



Democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives.

The theme for this year's [International Day of Democracy](#) (15 September) is **democracy education**, the process of ensuring that all peoples of the world fully understand their rights and responsibilities in decision-making.

The subject of this year's theme is essential for the long-term success of democracy, especially in countries that have recently transitioned to more democratic societies. Questions such as, "Why should I vote?", "How can I influence my leaders?" "What can I reasonably expect from my elected officials?" or "What are my constitutional rights?" need to be addressed through civic institutions, in the free press and in classrooms. It is only with educated citizens that a sustainable culture of democracy can emerge.

At UN Headquarters, on Monday 17 September, will feature speakers from the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF), the Community of Democracies, the Organization of American States, the UN Institute for Training and Research, UNESCO and the Permanent Representatives of Mongolia and Poland. The event, on democracy education, will be [webcast live](#) at 7 p.m. CET.

The event coincides with the launch of a new [UNDEF-funded project to put democracy education into wider practice](#)

**Additional links:**

- [UN website](#) for the Day, in six languages . It includes an information kit on democracy and the UN, human rights, elections, civil society and women -- with contributions from DPA, DPKO, OHCHR, UNDEF, UNDP and UN Women -- as well as a variety of videos (featuring UNDEF projects in Azerbaijan, Gabon, Guatemala, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, and Kenya).

- Information can also be found on the "Democracy" page of the [UN Global Issues site](#) , in six languages:

- A 60-second video seen here below, "[Make Your Voice Heard](#) ," produced last year, to share on social media channels.