



## **Moving from Humiliation and Exclusion to Participation: Ending Poverty in All Its Forms**

*Message from Mr. Cassam Uteem,  
president of the International Movement ATD Fourth World,  
on the World Day for Overcoming Poverty  
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This year's theme for the World Day for Overcoming Poverty - Moving from Humiliation and Exclusion to Participation: Ending Poverty in All Its Forms - is a reminder to all of us that, too often, humiliation and exclusion remain the lot of people living in extreme poverty. Despite the enormous sacrifices that parents living in poverty have to make in order to meet the needs of their children, they do not always succeed in overcoming their difficulties. Often, these difficulties are compounded by a society that - without knowing or understanding what people really face - stigmatises, condescends, and passes judgement. We must eradicate the prejudice against the poor that feeds this type of behaviour.

To those who have felt demeaned, humiliated, and excluded, know that we stand by you in your struggle and we appreciate the courage you have shown in the face of unacceptable conditions. May this World Day help to renew your strength and your hope that, together, we will manage to break the vicious cycle of poverty. Sticking together and being able to count on one another will make us more capable of refusing to accept poverty and overcoming it.

To world leaders, it is important to emphasise that people in poverty are already actively engaged in improving the lives of those close to them. We must involve them in the design and implementation of projects intended to benefit people in poverty in particular. It is critical to listen to them in order to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, always bearing in mind the goal of leaving no one behind.

In our diverse world, mutual understanding and living amicably together are goals that we have to work at every day. They constantly require innovative measures. Ensuring the participation of those living in poverty is the key to that innovation so that they can not only influence policies concerning them, but also so that they are able to become partners in transforming our societies.

Any other approach is destined to fail, and is a waste of the intelligence of the people who have a unique experience of resistance and struggle. I am thinking of those children and young people deprived of access to education. I have also in mind those families with no choice but to live in places where their future is bleak and where they are denied work, training, or health care.

Ending poverty in all its forms means making it possible for every person to feel that his inalienable human rights are respected and his dignity recognised. All of us can enrich humanity through our knowledge, our spirituality, and our sense of usefulness to others. Each one of us should be an artisan, creating together a world that is more just and with a deeper sense of solidarity.

