

International Committee for October 17



INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

International Committee for October 17: Appointment of Marta Santos Pais

June 6, 2022, Pierrelaye, France—We are pleased to announce the appointment of Marta Santos Pais to the International Committee for October 17. The Committee was established in 2008 to promote and support the observance of the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty, observed on October 17th each year, which is recognised as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty by the United Nations.

Aye Aye Win, President of the International Committee, in announcing the appointment said “I am truly honoured to welcome Dra Marta Santos Pais as a member of the International Committee. She is a world renowned human rights defender, and has demonstrated her unwavering commitment to the eradication of poverty and the rights of children. Her vast experience, expertise and commitment to poverty eradication and social justice will enrich and strengthen the work of the Committee to promote and support the spirit and objectives of October 17.”

Ms. Santos Pais is a human rights lawyer from Portugal with over 30 years of experience in human rights, promoting human rights and equality in Portugal as a member of the Portuguese Human Rights Commission and also internationally, contributing to the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and many international human rights standards including the Statute of the International Criminal Court. She was a member of the UN Drafting Group of the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and of its three Optional Protocols and has authored a large number of publications on human rights and children’s rights. She served as Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations on Violence Against Children (2009-2019). Prior to this, Marta Santos Pais worked with UNICEF (1997-2009) first as Director of Evaluation, Policy and Planning and subsequently as Director of UNICEF’s Innocenti Research Centre.

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<http://www.overcomingpoverty.org>

To know more

The International Committee for October 17 was established in 2008 with the following goals: to promote the 17 of October as International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, as recognised by the United Nations, uniting those who are striving together to end poverty; to promote the observance of the 17 of October in its original spirit; and, to promote opportunities where people from a variety of backgrounds, including those whose lives are most difficult, can work together in the fight against extreme poverty as a violation of Human Rights.

(<http://overcomingpoverty.org/article/international-committee-for-october-17>)

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty was first celebrated as the World Day for Overcoming Extreme Poverty at a major public rally held on the 17 of October 1987 in Paris, where one hundred thousand people from all backgrounds responded to a call from Father Joseph Wresinski, founder of ATD Fourth World, to gather at the Plaza of Liberties and Human Rights. On this day, a declaration was engraved on a Commemorative Stone proclaiming that extreme poverty is a violation of human rights and affirming the need for all people to unite to ensure that these rights are respected.

(<http://overcomingpoverty.org/article/history-of-october-17>)

In 1992, the United Nations proclaimed the 17th of October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Since then, governments, local authorities, members of civil society and the private sector have recognized the importance of this International Day, which has become a key rallying point for a growing number of citizens and organizations from all backgrounds, in the fight to eradicate extreme poverty.

(<http://www.un-documents.net/a48r183.htm>)

The Special Representative of the Secretary General (UNSRSG) on Violence Against Children is a global independent advocate in favour of the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children. The SRSG acts as a bridge builder and a catalyst of actions in all regions, and across sectors and settings where violence against children may occur. She mobilizes action and political support to maintain momentum around this agenda and generate renewed concern at the harmful effects of violence on children; to promote behavioural and social change and to achieve effective progress. The mandate of the SRSG is anchored in human rights standards, promoting the universal ratification and effective implementation of core international conventions. The SRSG cooperates closely with human rights bodies and mechanisms, with UN funds and programmes and specialized agencies, and with regional organizations. She also promotes cooperation with national institutions and civil society organizations, including children and young people.