



United Nations
Office on Genocide Prevention
and the Responsibility to Protect



United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Gariwo Foundation Join Forces to Prevent Genocide through Education and the Gardens of the Righteous

(14 November 2024, Pescara, Italy) The United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and the Gariwo Foundation have signed a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), during the GariwoNetwork 2024, an annual meeting that connects all the actors and partners engaged in raising awareness of the righteous around the world. This agreement marks the beginning of a formal partnership to advance education and advocacy efforts aimed at preventing genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.

This collaboration focuses on raising awareness about genocide and other atrocity crimes (war crimes and crimes against humanity) through innovative tools such as the Gardens of the Righteous, originated by GARIWO. The initiative highlights individuals who took moral stands against oppression, showcasing the power of individual responsibility in preventing atrocities.

Speaking at the signing, Gabriele Nissim, President of the Gariwo Foundation, stated, “I thank the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, and especially Special Adviser Alice Wairimu Nderitu, for this significant achievement. Raphael Lemkin, the man who coined the term 'genocide' and was the architect of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the crime of Genocide had this principle in mind: when a part of humanity is intentionally destroyed, all of humanity loses a part of itself. The Gardens of the Righteous contribute to Lemkin’s mission: to sound the alarm whenever injustices are taking place and to raise awareness about the righteous individuals who stand against them. We will work together with the Office because we dream of having a Garden of the Righteous in every capital city of the world.”

Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Under-Secretary-General and UN Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, emphasized: “The Gardens of the Righteous are a tangible, visual reminder of the consequences of hatred, the importance of empathy and courage, and the role that we all – as individuals – carry. And a strong reminder of how humanity is connected to nature and of the importance of safeguarding the first while respecting the latter. We look forward to implement this important MOU with GARIWO to advance the realisation of the gardens around the world”

The Memorandum of Understanding outlines joint activities, including educational programs, public awareness campaigns, and the worldwide promotion of the Gardens of the Righteous as symbols of moral courage and responsibility.

This agreement signals a shared vision to create a world where the memory of past genocides and other atrocity crimes serves as a safeguard for future generations.

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ABOUT GARIWO FOUNDATION - Gariwo is the acronym of Gardens of the Righteous Worldwide. Founded in 1999 by Gabriele Nissim, Pietro Kuciukian, Ulianova Radice, and Anna Maria Samuelli, Gariwo is dedicated to spreading the stories of the Righteous and promoting them through educational initiatives, editorial projects, and public events. In 2003, the first Garden of the Righteous Worldwide was inaugurated in Milan, managed by Gariwo in collaboration with the Municipality of Milan. Today, there are over 300 Gardens of the Righteous worldwide, and thanks to Gariwo's efforts, the European Day of the Righteous was established by the European Parliament in 2012 and has been recognized as a civic observance in Italy since 2017.

ABOUT THE OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL ADVISER ON THE PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE – The Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide works to promote awareness of the causes and dynamics of genocide, alert relevant actors where there is a risk of genocide, and advocate and mobilize appropriate action. Since 2019, the Special Adviser also acts as the United Nations systemwide focal point to coordinate and support the implementation of the United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech.

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