



United Nations Association of Australia

HERBERT VERE EVATT, ATTORNEY GENERAL; MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS; MEMBER OF THE DELEGATION FROM AUSTRALIA, SIGNING THE UN CHARTER, 26 JUNE 1945



# UNITED NATIONS DAY – FACT SHEET

“UN Day is a day on which we resolve to do more. More to protect those caught up in armed conflict, to fight climate change and avert nuclear catastrophe; more to expand opportunities for women and girls, and to combat injustice and impunity; more to meet the Millennium Development Goals.”

-- BAN KI-MOON UN SECRETARY GENERAL

## > WHAT IS UNITED NATIONS DAY?

United Nations Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter – the founding document of the UN. The UN Charter was drafted at the Conference on International Organisation in San Francisco (“the San Francisco Conference”).

In his remarks to the final session of this Conference, President of the United States Harry S. Truman said, “The Charter of the United Nations which you have just signed is a solid structure upon which we can build a better world. History will honour you for it. Between the victory in Europe and the final victory, in this most destructive of all wars, you have won a victory against war itself. . . . With this Charter the world can begin to look forward to the time when all worthy human beings may be permitted to live decently as free people.”

On 26 June 1945, 50 nations signed the UN Charter, committing to working together to achieve a peaceful and just world. The UN did not come into existence at the signing of the Charter. In many countries the UN Charter had to be approved by their national congress or parliament. It was resolved that the Charter would come into force when the governments of China, France, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, the United States and a majority of the other signatory states had ratified it and deposited notification to this effect with the US State Department. On 24 October, 1945, this condition was fulfilled by the required majority and the United Nations came into existence.

24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948 in honour of this anniversary. In 1971, the UN General Assembly recommended that the day be observed by Member States as a public holiday.



# > THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

The UN Charter established six principal organs of the United Nations: the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, The International Court of Justice and the Secretariat.

The UN as a global system is much larger and encompasses over 15 different agencies, funds and programmes that carry out its work. Examples of the work of UN agencies include:



UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, work towards a world where the **BASIC NEEDS OF EVERY CHILD IS MET**. UNICEF works in over 190 countries.



The UNHCR, the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, **LEADS INTERNATIONAL ACTION TO PROTECT REFUGEES** and safeguard their rights.



The World Food Program **GETS FOOD TO WHERE IT IS NEEDED** in emergencies saving the lives of people affected by war, civil conflict and natural disasters.



The World Health Organisation, the agency concerned with international public health. The World Health Organisation is responsible for playing a leading role in the **ERADICATION OF SMALLPOX**, significantly reducing the number of polio cases diagnosed each year and working with governments around the world in **LIMITING THE SPREAD OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASES/PANDEMICS**.



The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, leads and inspires the world in achieving universal access to **HIV PREVENTION, TREATMENT, CARE AND SUPPORT**.



The UN Environment Programme provides leadership and encourages partnership in **CARING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT** by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.



The UN Development Programme is the UN's global development network. It **ADVOCATES FOR CHANGE** and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.



# > UN DAY CELEBRATIONS

UN Day has traditionally been marked throughout the world with meetings, discussions and exhibits about the achievements and goals of the UN.

Every year the UN Secretary General releases a UN Day message reminding the world of the importance to strive for a just and peaceful world.

At the UN Headquarters in New York there is a UN Day concert that takes place every year as part of celebrations.

In Australia, the UNAA is hosting a program of events around the country and releasing a UN Day video which will be accessible on our website.

## MORE INFORMATION:

### History of the UN:

<http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/history/index.shtml>

### UN Day:

<http://www.un.org/en/events/unday/2011/index.shtml>

### Structure and organisation of the UN:

<http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/index.shtml>



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