

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY
8 September 2015**

Literacy, a human right that empowers individuals and advances societies, is needed more than ever as the United Nations prepares to adopt a new global agenda for sustainable development.

Agenda 2030 is ambitious and transformative, aiming to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and preserve our planet. Its adoption by world leaders later this month offers an opportunity to recommit to promoting literacy as part of our collective push for a life of dignity for all.

More than 750 million adults in our world are illiterate – and two thirds of them are women. Some 250 million primary school age children do not have a grasp of basic literacy skills while 124 million children and adolescents are out of school. All of these people, whatever their age, deserve the chance to learn to read. When we give them that opportunity, we will create more productive, stable and secure societies for all.

On this International Literacy Day, I call for governments and partners, including in the private sector, to join forces for universal literacy as an essential component of the future we want.