will be considered by the General Assembly before the 80th Anniversary of its foundation in October 2025.



[Watch a short video](#)
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The High Seas Treaty

On **19 September 2025**, an important threshold was passed as the 60th member state ratified the agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (**BBNJ**). The “**High Seas Treaty**” as it has become known will come into effect in **January 2026**. It aims to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030 by establishing **Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)** in international waters. It is the first comprehensive set of regulations for the high seas. According to the High Seas Alliance, the BBNJ Agreement will “*enable stronger international efforts to protect our ocean, mitigate climate change, and safeguard the lives and livelihoods of billions of people worldwide,*”



[Watch a short video](#)



Climate Summit

UN **Secretary General Antonio Guterres**, joined with the **President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil** in calling a Climate Summit on the margins of the UNGA. This initiative aimed to promote the urgency of addressing the climate crisis and encourage countries to present their **Nationally Determined Contributions** prior to the UN Climate Conference in Brazil in November. Forty Heads of State present in New York and close to a total of 100 countries pledged to present their upscaled commitments prior to the meeting of parties to the **Climate Convention – COP 30 – in Brazil** during the month of November.



[Watch a short video](#)

International Day of Democracy.

In his message for **the 2025 International Day of Democracy**, UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the importance of people having the courage to shape their societies “*through dialogue, participation, and trust*”. He noted that these efforts are more vital than ever at a time “*when democracy and the rule of law are under assault from disinformation, division, and shrinking civic space*.” A commemorative event was held at the UN lounge, celebrating democracy as a living force of agency, hope and cooperation that is rooted in the principle of “**We the Peoples**”. Panelists from **Chile, Malawi and Ireland** shared their convictions and their experience. The first female Ambassador from Malawi to the UN noted that her country had been successful in moving from autocracy to democracy in the 1990s without violence. Involvement of people in decision making at the local level has drawn strength from the African principle of “**Ubuntu**”. However, challenges remain, and women’s participation is not equally reflected at all levels of society. In an era of shrinking civic space and rising disinformation, building trust, dialogue, and shared decision-making is more urgent than ever. ➡ [Read more](#)



Women Peace and Security

25 years ago this month, **the UN Security Council** adopted **Resolution #1325 on Women, Peace and Security**. The resolution was historic in that



it marked the first time that the unique impact of armed conflict on women and girls was explicitly acknowledged and a call made for women’s active role in peace negotiations, peace-building processes, and decision-making. It recognized that women’s participation leads to *more durable and inclusive peace agreements* and it challenged the traditional exclusion of women from peace processes, calling on governments to take action.

On 8th October, **the International Peace Institute** hosted an event to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of WPS #1325, focusing on lessons learnt. Panelists highlighted the importance of consistent gender-responsive leadership in peace-keeping operations, overcoming bias, addressing taboos faced by uniformed women, and adopting ways to ensure women’s full and safe participation in UN peace operations. Canada reported on the successful “**Elsie Initiative**” which aims to increase the meaningful participation of uniformed women in all ranks in peacekeeping operations. ➡ Watch a [short video](#)

Fast facts from the Secretary General’s 2025 Report on Women, Peace & Security

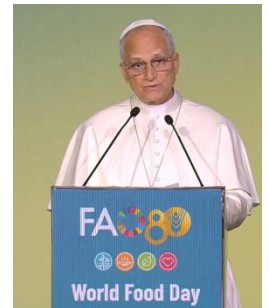
- **676 million women and girls** live close to deadly conflict.
- Conflict related sexual violence **increased by 87%** over a two year period and civilian casualties among women and children **quadrupled**
- Last year **87% of peace talks** took place last year without a single woman at the table
- Statistics show that women made up just **7% of negotiators; 14% of mediators**.
- In conflict-affected countries women hold **just 18%** of seats in local governance; less than half of the global average.
- **Just 0.4% of aid** to conflict-affected countries reaches women’s organizations.

World Food Day :

On **World Food Day, October 16th**, a landmark global event was held at the **HQ of the UN World Food Organization (FAO)** in Rome to mark the 80th anniversary of the Organization’s foundation. In his keynote address, **Pope Leo XIV** reaffirmed the importance of the agency’s enduring mission to end hunger and build resilient agrifood systems across the globe. He denounced the use of hunger as a weapon of war and noted that allowing millions of human beings to die in the grip of hunger is a “*collective failure, an ethical aberration, a historical shame*”. He urged

the international community not to look the other way when faced with world food emergencies noting that “*the hungry faces of so many who still suffer challenge us and invite us to reexamine our lifestyles, our priorities and our overall way of living in today’s world.*” ➡ [Read more](#)

➡ Watch the [short video](#).



RSHM Area in Brazil : Preparing for COP 30 – the UN Climate Conference



From 10 – 21 November, **Brazil** will proudly host the **30th Conference of Parties** to the **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 30)** in Belém, Pará. The **RSCM JPIC team in Brazil**, working with the **Sagrado Network of RSHM schools**, formed a task force for the initiative named “**COP 30 Sagrado**”. They have been actively involved in planning programmes and initiatives to raise awareness and strengthen commitment and responsibility to caring for our common home. An online programme was held for five days during the week of September 30th and a **video of practical initiatives** in the schools and social assistance projects was released **on October 4th**, the feast of **St.**

Fran ➡ Watch a [short video here....](#)