

The United Nations: In Everyone's Interest UN Day celebration set for Clinton

Written by Sister Sallyann McCarthy
Monday, 24 October 2011 15:24

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Mayor Rodger Holm has proclaimed October 24, 2011, UN Day in Clinton, Iowa. He will read the proclamation and preside at the raising of the UN flag on the city's memorial flagpole on Monday morning, October 24, at 11:00 am.

"We hope everyone who is able will join us at the Memorial Flagpole (6th Avenue South and the Riverfront) to commemorate the international organization which offers us the best opportunity to address the common good of all peoples," said Janice Cebula OSF, President of the Sisters of St. Francis, who have organized the local observance since 1989.

"Bringing to LIFE the Millennium Development Goals" is the theme of this year's commemoration

[The Goals \(MDGs\)](#) are a set of 8 global objectives aimed at improving the lives of the world's poorest people. The Goals, which cover a range of human development issues from providing universal primary education to halting the spread of HIV, were adopted at the [2000 UN Millennium Summit](#) by 189 nations and have spurred unprecedented global efforts to help the world's poor.

The MDGs provide the entire United Nations System, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with a blueprint to work coherently together towards a common goal to reduce poverty and improve lives. They set time bound targets, by which progress in reducing poverty, homelessness and hunger; combating HIV AIDs and other diseases; promoting gender equality, maternal and child health, education and environmental sustainability; and encouraging global partnerships for development can be measured. They also embody basic human rights — the rights of each person on the planet to health, education, shelter and security.

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The MDGs, which are slated to be met by 2015, have been the focus of UN Day celebrations worldwide for ten years: one means by which UN Associations around the world strive to focus public attention on the needs addressed in the MDGs. The Clinton Franciscans sit on the Board of the Iowa Division on the UN Association-USA and are founding members of the Franciscan presence at the UN, Franciscans International.

Annually Clinton's Mayors have come to the riverfront to preside, often in the rain and cold, standing together with thousands of mayors and other government leaders around the world in recognizing the significance of the U.N. Charter which went into effect on October 24, 1945.

In 1947, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a U.S.-sponsored resolution declaring October 24th United Nations Day, to be commemorated annually by all member-states of the United Nations. In the United States, each President, beginning with Harry Truman, has issued a proclamation asking citizens to observe U.N. Day and to reflect upon the importance of the United Nations to our national interest, as well as to each American individually.

For more information on the UN Day commemoration, call Sisters of St. Francis, 563-242-7611 or visit www.clintonfranciscans.com . #####

CUTLINE: the UN Flag flies along with the US, IOWA and MIA flags on Clinton's Riverfront Memorial following last year's UN Day ceremony.

SIDE BAR:

[The United States and the MDGS](#) , a report by [InterAction](#) , outlines three areas in which major reforms are necessary: official development assistance, trade, and debt relief. The United States has made some progress in each of these categories, yet more work remains to be done.

The U.S. is the largest single provider of official development assistance in terms of total

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dollars, but U.S. aid lags behind that of many Western European nations as a percentage of gross national income. American assistance totals 0.22% of GNI, far below both the 0.47% average of major donor countries and the UN's target rate of 0.7%. Moreover, over two-thirds of U.S. aid goes to middle-income and high-income countries such as Israel, and many of the world's poorest nations are not among top recipients of U.S. aid. Non-governmental aid, including remittances and foreign direct investment, similarly favors middle-income countries over the world's most impoverished.

U.S. trade promises, meanwhile, offer a brighter future for the poor — but only if the U.S. lives up to its guarantees. Federal lawmaking and exceptions to trade rules have frequently collapsed progressive trade reforms. Current legislation in the US Congress threatens US contributions to relieving international poverty by eliminating US payment of its UN dues and thus removing the US from the international consultative body.