



United Nations Day, 24 October 2008
Address to National Evangelical Church of Kuwait School

Good morning everyone. I'm so happy to be with you here today as you celebrate United Nations Day.

My name is Valerie Cliff, and I am the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kuwait. I have been working with the United Nations for more than 17 years – first in Cambodia, then in Bosnia, then in Palestine, then in New York at the HQs, and now finally in Kuwait.

The United Nations is a very special institution. The United Nations officially came into existence on 24 October 1945 (63 years ago), when the UN Charter had been ratified by a majority of the original 51 Member States. The day, October 24th, is now celebrated each year around the world as United Nations Day.

The purpose of the United Nations is to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people. It affords the opportunity for countries to balance global interdependence and national interests when addressing international problems.

There are currently 192 Member countries of the United Nations. They meet in the General Assembly, which is the closest thing to a world parliament. Each country, large or small, rich or poor, has a single vote, however, none of the decisions taken by the Assembly are binding. Nevertheless, the Assembly's decisions become resolutions that carry the weight of world governmental opinion.

The United Nations Headquarters is in New York City but the land and buildings are international territory. The United Nations has its own flag, its own post office and its own postage stamps. Six official languages are used at the United Nations - Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. The UN European Headquarters is in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. It has offices in Vienna, Austria and Economic Commissions in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia, Amman in Jordan, Bangkok in Thailand and Santiago in Chile. The senior officer of the United Nations Secretariat is the Secretary-General.

The Aims of the United Nations:

- To keep peace throughout the world.
- To develop friendly relations between nations.
- To work together to help people live better lives, to eliminate poverty, disease and illiteracy in the world, to stop environmental destruction and to encourage respect for each other's rights and freedoms.



**Office of the Resident Coordinator
in the State of Kuwait**

مكتب المنسق المقيم
في دولة الكويت

- To be a centre for helping nations achieve these aims.

The Principles of the United Nations:

- All Member States have sovereign equality.
- All Member States must obey the Charter.
- Countries must try to settle their differences by peaceful means.
- Countries must avoid using force or threatening to use force.
- The UN may not interfere in the domestic affairs of any country.
- Countries should try to assist the United Nations.