UN Secretary-General: Global Appeal to Address and Counter COVID-19 Related Hate Speech (8 May 2020)

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched a global appeal to address and counter “the virus of hate” – hate speech related to the COVID-19 pandemic. He called on political leaders to show solidarity with all members of their societies and build and reinforce social cohesion. The Secretary-General also urged educational institutions to focus on digital literacy. He called on the media, especially social media companies, to do much more to flag and, in line with international human rights law, remove racist, misogynist and other harmful content. Mr. Guterres also called on civil society to strengthen outreach to vulnerable people, as well as religious actors to serve as models of mutual respect.

WHO, UNIC / Our behavior will determine the future development of the COVID-19 pandemic

Dr. Melita Vujnovic, WHO Representative to the Russian Federation, in an exclusive interview, addressed some topical issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The success of the health system during the period of active epidemic growth was in protecting the system from overload, but is still faced with many important challenges on a daily basis. Regional specifics also influence the spread of infection, but the main factor of containing the epidemic lies in adhering to proper quarantine requirements, social distancing guidelines and hygienic measures by the population. If implemented correctly, the next outbreak is more likely to be avoided. The vaccine is under accelerated development, but that does not imply attaching less attention to safety and effectiveness, argues Dr Vujnovic.

UNHCR / World Refugee Day 2020

At a press conference held at TASS, Vanno Noupech, Head of the UNHCR Office in Russia, stressed that it was refugees who were to be one of the most vulnerable categories of the population during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the event, the second inter-museum festival titled “Point of Displacement” was announced, aimed at holding general dialogues on migration with a wide variation of the program. A roundtable discussion, organized by UNHCR in June in the framework of the festival, was attended by a number of highly qualified experts. For the first time, a podcast was arranged on the interrelationships between migration processes and various cultural fields.

UNESCO IITE/ Quality education non-stop

As a result of the mainstream school closure, caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, students worldwide are currently compelled to practice home schooling through the use of online resources and digital technology. In cooperation with UNESCO institutes, UNESCO IITE prepared and published a series of manuals on ensuring continuous quality education. The 1st international online conference “Childhood University: Cool Practices” was also held on innovative ways of education. More than 150 participants from 40 countries participated.

UNESCO IITE / Preschool education in the spotlight

The summer of 2020 began with a big gift for early childhood education: The International Practical Online Conference “University of Childhood: Noteworthy Practices” was held on 1-3 June 2020. The online platform brought together educators, students, researchers and experts from several countries, to discuss the most effective approaches, programs and technologies for the upbringing and development of preschool children. Speakers from Italy, China, USA, Finland and Russia dwelled on their approaches and answered questions of attendees. The conference was supported by the Rybakov Foundation, UNESCO and the World Bank Group.

ILO/ Effective anti-crisis strategies of the state of business: Social aspect

An annual social forum organized by the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (RUIE) and Odnoklassniki (Russian social network) under the topic of “A special Market: Lessons from the Crisis and Post-Crisis Development” to discuss the situation on the labour market and prospects for improving it. Alexander Shokhin, President of the RUIE, noted that today, the Russian economy is experiencing serious consequences of the crisis associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, and Mikhail Shmakov, Chairman of the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia , devoted a significant part of his speech to new forms of work organization. Olga Kulaeva, Director of the ILO Moscow Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, said that comprehensive solutions should be sought, based on the strategy developed by the ILO, and the main task is to return to normal life.

ILO / From Emergency Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic to Economy Recovery

The ILO Moscow Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia organized five webinars titled “From Emergency Crisis Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic to Economy Recovery”. The second webinar, held on 1 June 2020, was attended by some 100 government representatives. During the presentations, the role of the Public Employment Service (PES) during the economic crisis was discussed. Olga Kulaeva, Director of the ILO Moscow Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, presented the key findings of the 4th issue of the ILO Bulletin: COVID-19 and the Sphere of Labor. Experts highlighted a wide range of anti-crisis measures introduced in different countries to overcome the crisis in the labor market and employment sphere. The event was organized in the framework of the ILO Moscow Office project “Youth Employment Partnerships of the CIS”, implemented in cooperation with the Russian LUKOIL company.

UNAIDS, UNESCO IITE / TV health program “To Tell the Truth” focuses on COVID-19

When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the traditional broadcasting of TV program titled “To Tell the Truth” transitioned from TV-studio to online format and refocused attention on covering current topics of life in the new conditions. “To Tell the Truth” is a program on health-related issues, which has become possible as a result of a joint initiative of UNAIDS, UNESCO IITE and Odnoklassniki (Russian social network). Topics discussed by Lika Dlugach, the host, with various experts and celebrities, were the new pandemic and life in self-isolation, distance education, family conflicts, domestic violence, misinformation and conspiracy theories.

OHCHR / Vera Gurvich: “It is possible to make the most of any situation”

Vlada Gurvich, an intern of the Europe and Central Asia Division of the OHCHR HQ in Geneva, in an interview answered some questions on her internship, stressing that “it is possible to make the most of any situation”. She arrived in Geneva at a time when the epidemic erupted. According to her, having an internship at the time of pandemic is a unique experience since simultaneously, a crisis in the field of protection of human rights has occurred. Gurvich’s overall impression is that the team of the Division did its best to try respond to all aspects of human rights violations in full and on time.

WIPO / World Intellectual Property Day 2020

WIPO marks the International Intellectual Property Day on 26 April. This year, the Day’s theme dealt with “green” innovations since creating an eco-friendly future is an urgent task of the modern world. WIPO strongly believes that intellectual property rights will enable all inventors to patent their inventions to preserve and protect the environment. Francis Gurry, WIPO Director General, in his message, called for reflection on the role of innovation and the IP system in creating an eco-friendly future and human prosperity.

UNIC / The universal language of caricature

UNIC Moscow marked the World Press Freedom Day on 3 May by unveiling an exhibit of cartoons. The exhibit featured some of the works of leading Russian cartoonists. According to UNIC Director Vladimir Kuznetsov, political cartoons are an essential element of expression of views and means of formation of public opinion. A cartoon whose language is universal and does not require translation contributes to uniting people, while allowing to build bridges between different cultures and social groups and opposing intolerance and extremism.

UNIDO / What hinders start-ups and innovative enterprises

The researchers at Higher School of Economics – National Research University, specialists of the SKOLKOVO Innovation Center and the UNIDO Center in Russia are engaged in a systematic study of relevant motivations, preferences and existing barriers for the Russian high-tech startups and small innovative enterprises to enter the international market. According to Ninel Senyuk, advisor to the Director of the UNIDO Center in Russia, the lack of own finances and other resources and insufficient government support for promotion are the main barriers for Russian small innovative enterprises.

ITU / Natalia Mochu: “Happy to do highly interesting and creative work”

In an interview, Natalia Mochu, Regional Director, Regional Office for CIS countries of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), highlights the importance of the direction of her organization. She pays special attention to cyber security and Internet security. According to N. Mochu, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, such tasks as the use of telecommunication in emergency situations, ensuring the stability of networks and developing their infrastructure, have come to top the agenda.

Summary

The full version of the UN in Russia bulletin in Russian can be found on the UN Internet portal in Russia www.unrussia.ru (Publications and Documents)