



**ATD
FOURTH WORLD**

NOV - 7 2016

16-09541

H. E. Mr. Jan Eliasson
Deputy Secretary-General
United Nations

26 October 2016

**INTERNATIONAL
MOVEMENT
ATD FOURTH WORLD**

Founded by
Father Joseph Wresinski
(1917-1988)

NGO in consultative
Status with Ecosoc,
Unesco, Unicef, ILO and
The Council of Europe

**MOUVEMENT
INTERNATIONAL
ATD QUART MONDE**

Fondé par
le Père Joseph Wresinski
(1917-1988)

ONG ayant le statut
consultatif auprès de
l'Ecosoc, de l'Unesco
de l'Unicef, du BIT et
du Conseil de l'Europe

**MOVIMIENTO
INTERNACIONAL
ATD CUARTO MUNDO**

Fundado por el Padre
Joseph Wresinski
(1917-1988)

ONG dotada de
estatuto consultativo
con Ecosoc, Unesco
Unicef, OIT
y el Consejo de Europa

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Re: Thank you for your contribution to the commemoration of the International Day for
the Eradication of Poverty

Feb #
16-01211

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the New York team of ATD Fourth World and all the people with direct experience of poverty who courageously took the floor, I would like to thank you for your presence and your words at the Commemoration of the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

Knowing that people with their background very rarely speak at the United Nations, they had prepared very carefully. They looked at their lives and carefully chose experiences that could help other people understand their struggles, words that could better reflect their wisdom, and hopes that could better represent the yearning of their communities.

When they were preparing, Nicole, Johnny, Kimberly, Patrick, and Marlon were reminded of painful moments — distressing memories that brought frustration, tears, and rage; but they also found the courage to look at the future with hope, to dream, and to invite us to join them in their efforts.

Every year, with the support of the Permanent Missions of France and Burkina Faso, we organize the commemoration for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty giving priority to the voices of people with direct experience of poverty. Every year, UN officials listen to their words. Very rarely do they recognize the importance of connecting, as you said, "those who are privileged, those who have reached the position of influence, and those who are affected." Your final comments brought dignity and respect to the people who so carefully prepared to speak about their lives, their struggles, and their hopes, and we are deeply thankful for them.

Years of experience fighting side by side with people living in poverty have taught us that the eradication of poverty will really start when people living in poverty can themselves lay claim to the definition of poverty; when we recognize that they are in the forefront in the fight against poverty; when they become real partners in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs to eradicate it; and when these policies and programs recognize and build upon the efforts, the strategies, the solidarity, and the intelligence of the people who are furthest behind.

Many changes will be needed, especially in those people who hold power over the definition of poverty and over policies to eradicate it. They will need to make room to work hand in hand with people who have direct experience of poverty.

Finally, let me express again my most sincere gratitude, because thanks to your final words, people with direct experience of poverty left the room knowing that they had been heard.

Sincerely,

Cristina Diez
Main representative to the UN
International Movement ATD Fourth World

EOSG/CENTRAL

2016/10/26