21 SEP 2017

SPEECH

Our environment is important for us. Not only locally but also globally around the world. Today it's time to lay focus on the environment and peace. We do this special deed together with thousands of schools, youth groups, cities and organisations around the world. We plant trees today with our friends in the North, South, East and West. The first trees are planted in Oceania. Then, following the Sun, trees will be planted in Asia, Europe and Africa. The last trees will be put to Earth on Hawaii and Cook Islands. Thousands of schools in over 100 countries are planting trees with us.

Environment Online- ENO is a global virtual school and network for sustainable development.The first ENO Tree Planting Day took place twelve years ago, 21 September 2004. It was also later same year when Wangari Maathai received her Nobel Peace Prize, because of planting trees.

We are celebrating the international day of peace, with a theme **"Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All."** The theme honours the spirit of <u>TOGETHER</u>, a global initiative that promotes respect, safety and dignity for everyone forced to flee their homes in search of a better life.

Today we are planting trees for peace again. So far, schools and ENO Green Cities have planted over 20 million trees and with the support of governments aims to plant 100 million trees by 2017. With their support this target will most likely to be reached by the end of 2017. This commitment was also highlighted by United Nations in Rio +20 Summit.

Tree is a symbol for us. Firstly, it reminds us of nature and the importance of environmental protection. Secondly, it symbolizes our co-operation between schools and people around the world. We live in different cultures but appreciate their richness. We respect the rights of everyone, also nature and animals. Let's mark these trees as peace trees and grow together with our trees towards better future.