

Rome, Italy, September 22 (Infosplusgabon) - Ridding the world of wars is an essential step in eradicating hunger, FAO Director-General Jose Graziano da Silva said on Friday.

"Peace and the end of conflicts are fundamental in the battle against hunger, which is FAO's constant goal," he said in a statement to honor the International Day of Peace.

The day has since 1982 been sanctioned by the United Nations. Global peace is the subject of a high-level plenary meeting next Monday to help kickstart the United Nations General Assembly.

The second SDG calls for the eradication of hunger by 2030. The number of hungry people in the world has been rising in recent years, according to FAO's benchmark reports on the matter.

"Conflict and instability are among the main causes," Graziano da Silva said, noting that 60 percent of those facing hunger live in countries affected by war or civil unrest.

"The evidence is clear," he said. "If conflict increases, hunger increases. The relationship is direct."

FAO is enhancing its efforts to contribute to keeping and sustaining peace, notably through programmes designed to foster social cohesion, protect and bolster livelihoods and support recovery, reconstruction and rural development to generate mutually-reinforcing cycles, Graziano da Silva said. Agriculture can be an engine of stabilization and recovery for people living in fragile contexts, he added.

"I am convinced that our efforts to both save lives and livelihoods - by fostering long-term resilience - are important contributions to peace and stability within countries, across regions and beyond," he said, adding that not only is peace a precondition for food security, but agriculture and food security can contribute to peace.

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