

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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REMARKS AT EVENT COMMEMORATING
THE REINSTALLATION OF CANDIDO PORTINARI'S 'WAR AND PEACE'
New York, 8 September 2015

Your Excellency Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of the Federative Republic of Brazil to the United Nations,
Professor João Candido Portinari,
Mrs. Maria Duarte, Executive Director of the War and Peace project,
Distinguished guests from the arts and academia,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you so much for joining us at this momentous celebration!

Today we say “Welcome home” to two of the most meaningful works that the United Nations is honoured to host.

I thank Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota and the staff of the Permanent Mission of Brazil for this wonderful event.

War and Peace are more than magnificent works of art – they are Portinari’s call to action. Thanks to him, all leaders who enter the United Nations see the terrible toll of war – and the universal dream for peace.

I am deeply grateful to Projeto Portinari and the Brazilian Government for the restoration. I am delighted that in Brazil and Paris this process was open to the public.

In 2011, when the murals were in Brazil, I visited Brasilia. At the time, I said that Brazil had a much more important guest than me. I meant *War and Peace*.

As you know, Portinari himself was warned by his doctors to stop working on the murals because he was becoming sick from the lead paint. But he refused. He literally gave his life to finish these masterpieces. He never lived to see them installed.

Please join me in a moment of silence to honour the memory of this visionary artist.

[PAUSE FOR A MOMENT OF SILENCE]

Portinari is no longer alive, but legacy will live forever at the United Nations.

Let us realize his vision and move from war to peace.

Thank you.

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**LINE TO BE READ DURING COMMEMORATION OF
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“The challenge posed on the threshold of the 21st Century is nothing less than to change the course of civilization, to shift its axis from the logic of those means in service of short-term accumulation, to the logic of the ends, in service of social well-being, the exercise of freedom and cooperation among people.”

[Celso Furtado, Brazil: The Interrupted Construction]