

## Bridging the Divide - Ending Global Inequalities

The United Nations was founded not only to ensure global peace but also to provide opportunities to build bridges - to build bridges between different nations, people, societies and political views. The hope was to end the divisions that had existed for centuries. There were the wealthy and the poor, former conquerors and the conquered - all being in the same room, all sharing the same planet.

To this day though, too little has been done. Global inequalities are still a reality and they exist in many forms. One of the most prominent examples is probably economic disparity. How can the countries representing one eighth of the world's population have the economic strength of all the others combined? While some individuals are on track to become the world's first trillionaires, millions of people still do not have any access to basic human necessities such as food, clean water, shelter, education and affordable healthcare.

Human rights should not be a privilege. They shall be - they are universal.

Many people trapped in poverty start looking for scapegoats, which causes tensions within society and leads to the suppression of minorities and the rise of the political extremes. It is that extremism that sparks tensions between nations, between societies.

The Covid-19 pandemic showed us how quickly we can ignore the needs of the poor and those on the margins of society. It can only be hoped that the world has learned from this experience. Combating the pandemic was not a national matter. International cooperation led to the necessary advances in vaccine research, and international aid helped developing countries to gain access to them.

However, this international cooperation especially between developed and developing countries began too late. Initially, there were only national responses and initiatives, despite it being an issue of global scale.

In times of crisis, countries with strong institutions and economic resilience have an advantage as they are able to maintain stability and provide a safety net for their people. This is something that every human being deserves, yet strong institutions are rarely found in many developing countries.

In recent years the consequences of climate change have become even more visible, including famines and natural catastrophes on an unimaginable scale. The global economy is under threat and the livelihoods of billions are at risk.

It is the sad truth, that especially the poorer countries of the global south are most affected, even though they contributed the least to climate change. Now is the time for the wealthy to face their responsibility and support those whose livelihoods are at stake to adapt and prevail in this crisis.

Faced with these inequalities and their consequences millions of people were left with no other option but to migrate, despite the many obstacles that exist as some countries consider people who seek a life in dignity as criminals. Closing borders and turning a blind eye cannot be the answer. Every human being deserves a place where they can live in dignity and if that is not to be accomplished through migration, then the global inequalities must come to an end.

Humanity was always able to achieve greatness through cooperation. Why not now as well? Why do we not try to build up a global system that benefits everyone? A system without exploitation, that is able to adapt to climate change and achieve net zero emissions. Through cooperation, strong institutions can be established and economic opportunities will arise.

A stable world, where all nations cooperate peacefully to provide a life in dignity for every human being, sounds like an utopia, but it is the purpose of the United Nations, it is the reason why it was founded over 80 years ago.

Humanity must not divide itself. We all live on the same planet and any divisions will only hinder and harm us. Bridges must be built.