

our world our dignity our future

17 October 17 dreams 17 goals

#TellEveryone the #RolesWePlay #EYD2015  
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INTERNATIONAL DAY  
FOR THE  
ERADICATION OF  
POVERTY



OCT 17

#endpoverty

<http://overcomingpoverty.org>

Messages from the  
#EndPoverty Day

in Dublin – 17.10.2015

#Leave No One Behind!



**UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN  
PRESIDENT OF IRELAND**



As we mark UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty this October 17th, we recognise the special significance of 2015 in what must be our collective effort to eradicate global poverty. This year marks a decisive moment in history, with the agreement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals “Agenda 2030” in New York in recent weeks, and what will hopefully be a successful outcome at the COP21 Climate Change Summit in Paris at the end of the year.

Delivering on the promises to end inequality contained in Agenda 2030 will require concerted political commitment and it is essential that the central role of the State as the guarantor of the human rights of citizens is retained. It is also essential that economic forces are harnessed to serve the requirements of social justice and human rights, rather than the interests of justice being seen as residual to the demands of the market. At the individual level, we must recognise that sustainability and equality will require changes in lifestyle, patterns of consumption and attitudes.

“Leave no-one behind” is a central principle of the Agenda 2030 Goals and we are, above all else, called upon to re-forge a commitment to the inherent and universal dignity of every member of the human family. As we gather on this day, the world is turning its efforts and its capacities more fully than ever before to eradicate poverty – let us all play our part in turning that dream into a reality.

**Michael D. Higgins**, President of Ireland





## Councillor Críona Ní Dhálaigh - Lady Mayoress of Dublin

Tá fáilte roimh uilig anseo inniu chuig an comoradh fíor tabhachtach seo – Comoradh na Naisiun Aontaithe le deireadh a chur leis an mbochtaineacht.

Last year marked the hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of the first world war.

Next year, we will mark the centenary of the Easter Rising. **Next year is an important year for Ireland.** In 2016 we celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of an event that gave birth to an Independent Ireland. That event was the 1916 Rising, when in the middle of the First World War, idealistic patriots who were frustrated by the refusal of the British Parliament to grant even limited independence, rose in revolt. The rebellion failed but it seeded the events that led to our War of Independence. More particularly on that Easter Sunday of 1916 the leaders in announcing the Irish Republic published the Proclamation of Independence. That Proclamation set down ideals that have yet to be fully achieved..ideals of equality, of justice, of access to opportunity and of real freedom.

But today, on International Day for the Elimination of Poverty, I would like to remember a more recent anniversary.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the **Make Poverty History** march that took place in Dublin on the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. I was just one of more than 20,000 people who marched through the streets of Dublin that day.

I remember a sense of being part of a global movement, of marching alongside those who had mobilised in cities

across the world to send a message to the G8, to demand debt cancellation and trade justice.

We gathered at the Spire in O'Connell Street and we marched to Merrion Square. The centre of Dublin was a sea of white and black and I have no doubt that many of you here marched as well.

Perhaps you too remember Des Geraghty taking to the stage and telling us that a child would die because of preventable poverty every three seconds? He told us that it was the challenge of our generation to make poverty history. Every three seconds. Last night, while preparing for this speech I wondered what the figure was for today. Ten years on from the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2005, was a child still dying every three seconds?

According to the most recent report I could find, from the World Health Organisation in September, the number of children who die under the age of five is 16,000. Every day. That works out at one child every five and a half seconds. I didn't really know how to feel when I figured that out.

Part of me wanted to take some satisfaction, some hope or solace that, if nothing else, the figure was improving, that less children will die this year than died when we marched ten years ago.

But another part of me remembered that Nelson Mandela had once said that, **“Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.”**

A life in poverty is a life where the fundamental human rights, the essence of what makes us human, are denied and refused.

The natural and man-made resources of our planet are enough, more than enough, to feed, clothe and house every man, woman and child.

We **choose** not to. We, as a society, as a culture, choose not to do so. We balk at higher taxes. We wonder whether the money spent on overseas development aid could be spent on something closer to home. We consume more and more every year and using up more and more of our dwindling natural resources.

We struggle with our first world problems while others struggle to survive or, knowing that they will lose that battle, struggle to give their children a better chance.

We look at pictures of people in countries far away that do not look like us and we see them as something other, something different to us, and as somehow culpable in their poverty.

Some say that charity begins at home, that we have to look after our own first. But in a country where residents blockade roads rather than offer sanctuary to the shattered remains of burned-out families, one must wonder whether, for some people, their charity begins anywhere.

Poverty is not history because we have not chosen to make it so. That can be the only honest judgement of us as a people, of us as a species.

So where do we begin? We begin by working together, and so I want to particularly welcome the delegations here from Limerick, from Drogheda, from London and from all of the other cities and towns marking this day.

We do it by working together to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted last month, are living, real, targets and are not ignored by governments and corporations. WE must not leave anyone behind.

But as well as working together on a global scale, we must also change ourselves.

Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the authors of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, once said that human rights begin "in small places...so close and small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world".

The frontline in the global struggle against poverty is in the poorest countries of the world like Malawi, Liberia and Ethiopia.

And it is in the poorest parts of one of the wealthiest countries of the world, like Dublin's inner city, Moyross in Limerick and Knocknaheeny in Cork, Ireland's small places.

If we are serious about making poverty history, then we must join together, as one movement, as we did in 2005. We must cooperate and share and we must never forget that if poverty is unnatural and manmade, then we have it within ourselves to end it.

But while we support the global struggle against poverty, when we sign petitions and write letters to politicians and tell them on the doorsteps in the spring that Ireland must do more, and spend more, to end poverty, we must also fight our individual struggles, alongside our neighbours, family and friends, in our own small places. **I commend the speakers here today who will honour this event by sharing their personal testimonies. They will tell us the ways in which they contribute to the life of their communities and to the fight against poverty they** will challenge society's negative perceptions of people living on low incomes or supported by the welfare system.

One month ago, I recieved a letter from Donald Lee, the President of the International Committee for October 17<sup>th</sup>. Donald Lee ask me if the City of Dublin could be part in 2017 of a network of 50 cities who are going to celebrate the existence of the "17 October Stones".

In 2017, we will mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the unveiling of the "mother" Stone on the Human Rights Plaza in Paris

I can assure you that the city of Dublin will look at this request with a special attention and that we will be happy to prepare the 2017 anniversary with the Irish 17 October Committee and with all citizens in Dublin for whom the Stone which is just before me is so important!

A great deal of our time and energy is taken up with the importance of economic growth and activity. While economic growth is essential it should only be a tool that serves the needs of people; that supports viable and vibrant local communities ; and that ensures the we protect and sustain the fragile and delicate environmental eco system of our world. Simply put we need to have happy and engaged people, who lead healthy and fulfilling lives, who have meaningful and rewarding work, and who enjoy and protect the landscape and environment in which they live.

This is not just about poverty but about inequality. Improving incomes means nothing without access to public services and social security net. This issue is just magnified and multiplied in developing countries.

- Poverty is not a phenomenon, its man-made and systematic.
- The West has deep inequality and plays a fundamental part in the underdevelopment of the South.

There is loads to say on 2030 SDGs but I think others will speak on that. I think the main part is that it doesn't mean we wait till then but action is urgently needed now on eradicating poverty, in Dublin as much as any other city.

Ní neart go chur le cheile.



## Hallelujah by the Neighbourhood Youth Project 2 inspired by the song of Leonard Cohen

We all gather here now every year,  
In a world where poverty and fear,  
Exists and we all know that's true now  
This world where wealth and riches thrive  
Yet millions struggle to survive,  
And refugees and migrants they are dying,

### **Chorus –Hallelujah x 4**

Is this the world we want to see,  
Wars, famines and inequality,  
And refugees abandoned can't you see now?  
This world is not just ours alone,  
We must share it as its all our home,  
And we all know just how true that is now

### **Chorus**

Its really up to you and me  
To show true solidarity,  
We need to do whats right and do it now yea  
No more children dead upon our shores  
But welcomed here with open doors  
We all know that's what we must do now.

### **Chorus**

So here today let us all swear  
To help the poor everywhere  
And do it as we know we must now  
So fortress Europe we'll destroy  
So we can sing the Ode to joy,  
and sing it as if its true, yea.

### **Chorus**

## Members of the “#RolesWePlay” project – ATD UK

**Thomas:** The importance of the “#RolesWePlay” project is getting a variety of opinions out into the world from a variety of people who have lived the life they talk about. That, to me, means an unbiased look at real life

rather than a biased, one-sided opinion like in many papers. A lot of the time they perceive you as lazy and not wanting to do anything but it's not a case of not wanting to. You have to understand that people in poverty aren't there



through choice; it's just through a set amount of things that happen. One day you can be on top of the world and two days later at the bottom.

poetry for weddings, funerals, birthdays and at Easter and Christmas time. I wrote a poem recently for a supermarket and it was put up on the wall. One of my poems was read out at the



**James:** We all bring something to our communities, be we unemployed or someone earning multi-millions. We all have something to give. When you're in poverty, it's important to feel you're a valued member of the community. If you feel your opinions matter and your voice is important to someone out there, you will constantly grow and evolve.

**Ewa reading the testimony of Georgina:** I like to write poems because I can express all my thoughts easier than speaking them. I write

House of Commons. I give my poems to people and I hope it makes them happy.

Words can be hurtful; you have to be careful. I like to take the time to read over what I have written, ask people what they think and then add to it. I feel joy and I feel happy when I write but then, after I've finished, I feel sad and I'm not sure if it's good enough or what people might say. When I'm with people I wonder what they see in me. But there's one thing they can't see and that is the loneliness in me.

## Testimony read by members of Focus Ireland

My name is Ann.

When I was a teenager I was diagnosed with an intellectual disorder. This meant that my schoolwork suffered and that I found school really difficult. I got extra classes to help me in a practical way but I didn't really understand what was going on and what was wrong. There was no one there to talk to me about it, to help me understand what was going on. It was tough at home too, fighting with my family meant that I often went to stay with my auntie, just to get away from things.

I should have been diagnosed at a much earlier stage but isn't that often the way in Ireland? The crisis has to happen before any help is provided. This is something I've experienced again and again in my life.

Despite all of this I got my leaving cert and started in college but due to health problems I didn't finish it. I started working but I knew I couldn't live at home any longer, I needed my independence and also the fighting was too much. I needed to get away. I wasn't entitled to social welfare so there were no options for me – I ended up in a hostel. At this time there were only two hostels in the city for women so my options were very limited. I believe that if the criteria for rent allowance



The **High Hopes Choir** joining the #EndPoverty Day gathering.

were more flexible that I wouldn't have ended up in that situation.

The hostel was scary, sharing a dorm was awful and there were people who were using drugs, I felt so unsafe. When I found out I was pregnant it was even worse. When I had my baby a social worker came to see me – my Mam had asked them to because she was worried I couldn't cope because of my intellectual disorder and the circumstances I was living in - but the social worker closed the case quickly when they heard I was moving into a flat with my boyfriend. Again I think if the social workers had offered me practical support things wouldn't have got as bad as they did later on.

Myself, my baby and my boyfriend moved to a flat, it was horrible, as bad as the hostel but I didn't have much say in it. My boyfriend controlled the money and made all the decisions. Things were too much for me, trying to cope with my health, minding a small baby and being fearful of my situation meant I just was just about surviving. I didn't even realise that things had got so bad, that I was a victim of domestic violence. There was no one there for me.

When my second child was born he got very sick and social workers were called. They could see that I was struggling. Social workers and community supports should have intervened much earlier but again and again the help comes so late because the resources aren't there to prevent the crisis.

My kids went to live with my parents and I went back into the hostels, I was on the homeless list but without my children I was right at the bottom of this list, I wasn't a priority when I should have been. It was no surprise that my mental health got very bad at this stage. The social worker helped to get me an assessment but the

mental health services said they couldn't offer me much help.

I struggled but kept going. Then, after a long dark period I was offered housing with a charity that works with people who have been homeless. Having a home of my own meant that for the first time in a long time I started to feel safe. Things were still hard but there was support to work on the issues that were affecting me, to really settle.

But I didn't stop there. I wanted to get involved in life again, to be part of something. I took up all of the opportunities that were offered to me – I volunteered in a drop in service where people who are homeless come in to get some food, advice and be away from the street, I became part of a community choir which gave me a chance to do something I love and be part of a community of **choice**.

I've now taken up the chance to become a Peer Researcher and together with a group of people from the housing and homeless charity that housed me and together we've developed a new charter to guide their work. My experiences, good and bad have helped to inform my understanding of support services should work.

You can see from my story that a couple of things are very important - start working on issues early and don't wait for a crisis, focus on people's strengths and build on these not on their difficulties, don't let people go round and round in a broken system.

I believe that working with people to address their own needs early and consistently contributes to an equal society, a society that we can all be proud of.

Thank you for hearing my story



## Testimony of Diane and Ritah with the Dominican Justice Office

Hi all, my name is Ritah, I am 24 years old and I have a 7 year old boy. Diane, who wishes she could be here today to read this with me, is 23 and has two boys who are 6 and 4. We both got pregnant when we were teenagers and life changed for us completely. At 18 years, we were single young mums with no family support.

I remember going home after my son's birth from the hospital. I had no-one to teach me how to feed him, bathe him, change him or what to do when he cries at night, and it was so challenging. I had to figure out all by myself how to look after him even though I had never even held a baby before.

Nights were so tough, because he would stay awake all night. There was no one who asked me how I felt or to have a chat with me about how I was getting on as a single young mother. Being a mother is hard in this world, but being a young single mother is extra hard because you also have to be the father to your children, not just the mother. Diane was also going through the same struggles: like me, she had to grow up so quickly. She was meant to have social workers but didn't and so was all alone with a new-born baby and the only option she had was to really fend for herself. Life was just hard for so long and the road was tough, lonely and scary. But the two of us were determined to give our children a better life and we found an inner strength to carry on, to go back to school and try to achieve the dreams we'd had before.

Diane and I became friends and we would speak about all the challenges of being a young mother and hoped one day to reach out to others. Because of what we went through, we never want to see any other young mother with no family support or other networks to go through the same challenges we did. We know how it feels to be alone with your child with no one asking you how you feel, check on you in the hospital, give you a call to find out how you doing or have a cup of tea with you. Some people need a holding hand, a shoulder to cry on, and we wanted to be people the people who can empathise with them.

We also want to remind mothers that having a child young cannot stop you from reaching all your goals. It could be education, employment, engaging in different activities or anything. There are barriers such as child care, the stigma attached to being a young mother, mental health issues, but there is power in togetherness, and once we come together we can overcome these barriers and reach for our dreams.

We're both studying social care and when Diane heard about a social enterprise where people have to come up for an idea about something missing in Irish society, we applied. What we thought was missing in Irish society was help for young mothers, mothers who are alone, young mothers with no family around, young mothers who are completely isolated and lonely and having to grow up quickly. Our idea to create a support network for young mums won first place. And after that happened we thought "do you know what? We have to work towards this, we have to make it happen" so today



we are working on our dream, we're working with Marie in the Dominican Justice Office and we have our first meeting of the Young Mothers Network in a few weeks, we're starting small at the moment but the whole idea is for young mums to meet with other young mums, to find strength in being together, to help each other not

to lose their goals, or to forget who they are. Yes they are mothers, but they're still individuals with dreams of their own. Maybe someone here will want to come to our group. We want to tell you that you would be welcome.

Thank you.



## Testimony of Phyllis read by Cecilia, Community Action Network

Good Morning, My name is Phyllis and I have been a resident in Dolphin House, Dublin 8 for many years. My community is a strong, vibrant one, full of people some of whom have lived there for generations but all of whom put their hearts and souls into building homes for their families. But for years the odds have been stacked against us doing just that. We have lived and continue to live with poor housing: damp, mould, sewerage, overcrowding - for which we pay rent, and which costs a fortune to heat and decorate, which impacts negatively on our health and the health of our children, which in turn costs a fortune in medical bills and in time off school and ultimately causes huge mental stress on a daily basis.

Until such time as we started naming this lived experience as a violation of human rights, we were getting no satisfactory response from the state. We had no where to turn but were left frustrated, powerless to get on with it.

We never saw the Celtic Tiger but we were told that now that he was gone, we could expect even less by way of state response to our living conditions. That is what prompted us to set up Rialto Rights in Action and to re-

name poor housing as human rights violations and to campaign for change.

Before this, the only human right I had ever heard about was the right to remain silent but over time I learned I and you have human rights because we are human. We are supposed to live a life of dignity and respect.

From the very beginning, I really connected to that idea of emphasising the "human" in all of us, especially when so much of our experience is de humanising. And yet all we want is an adequate home which is a basic human right. I have come to know that an adequate home means: a dwelling that is fit to live in, affordable, has access to services, family and community supports, and is one where adults and children can live in peace, security and dignity.

How can families be fully human when they live in overcrowded poor conditions that damage their health and wellbeing?

How can we as a society respond in a more human way to this type of reality?

In our campaign in Rialto Rights in Action, we learned that the state has a duty to respect, protect and fulfil our right to adequate housing and that they can be held accountable for not doing this.. We experienced the power of using human rights language, of gathering evidence, of using the media to highlight our experience in a new way. And it has delivered real outcomes in terms of:

- Empowerment
- Better quality short term refurbishment
- Regeneration – at least Phase One begun
- More respectful engagement

But it is a long journey and one where we have to keep the pressure on all the time, otherwise the system just has a way of reverting to old ways!

That is our story locally, but it led to a bigger campaign to deal with similar housing issues for Local Authority tenants on a national basis. Through this national campaign we gathered evidence across many more communities and lodged what is known as Collective Complaint with the Council of Europe.

I know it is no longer about asking please and being made to feel grateful, undeserving and blamed. This way of working is all about shifting the blame from residents to systems. It is all about taking power and feeling equal.

## Glenn Gannon reads an extract of his book “The Miracle Man”

“The Miracle Man” is the inspirational true story of Dubliner Glenn Gannon. Glenn brings you on an emotional roller coaster as he describes his incredible journey from near death on the streets of Dublin to the bright lights of Hollywood acting alongside Pierce Brosnan. This story is living proof that miracles can happen and can be seen in the fine words of this captivating memoir. Miracle man is a parable of hope for the downtrodden and the marginalized which stays with the reader and has them hooked from the first paragraph. A percentage of the profits from the sale of this book will go towards Simon Community Services Ireland.



In the spring we sold daffodils or daffs as my Mam called them. I loved their golden warmth and thought they looked so beautiful especially the smaller variety. They were like the sun I thought, with gold and lemon shafts of sunlight beaming from their smiling faces. Mam had told me that my little sister Anne, who had died after a bout of meningitis aged four, was a little angel and I imagined her as a little golden angel smiling at me from heaven. I spent so much time standing beside my Mam looking up and around that I imagined shapes and colours in the sky and in all my surroundings. I watched how leaves floated on the breeze and how raindrops dripped from branches into puddles that ran down the gullies before gushing into the drains. I floated ice lolly sticks in these sidewalk streams and ran alongside them before they disappeared from view, and it helped to amuse me on the long cold days that we stood trying to sell our flowers.

On St. Patrick's Day Mam and I sold shamrock that we had collected along by the canal banks. We were armed with two blunt bread knives as we walked the five bridges to Harold's Cross in the cold damp March weather cutting tufts of grass and washing them in the canal, then shaking the clay from them to glean the shamrock from the middle of the grass sods. Mam showed me how to tell the difference between shamrock and clover. "One looks like the other," she said, "but white bands mean its clover." Mam knew everything I thought, then carefully placing our shamrock treasure into our baskets we repeated the process along all the banks on the other side of the canal on our way back. When we got our precious cargo home we steeped it in water in the bath overnight before drying it and binding little sprays of it with thread and brass safety pins. The purpose of our efforts was to sell to the people going to mass at Fatima Chapel in Rialto. Mam bought yellow and white ribbon which we cut



and made into badges at Easter. We also sold flower bouquets with yellow and white ribbons tied on them, and in summer we sold chrysanthemums, marigolds, and large beautiful multi-coloured dahlias. However, my favourites were the beautiful long stemmed gladioli. In August we went to the Royal Dublin Horse Show to sell red and white carnations and I was in seventh heaven surrounded by the most beautiful horses from all over the world.

Mam was as well-known at the Horse Show as any of the celebrities attending and she was photographed with, amongst others, Harvey Smith, David Broom, Captain Ringrose, the Aga Khan and Hollywood actress Rita Hayworth. Mam was photographed with them all, and one famous rider even presented her with a long slender riding crop with a leather handle. It tapered into a slim steel top that was bound with the softest leather that made it swish in the air. I hated it as it made me shiver and I wondered how anyone could beat such a beautiful animal as a horse, so I usually put it to the bottom of the pram so I didn't have to see it.

We sold our flowers or pot plants depending on the seasons. In winter we sold greenhouse grown Hyacinth pots with the most beautiful aromas in a variety of shades of lilac to deep violet and shades of pink to deep purple. That first Christmas without Dad, as the choir at the Mansion House sang relentlessly one beautiful hymn after another, I stepped out a beat in time to try to make my numb feet heat up a little. We sold holly and mistletoe to merry office workers on their way to their Christmas parties. Mam told the young men it would bring them luck with the ladies, "You might even get a Christmas kiss," Mam said, as she sold them sprays of mistletoe. They laughed aloud and trudged through the snow, up Dawson Street and on toward St. Stephen's Green. My breath made little steam clouds as I watched them walk away and I asked my Mam could I run up to the corner to look at the orange lights. "Ok Son," Mam said, then calling after me, "don't go off Son, stay where I can see you." The snow crunched under my feet as I crossed the road at Lennon's newsagents shop on the corner. I loved to look in the big windows, there were always the new annuals with the hard covers, The Dandy, The Beano, and The Topper. I looked across to Rice's Pub where Mam brought me once or twice to buy me hot Bovril with cheese and crackers and a glass of raspberry with a frothed head. I imagined I was drinking a pint like my Dad. Above the pub was a giant neon orange sign that peeled and unpeeled in the most beautiful warm rich lemon, yellow and gold colours as it spelled out Little Chip Marmalade. Just looking at it made me feel the warmth of the fireside at home where Dad used to toast a thick slice of batch loaf on the fire and spread thick marmalade on to it just before he would tell me a story at night. I wondered where my Dad was now and in the distance I thought I heard him call my name. I listened intently, it was my name being called but it was my Mam wondering where I was. I retraced my footsteps and called out, "I'm coming Mam, I'm coming."

One morning I awoke to find it was light and the birds were singing. I looked under all the coats that covered the beds but no one was there, the flat was silent except for the sound of a tap gushing forth water in the kitchen. I stumbled in sleepily to find my Mam putting on the kettle and I knew it wasn't Sunday as the schoolbags were gone from the hallway. Mam was being very secretive when I asked her why we weren't out selling our flowers and I sensed something was up, and when I got that feeling I was usually right.

Finally, I was dressed in my best clothes and Mam couldn't avoid my gaze and my questioning anymore. She sat me down and said, "son, we have to go to Court because you didn't go to school." "But Ma," I said, as fear began to rise in me. "Shush", she said putting a finger to my lips. Then she told me about my five cousins from Crumlin who had all been sent to Artane one after another for helping their Mam sell flowers. I had overheard Mam say this before. "But Ma," I said, quickly, "tell the Judge I'll go to school Ma, tell him I'll go and I'll help you after school." "Don't worry son, I won't let them take you to Artane, I won't," Mam said.

I was eight years old when I stood in the dock in Kilmainham Court, alone and shaking as a criminal might stand. The School Inspector took to the witness box and swore my life away. "This is the worst case of non-attendance I have ever witnessed," he told a very attentive judge. I remember vividly every word that was spoken and over fifty years later it still turns my stomach to remember that fateful day.



Terror filled me with a feeling from which I could not move. I felt a warm flow of liquid running freely down my legs and the stories that had been told to me by my cousins came flooding back to my mind and my blood ran cold. Some were in the Artane Boys Band and their only way of seeing something of the outside world was when there was a big match on in Croke Park. I used to sell colours of the teams for Mam and I could get inside the grounds and run alongside when they were going on to the pitch or coming off. They knew me from the markets but they weren't allowed to speak to anyone. They whispered things to me that made me swallow hard and thank God that I could run out to freedom and find my Ma. There I was in a court room in front of a man doing his level best to make me a part of that unspeakable nightmare that was Artane Industrial School. I didn't know why he would try so hard to send me away because he had come to our flat to warn Mam once or twice and he always seemed reasonable. This time though, he stood sternly and how different he sounded, striking terror into my heart.

It has only come to light in the last decade that there was a capitation grant of ten pounds paid to industrial schools for each child imprisoned there. The child's upkeep would rarely exceed one tenth of that so it was plain and simple cheap child slavery. Its victims were sent down from the courts by people like this man who claimed that the education of a child was paramount to the child's welfare, when in actual fact the child's welfare or education was the last thing that these people cared about. It was a business arrangement and so the full rigours of the law were implemented to enable the powers that be to remove children from their families simply because they could. The families were unable to mount any real defence due mostly to illiteracy or circumstances of extreme poverty.

The Judge said aloud, "So you won't go to school, eh young man?" I was struck dumb and begged Jesus to save me, not my first time for calling on my God but it could be my last I felt, for I was convinced that if Jesus did not save me now, I was surely dead. "Won't speak, hmm...", the Judge said, "well we shall have to teach you a severe lesson my good man, I think five years in Artane should convince you to do what you are told in future." Then looking out toward the courthouse he said aloud, "Is anyone here to speak for this boy?" and two burly police officers came toward me to take me to the big Black Maria van I had seen parked outside the Courthouse.

The book "The Miracle Man: From Homelessness to Hollywood" by Glenn Gannon can be purchased on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



## Shane Alger sang "The Times They Are A Changing" (Bob Dylan)

Come gather 'round people  
Wherever you roam  
And admit that the waters  
Around you have grown  
And accept it that soon

You'll be drenched to the bone.  
If your time to you  
Is worth savin'  
Then you better start swimmin'  
Or you'll sink like a stone

For the times they are a-changin'.

Come writers and critics  
Who prophesize with your pen  
And keep your eyes wide

The chance won't come again  
And don't speak too soon  
For the wheel's still in spin  
And there's no tellin' who  
That it's namin'.  
For the loser now  
Will be later to win  
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come senators, congressmen  
Please heed the call  
Don't stand in the doorway  
Don't block up the hall  
For he that gets hurt  
Will be he who has stalled

There's a battle outside  
And it is ragin'.  
It'll soon shake your windows  
And rattle your walls  
For the times they are a-changin'.

Come mothers and fathers  
Throughout the land  
And don't criticize  
What you can't understand  
Your sons and your daughters  
Are beyond your command  
Your old road is  
Rapidly agin'.  
Please get out of the new one

If you can't lend your hand  
For the times they are a-changin'.

The line it is drawn  
The curse it is cast  
The slow one now  
Will later be fast  
As the present now  
Will later be past  
Your old road is  
Rapidly fadin'.

And the first one now  
Will later be last  
For the times they are a-changin'.



## The Revolution will not be televised

prepared by the NWICTDP group and based on GIL SCOTT-HERON lyrics

You will not be able to stay home, brother,  
You will not be able to plug in, turn on and cop out.  
You will not be able to lose yourself on skag and  
skip out for beer during commercials,  
because the revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be televised.  
The revolution will not be brought to you by Google  
in 4 parts without commercial interruptions.  
The revolution will not show you pictures of Enda Kenny  
blowing a bugle and leading a charge by Joan Burton  
Gerry Adams and Michael Martin to eat ham and cheese  
sandwiches confiscated from the homeless.

The revolution will not be televised.  
The revolution will not be brought to you by the Abbey  
Theatre and will not star Twink, Gay Byrne or Zig Zag and  
Ian Dempsey.  
The revolution will not give your mouth sex appeal  
The revolution will not get rid of spots  
The revolution will not make you look five pounds  
thinner, the revolution will not be televised brother.

There will be no pictures of you and Jack Charleton  
pushing that shopping cart down the block on the dead  
run,

or trying to slide that color television into a stolen ambulance.  
 RTE will not be able to predict the winner at 8.32 on reports from Polling stations in the 26 counties.  
 The revolution will not be televised.  
 X Factor, Fair City and Britain's Got Talent will no longer be so god damned relevant, and women will not care if Dick screwed Jane on Big Brother because poor people will be in the street looking for a brighter day.  
 The revolution will not be televised.

There will be no highlights on the eleven o'clock news and no pictures of homeless men and women activists  
 and Mary Robinson blowing her nose.  
 The theme song will not be written by Bone, Hozier, nor sung by Boyzone, One Direction, Jedward or Daniel

O'Donnell.  
 The revolution will not be televised.

The revolution will not be right back  
 after a message about rich food, luxury apartments or rich people.  
 You will not have to worry about a dove in your bedroom, a tiger in your tank, or the giant in your toilet bowl.  
 The revolution will not go better with Coke or 7UP  
 The revolution will not fight the germs that may cause bad breath  
 The revolution will put you in the driver's seat.

The revolution will not be televised, will not be televised, will not be televised, will not be televised.  
 The revolution will be no re-run brothers and sisters  
 The revolution will be live.

## Poems by Rita Ann Higgins

### Guess What

Two wrongs  
 don't make a right  
 the politician said.

Ok, we threw billions  
 at the roads.  
 We meant to throw it  
 at the health service.

We did try  
 and we did throw,  
 but guess what  
 we did miss.

### Flight

Her name got lost  
 in the rush.  
 They don't give any warning  
 when they're going to sack  
 the village.

She just fled.  
 One child on her hip,  
 the other two gripping  
 that cotton dress.

The link was ancient,  
 unspoken, unwritten.

Their tears were real.  
 She had nothing  
 to give them,  
 only she was theirs  
 and they were hers.



When she got so far  
 outside the village  
 she took a breath,  
 and looked back.

No salt, no ceremony,  
 just smoke.  
 A lot of smoke.

She walked and walked.  
 The children never let go.  
 One sob in tandem with the other,  
 a comforting beat.

They walked for days.  
 Too exhausted to cry any more  
 the children were silent.  
 At night she nods for short spells,  
 not long enough to be called naps.  
 Night noises frighten her.

They huddle together,  
 a fretful sleep.

Another community let them stay.  
 Now she just wants to stand here  
 for as long as she walked.

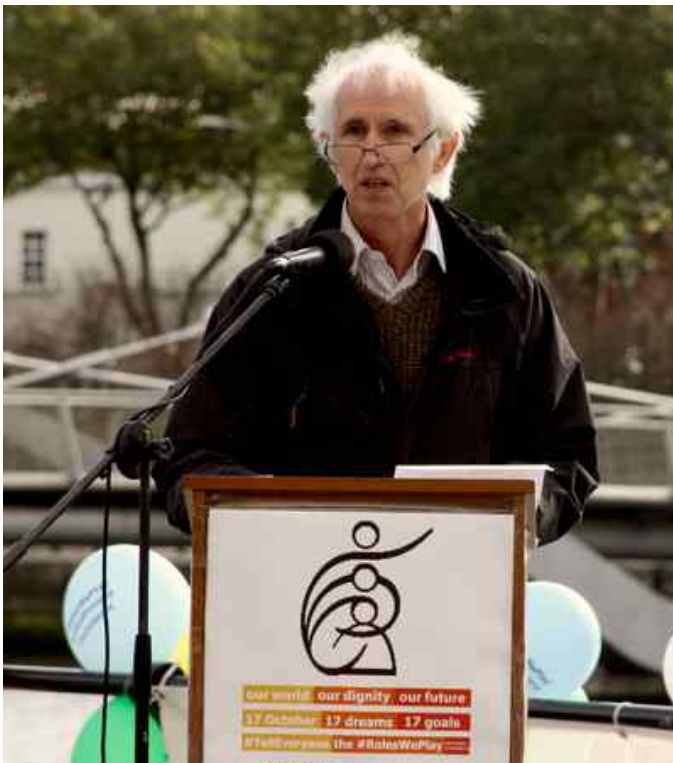
She is Aung San. She is Teresa.  
 She is Malala.

Poems by Rita Ann Higgins from forthcoming collection Tongulish to be published in April 2016 from Bloodaxe.



# Joseph Wresinski's 17 October Address

read by Professor Robert Walker



## **You, the millions and millions of children, women and fathers**

who have died from misery and hunger and whose  
legacy we hold.

It is not your death that I evoke,  
today on this Plaza of Human Rights  
and Liberties.

I bear witness to your lives.

I bear witness to you, the mothers,  
whose children are cast aside in this world,  
condemned as they are to sheer misery.

I bear witness to your children,  
twisted by the pains of hunger,  
no longer able to smile,  
yet still yearning to love.

I bear witness to the millions of young people who have  
no reason to believe or even to exist,  
and who vainly search for a future in this senseless  
world.

I bear witness to you, the poor of all times,  
still poor today, forever on the road,  
fleeing from place to place,  
despised and disgraced.  
Labourers without a trade,  
ever crushed by their toil.  
Labourers whose hands, today,  
are no longer useful.

Millions of men, women, and children  
whose hearts are still pounding strong  
to the beat of the struggle,  
whose minds rise in revolt  
against the unjust fate imposed upon them,  
whose courage demands the right  
to priceless dignity.

I bear witness to you,  
children, women and men,  
who do not want to condemn,  
but to love, to pray, to work, and to unite,  
so that a world of solidarity may be born.  
A world, our world, in which all people  
would have given the best of themselves before dying.

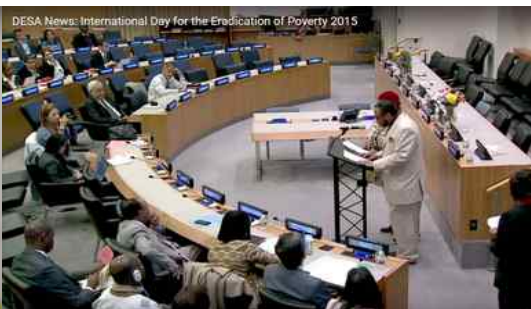
I bear witness to you,  
men, women and children.  
Your renown is henceforth engraved  
by heart, hand and tool,  
in the marble of this Plaza of Human Rights and  
Liberties.

I bear witness to you, so that humanity  
may at last fulfil its true destiny,  
refusing forever that misery prevail.



2017 will mark both the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International #EndPoverty Day and the centenary of the birth of Joseph Wresinski (1917-1988), the founder of this special day. Many events and campaigns will take place during the year. Updates will be available on [www.17october.ie](http://www.17october.ie) and on the international website [www.joseph-wresinski.org](http://www.joseph-wresinski.org).

**On the next pages you can read the statement presented by people with experience of poverty at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 17 October 2015, including words from Noleen, Ireland.**



## ATD Members' statement at the United Nations 17 October Ceremony in New York

(see the video <http://17october.ie/the-endpoverty-day-at-the-united-nations-in-new-york/> )

With ATD members in New York, we've been preparing the following statement for a few months. We come from all walks of life: some of us are experiencing hardship, some of us aren't but have chosen to commit themselves alongside those who are. To work on this message, we've read some statements made by members of our Movement in Ireland, the Republic of Mauritius, and the Philippines. We also watched some videos from Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. All of them were related to the theme of this year's October 17: "Building a sustainable future: Coming together to end poverty and discrimination." Through this process, we've discovered together how what we learned about poverty abroad resonates with our own lives and the struggles we face here.

### **1/ To build a sustainable future, our struggle must be recognized.**

In a video from Latin America, a man explains: "We are making a better planet because we take tons of rubbish out of the dump. For most people, those things are worthless. But for us, as well as an income, we are doing something for our families and children, for those coming after us. We're leaving a better planet."

For us in New York City, we realized that people living in poverty are cleaning up the planet for us in a lot of places, but they are not only building their future — they are building OUR future.

An Irish mother, Noleen, says: "Persistent poverty is the world we were born into. It's a hard feeling not to be able to climb up the ladder little by little. It's hard to feel trapped and dependent."

For us, "everybody who wakes up in the morning has to hustle for a dollar. We just have to hustle more. We are the last ones to get our hand-outs. We got to fight for every dime." When you are poor, your life, your kids' life, your family life is not your choice.

### **2/ To build a sustainable future, our experience and knowledge must be taken into account.**

People in Mauritius Island report: "There is this non-profit that decided to offer us training. It is a good idea but the point is 'Is this training a priority for us just now?' They would not be able to answer this question because before they wrote the project and raised funds to see it through, they did not come to consult us about it. This project was a good project to start with — it was meant to help us overcome our difficulties — but it became a project that divides our community and pushes us to do something that we cannot do at the present time; above all, it has belittled our dignity."

In this situation, the non-profit staff didn't talk to the community; they tried to make their own decision without involving the people there. If they had talked to a community board first, the community would have known that its members have a say in what happens, that they had been part of the decision-making process.

Also, we want to say that we are not poor, we are rich every day even if we are poor every minute, because our mind is thinking, "How am I going to feed my family today?" But when we can go home, we feel good. As the Pope's message at the Post-2015 Summit reminded us: "Absolute minimum has three names: lodging, labor, and land". To have a key to a house in our hand means we can start again. There's sustainability because there is a sense of ownership.

### **3/ To build a sustainable future, our rights must be recognized.**

In a video from Latin America, a woman says: "I have my dignity. I don't wait for other people's crumbs, when as a human being, I can provide for myself, for my home, for my family." During the Interactive Dialogue: Ending Poverty and Hunger at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015, the Head of State of Mali said, "When people give you their crumbs, they don't acknowledge your dignity."

It seems as though the crumbs are not really to insult you, but to subliminally put you in your place. This is what you're worth. It holds you down.

People struggling to feed their families don't wait around to be given what they are entitled to. But if they are cleaning junk, they are identified with junk – even if they are doing what they can to make a better living. None of us lets poverty eat at us. We are all trying to make our way out of it. “Forget those crumbs; we're going to get cake or cornbread.”

One of us said: “I will not settle for less because I am not less. I will work hard for what I want and I will not take what is decided for me. I will earn what I deserve.” We don't accept pity because we are bigger and better than that. We don't wait for charity.

Still in Latin America, a woman said: “If the Government really wanted, we could accept a piece of land from them which has basic services, that is affordable and pay installments on it according to what we can afford”.

That's like the American Dream. You want to own a home but it is not affordable, especially for poor people – even if we work hard all our life. Cookies can break into crumbs, but crumbs don't turn into cookies.

We've heard so many things, but people have to keep their promises. Most of the time, it's like telling someone who's homeless, “I'll go get you food,” and then you leave and you don't come back. So we rely on each other to build things up from the ground with sweat equity.

#### **4/ What does a sustainable future means for us?**

A woman from Guatemala said, “We have to demand that our poverty is not used to manipulate us. We are not only people to give charity to, but people whose opinion has to be sought.”

Nobody ever wants to feel like they're being used, and you never want someone to think that you're using them. A sustainable future, it's a give and take. A sustainable life is us, giving and receiving.

It's also a big thing when people think that poor people are using the system. But people really need help. What we all need for a sustainable environment is not to feel guilty when we need help and always for there to be someone who is willing to help us, whether it is in the community or the government or your best friend. We're asking because we need it, not because we want to take it from you.

We also believe that if you are on your own, you don't really have that many chances. The first thing that hurts

us is being divided. Everybody is separating, but everybody has to play a part to come together. Police in some neighborhoods have forbidden people to stay on the stoop. The fact that people were on the stoop was a big part of the community. They were looking out for one another's children, and they were helping to prevent crime, because that way everybody knew what was happening on the block. When the police prevent people from staying on the stoop, it does a lot of damage to the sense of community.

If we respect one another, if we can see that we're all human beings, that we're the same species, that black and white is not a different set of species — that's why it's called the human race. We're all one. If we respect one another, we could come to terms with all of our problems and fix them. But there's always this separation: “I'm better than you,” or “I make more money than you.”

#### **A sustainable future is all about breaking barriers.**

One of our young people said: “My school is literally garbage. People ask me: 'Why do you stay there?' Because that's my school. I love and respect my teachers. It's another issue when your teachers barely make any money. They've got their own families that they barely see, and they're spending their paycheck to teach me something. I feel offended by this. How are they going to take care of themselves? It doesn't make any sense.”

For us, a sustainable future is for people to be able to live as they want, with access to resources. Resources like a job, but also water, which is all we have in the planet that we cannot live without. Also, for us a sustainable future is to educate the children with respect to what they need to know, with their own culture and their own being. You make a sustainable future if you respect your roots and bring up your children in this way. A sustainable future is a world where we have concern for others. One parent says, “I want my children to take care of other people,” but sometimes, we have to fight like hell to keep our children with us.

Another parent said, “To fulfill my goals as a mother, I watched my kids grow up and did the best I could for them. When it comes to education, I stand behind them.” Sometimes we succeed in changing things, sometimes we don't. It's a part of life but we still have to fight.

Noleen, from Ireland told us: “What keeps me going day after day? I suppose it's what is inside, really: it's self-pride, it's inner strength, it's knowing that one day our voice will have to be heard.”





## SAOL Sisters sang “May you never” by John Martyn

*May you never lay your head down,  
without a hand to hold.  
May you never make your bed out in the cold.*

Just like I'm greeting some brother of mine,  
You know that I love you true.  
You never talk 'n' judge me behind my back  
and I know that there's those that do.  
Oh please won't ya please won't  
ya bear it in mind  
Love is a lesson to learn in our time.  
And please won't ya, please won't ya bear it  
in mind for me?

*Chorus.*

You're just like a very close sister to me  
and you know that I love you true.  
You hold no blame to stab me in my back  
and I know that there's some that do.  
Oh please won't ya please won't  
ya bear it in mind  
Love is a lesson to learn in our time.  
And please won't ya, please won't ya bear it  
in mind for me?

*Chorus.*

Just like I'm greeting some brother of mine  
you know that I love you true.  
You never talk 'n' judge me behind my back

and I know that there's those that do.  
Oh please won't ya please won't  
ya bear it in mind  
Love is a lesson to learn in our time.  
And please won't ya, please won't ya bear it  
in mind for me?

May you never lose your temper,  
if you get in a bar room fight.  
May you never lose your woman overnight.

*Chorus.*

## Hope in Direct Provision ----->

The patchwork of drawings presented here has been prepared for the UN #EndPoverty Day by a group of asylum seekers accommodated in the direct provision center located in Mosney, co. Meath. This center can accommodate more than 800 asylum seekers in houses and apartments in the former holiday camp.





On 17<sup>th</sup> October 2015, 3 teenagers representing Africa, Asia and Europe read the 17 October call in the original French, English and Irish:

Wherever men and women are condemned to live in extreme poverty, human rights are violated. To come together to ensure that these rights be respected is our solemn duty.

Joseph Wresisnki



**A call from ATD Ireland launched on the UN Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2015 and updated on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016**

## A short « To Do List » for all candidates to the next Irish General Election

*«This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.»*

From the Preamble of 'Transforming our world: the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'

These are the first words of the **2030 Agenda**, prepared with the support of the Irish Mission at the United Nations and adopted by the Irish State, as one of the Member States of the UN, **on the 25 September 2015** in New York.

As the 2030 Agenda kicked in on 1st January 2016, ATD Ireland ([www.atdireland.ie](http://www.atdireland.ie)) takes this Agenda on board. **It calls on all candidates to the 2016 General Election (GE) to prepare themselves to work towards the realisation of the 17 UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development** and to play their part in combatting poverty and deprivation, both in Ireland and abroad.

**As part of this preparation, we suggest here a « To Do List » ahead of next general election:**

**1 – Think Global Goals:** We invite future candidates to study the content of the **2030 Agenda** and the commentary of Irish Ambassador David Donoghue about the spirit that guided its elaboration. If they are elected, we expect Dáil representatives to help put in place a national strategy for the implementation of the **Universal Sustainable Development Goals** in Ireland and abroad.

**2 – Think Human Rights:** We invite future candidates to acquaint themselves with the ambitious Human Rights framework adopted by the UN Human Rights Council in **September 2012** and inspired, among others, by the report on Ireland of UN Special Rapporteur Magdalena Sepúlveda. This framework is « **The UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights** ». If candidates are elected, we recommend they use this framework as one of the key documents for the design of a long-term multi-dimensional consistent national anti-poverty strategy. On 8th December 2015, Míseán Cara and ATD, supported by Human Rights Chief Commissioner Emily Logan, launched in Dublin a helpful handbook to make Human Rights work for people in poverty.

(download at [www.atdireland.ie/wp/handbook/](http://www.atdireland.ie/wp/handbook/))

**3 – Keep Promises:** In **February 2014**, the Irish Constitutional Convention requested with a massive majority the strengthening of the protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Irish Constitution. Having in mind the current dramatic housing crisis, and in support of the work of the Irish ESC Rights initiative, we invite future candidates to remember the 2014 decision and to ensure the new Government looks favourably on the Constitutional



Convention's request. In September 2015, Taoiseach Enda Kenny reiterated the Irish promise to achieve the UN 0.7% GDP target for development assistance. But no timelines were given to the commitment. We invite future candidates to suggest timelines and to keep promises.

**4 – Look for Innovation:** If eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is indeed the greatest global challenge, we must use all available expertise. For centuries a specific knowledge has been forgotten or under-estimated: the expertise of people who themselves face long-term and often generational poverty. We invite candidates to be creative and ambitious. Inclusion on all fronts is necessary for development, **especially design and decision-making inclusion**. Pilot projects should be supported that value, listen, empower people from the margins and that give them a genuine leading role in designing, implementing and assessing anti-poverty strategies.

**5 – Learn from the COP21 in Paris:** The first people to suffer from climate change will be members of the world's poorest communities. We invite GE candidates to take time to read our [Croke21 declaration](#) and to be informed by Irish & foreign leaders of the Climate Justice Movements. We know it is of paramount importance for our common future that we take action on climate issues in a fair way that defends the world's most disadvantaged people. All future candidates should accept to be trained about these complex issues.

**6 - Think '17':** Could 17 October become an annual « check-up » appointment for the 17 Goals ? As « eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge » in the 2030 agenda, why not decide that the UN Day for Eradication of Poverty becomes an annual date when Ireland looks at its progress regarding the implementation of this agenda ! The '17' October for the '17' Goals. The new Dáil and new Government would certainly remember it!

**7 – Stay Vigilant to the guiding principle 'Leave No One Behind':** Many Irish and international NGOs and CSOs, and among them ATD, invested much time and effort to influence the draft of the 2030 agenda. Their voices have been heard. Heads of State accepted **“leave no one behind”** as a guiding principle for the 2030 agenda. However, we know that to “leave no one behind” is as difficult a challenge in the fight against poverty, as in the fight against climate change or when facing growing migration issues. It requires that the dignity of people living in poverty be respected and that their life experiences and unique knowledge be recognised.

We invite all future GE candidates to remain vigilant. They should let themselves be nourished by the thinking and lives of people and families living at the margins and especially in persistent and severe poverty.

ATD Ireland -17 Oct 2015 & 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2016

