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MESSAGE BY UN SECRETARY-GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD  
IN OBSERVANCE OF UNITED NATIONS DAY  
(24 October 1960)

In the year which marks the fifteenth anniversary of the signing of the Charter, the United Nations is more at the center of the international debate than perhaps ever before. Much of what is said is critical. However, this is not a sign of weakness. An organization which does not mean anything as a promise or as a challenge is forgotten or lingers on as a conventional element in the world picture.

Fifteen years ago, at the end of the holocaust of the Second World War, at the end of the tyranny of Nazi and fascist rule, the world looked with great hope toward the future. The United Nations was born out of this hope and was inspired by expectations of a bright future. Today, shadows fall again heavily over the political scene, and the Organization has reached a stage where it has to prove its value in a divided world, reducing tensions, forestalling frictions and providing means by which we can find our way to a future of peace in freedom for all.

The United Nations stands today strengthened by the dramatic approach to universality. Still there are gaps, regrettable gaps. However, for the first time the African world has now reached a representation in the Organization which makes its voice strongly heard. These new nations wish to build a life of progress in full independence. They look to the United Nations for moral, political and economic support. Such support can be given if all the other Members use the Organization to its full capacity, loyal to its principles and in subordination to its aims. In that direction lies our best hope for a world in which every nation can make its full contribution and fully realize its potentialities in the service of its people.

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