



2 April 2014 - This year the World Autism day, 2 April, is dedicated to celebrating the creative minds of people with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that manifests itself during the first three years of life. It results from a neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain, mostly affecting children and adults irrespective of gender, race or socio-economic status. The rate of autism in all regions of the world is high and it has a tremendous impact on children, their families, communities and societies.

The 2007 resolution of the UN, marking 2 April as Autism Awareness Day, is one of three official disease-specific United Nations Days and will focus the world's attention on autism, a pervasive disorder that affects tens of millions. Based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities this day is part of a strong framework for action to create a better world for all. The World Autism Awareness Day resolution encourages all Member States to take measures to raise awareness about autism throughout society and to encourage early diagnosis and early intervention.

To honour this day, the UN is hosting a series of discussions and films to help raise awareness surrounding this issue in partnership with non-profit organizations. Autism Speaks, a non-profit charity and partner with the UN for their discussions and film screenings, is also launching the Light It Up Blue campaign. This is a global effort that sees thousands of iconic landmarks, such as the Empire State Building and the Sydney Opera House, and cities and towns around the world lit up blue to shine a light for Autism Awareness.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message says that the measure of a society's success is how well those with different abilities are integrated as full and valued members. He calls on the international community to "take part in fostering progress by supporting education programmes, employment opportunities and other measures that help realize our shared vision of a more inclusive world."

Additional links:

- [World Autism Awareness Day](#)
- [Secretary-General's Message](#)