



**MARISTEN  
GYMNASIUM**  
FURTH



Dear Mr Secretary-General,

we are a UNESCO school from a small village in Bavaria and as such we strive to encourage our pupils to become well-informed global citizens of tomorrow who are well aware of the fact that today's world does not look like our beloved little Furth.

While doing research about political challenges that the United Nations are currently dealing with, my senior year pupils had the idea to write personal letters to you, dear Mr Guterres, in which they openly express their fears and concerns for the future.

Our younger pupils also wanted to address you and they, together with our whole school family, send you their very best Christmas wishes.

Maybe you'll find the time to read our letters.

Thank you so much in advance!



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Your Excellency Mr. Guterres,

as a Unesco-Project School we want to thank you, as a representative of the UN, for promoting global cooperation in so many thematic areas. We are so glad that there have been no world wars for the last 70 years. Yet one thing we are scared of is the threat of a nuclear war in the future.

As the situation between North Korea and the USA intensifies, many voices fearing an atomic war are getting loud. This fear has been existing since the cold war and as long as countries have the possibilities to develop or to gain access to atomic firepower, a world destroyed by atom bombs will still be part of our darkest nightmares. After the US military dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the destructive power of this weapon shocked the entire world and the fact that both areas won't be habitable for centuries is one of the main reasons why no country should be allowed to produce, develop and especially make use of atomic weapons. As peacekeeping is one of the fundamentals of the UN and any democratic country, we hope that this topic is top priority not only for you but for us, the generation facing modern warfare with incredible and destructive firepower able to completely eradicate states, as well. Next to the horrendous number of deaths, nature is also completely wiped out and the genetic malfunction caused by the radiation left behind by an atomic bomb disrupts the natural state of the environment. Apart from environmental damage through atomic radiation there are many other factors that affect the natural state of our world.

The biggest of those factors are the climate change and the environmental pollution. Our generation is aware of what you have done so far to protect our environment and we are very grateful for that. But we think there needs to be done more, especially by the government. There should be a better educational system informing of actions, which can have an influence on climate change. Nowadays almost everybody lives an unsustainable lifestyle

and there is way too much plastic that is thrown away. In order to abolish this deficits in first world countries there is the possibility of introducing returnable bottles in all member countries, of the UN or chargeable plastic bags for shopping, like in Germany. On top of that, there should be more public stations in the rural areas, to reduce pollutant emissions and to motivate people to use the bus instead of their car for means of travel.

Due to its encouragement for the environment, the UN is an irreplaceable institution. The honouring of ecological companies like the bike-sharing startup “Mobike” with an award for the Champions of the Earth, is an inspiration for young entrepreneurs and points out the importance of the protection of the environment. Concluding contrasts to avoid the climate change and air pollution allows us, the generation Y, to look forward to the future with confidence. We hope you understand our concerns and keep going on with your great work.

Yours sincerely,



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Dear Mr. Guterres,

As we are pupils of a school which is located in a little village near Landshut in Bavaria, we are very interested in international politics.

Due to the fact the UN stands for international collaboration we wanted to address this letter especially to you, as you are the Secretary-General.

The topic that instantly caught our attention while researching was the exit of the USA and Israel from UNESCO. After the UNESCO confirmed the inclusion of Palestine, these two states accused the organization of taking an anti-Israeli tendency.

What impact does this development have for the UNESCO community, especially the consequences for American UNESCO schools?

From our point of view peacekeeping is the most important topic the UNESCO stands for. Our last question would be if this aim is endangered by the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

In our opinion we rather consider this as an unnecessary sign of provocation towards Palestine.

We are looking forward to receiving an answer if you find the time.

Thank you for reading and Merry Christmas.



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Dear Mr. Guterres,

I think we all want white Christmas and therefore we have to do something against the climate change. Don't you agree? A big fear of our generations is to never ever have white Christmas again. The global warming continues and every year the chance for snow descends. Furthermore, if it gets warmer, the ice in the Antarctic melts and in order to this the sea level increases. The storms and heat waves are increasing as well. If we love white Christmas and I think everybody does, we have to change our behaviour in relation to cars, fuels coal and lavish handling.

But not only the climate is affected. There are so many more problems to manage, like for example the extinction of animals. Especially in Africa people don't really care about animals and so they kill them and try to make profit out of that. In our opinion, stricter punishments would be needed to save the animals which are threatened of becoming extinct. Another problem is that the number of insects reduces fast. This has big consequences for the agricultural sector. So maybe our everyday food gets more expensive.

Furthermore we are frightened by terrorism all over the world. The latest explosions in New York or the attack on the winter market in Berlin in 2016 increase our fear. We all have to do something against terrorism but the politicians can do even more, because they have much more power than we, the normal citizens. We must try to control potential terrorists better to avoid disasters like the latest one in Manhattan. There has to be peace instead of terrorism.

We hope you understand our anxiety and we wish you all the very best!



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Dear Mr. UN Secretary General,

The 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2016 shattered the balance of the world. “Make America Great Again”, but what about the rest of the world? What happened since?

The aims of the Paris climate protection agreement are holding the increase in the average temperature below 2°C and to reduce the greenhouse gas emission. With the US being the second biggest polluters in the world, leaving the Paris climate protection agreement could become a catastrophe, even more so with President Trump denying the existence of climate change. As pupils of a UNESCO school, which is in a beautiful little village in Lower Bavaria that won the German Sustainability Award for small towns in 2014, we are very concerned about all questions concerning the environment and this terrible development in the United States of America.

A second challenge for the world, also caused by the US, is the development in the Middle East. The conflict between Palestine and Israel is getting more dangerous every day since Mr. Trump acknowledged Jerusalem as capital of Israel. In our opinion, Trump is going too far because he is risking a new outbreak of war in the Middle East and following that, another refugee crisis might hit Europe. We are afraid that this war could potentially be one of the most devastating in the history of mankind due to the danger of nuclear and chemical weapons.

You as UN Secretary General surely have a more qualified opinion about these problems so we ask ourselves: What is your solution to these problems?

Let us hope for a Christmas miracle.

Thanks a lot for reading about our concerns.

We hope you and your family have an enjoyable Christmas time.

Sincerely yours



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Dear Mr Guterres,

We are pupils of grade 12 of the Maristen-Gymnasium Furth in Germany, which became a UNESCO-school in 2015.

This year we did a group project called “Migration& diversity” and during this project, we learned a lot about migration then and now. We read in your CV that you were working as a Commissioner for refugees in the UN. We found that very interesting and we would like to know more about your work then and your opinion today. Surely a solution to this difficult problem like the Rohingya in Myanmar is very hard to find. We have heard that this Muslim minority is persecuted. In this religious conflict the human rights suffer the most.

Especially women’s rights are today -in 2017- still a big topic and in our opinion, more attention should be paid to it. Luckily the modern society is beginning to understand this.

A current movement that supports this opinion is the #MeToo Movement. For us, as pupils of an UNESCO-school, the preservation of human rights and equal rights of men and women are really important and movements like #MeToo support this development worldwide.

For the future our desire is that there are more campaigns which promote human rights and especially women’s rights.

In which part do you think improvements are needed? And what do you think about the #MeToo Movement? Do you think it is an overreaction or is it appropriate?

We would be happy to hear from you. And it would be a pleasure to meet you in person in New York to discuss these topics with you.

We also wish you and your family Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Yours sincerely,



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Dear Mister Guterres,

This year has been a year of many conflicts and war between people all over the world. We as young and politically interested pupils are very concerned about these developments.

What can we do to maintain peace and reduce wars? In Myanmar for example many people have to take refuge because of religious diversity. But why can't they live as neighbors? And why does the government not really try to improve the situation for example with a better development plan or permission of international support?

Another topic we have discussed is the IS-Attack in Cairo last week. We read in the newspaper that the government of Egypt violates the human rights. Our question to you is what the UN does against this. And what can the world do against troublemakers like Donald Trump? What would happen if the government and the inhabitants of Jerusalem ignore his provocations?

Shouldn't powerful states like the USA prevent the conflicts and mediate between the opposite parties? We have also read about the two-states-solution. Our question is whether there is an opportunity to realize this after Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

We are concerned about this because these conflicts may develop into a civil war which can cause another refugee wave. This can put a strain on the European states for example with financial aspect or political unrest.

Thanks for taking the time to read our letter.

We wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year!



