



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



PEACE, JUSTICE, AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS: WHY THEY MATTER

What's the goal here?

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

Why?

People everywhere need to be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation.

Conflict, insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice remain threats to sustainable development. In 2019, the number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 79.5 million, the highest level ever recorded. One in four children continues to be deprived of legal identity through lack of birth registration, often limiting their ability to exercise rights in other areas. The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to

Every day,
100
civilians
- including
women and
children -
are killed
in armed
conflicts
despite
protections
under
international
law

amplify and exploit fragilities across the globe.

What needs to be done to address this?

Governments, civil society and communities must work together to implement lasting solutions to reduce violence, deliver justice, combat corruption and ensure inclusive participation at all times.

Freedom to express views, in private and in public, must be guaranteed. From 2015 to 2019, the United Nations recorded at least 1,940 killings and 106 enforced disappearances of human rights defenders, journalists and trade unionists across 81 countries, with over half of killings occurring in Latin America and the Caribbean. Laws and policies must be applied without any form of discrimination. Disputes need to be resolved through functioning and justice systems.

National and local institutions must be accountable and need to be in place to deliver basic services to communities equitably and without the need for bribes.

How does this goal apply to me, wherever I live?

Crimes that threaten the foundation of peaceful societies, including homicides, human trafficking and other organized crimes, as well as discriminatory laws or practices, affect all countries. Even the world's greatest democracies face major challenges in addressing corruption, crime and human rights violations for everyone at home.

What would be the cost of not taking action now?

Armed violence and insecurity have a destructive impact on a country's development, affecting economic growth and often resulting in long-standing grievances among communities.

Violence affects children's health, development and well-being, and their ability to thrive. It causes trauma and weakens social inclusion.

Lack of access to justice means that conflicts remain unresolved and people cannot obtain protection and redress. Institutions that

do not function according to legitimate laws are prone to arbitrariness and abuse of power, and less capable of delivering public services to everyone.

To exclude and to discriminate not only violates human rights, but also causes resentment and animosity, and could give rise to violence.

What can we do?

Exercise your right to hold your elected officials to account. Exercise your right to freedom of information and share your opinion with your elected representatives.

Promote inclusion and respect towards people of different ethnic origins, religions, gender, sexual orientations or different opinions. Together, we can help to improve conditions for a life of dignity for all.

To find out more about Goal #16 and other Sustainable Development Goals, visit:

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS