

New UN Chief Says World Faces Many Complex Crises



United Nations, January 4 (RHC)-- The new United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres has warned that he cannot perform miracles and that the global body faces "very challenging times."

Guterres made the remarks on Tuesday before starting his first official day of work at the UN headquarters in New York after succeeding Ban Ki-moon as secretary general on January 1st. He said: "I think it is useful to say there are no miracles, and I am sure I am not a miracle maker."

He went on to underscore the large number of complex crises around the world the United Nations must deal with, adding that the world body should have no "illusions" over the "challenging times" it faces. "We see everywhere in the world conflicts that multiply and are interlinked and have triggered this new phenomenon of global terrorism."

Guterres stressed that despite easing the sufferings of some people, "we still fail in the prevention of conflicts and conflict resolution." He went on to add that there is a large amount of resistance around the world and a large amount of skepticism over the UN's role.

"We need to be able to recognize our shortcomings, our failures to get rid of the straight-jacket of bureaucracy," he added. "The only way we can achieve our goals is to really work together as a team and serve the values enshrined in the Charter and that unite humanity."

Guterres was elected for the post by the UN General Assembly for a five-year term on October 13 last year. He was the prime minister of Portugal from 1995 to 2002, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees from June 2005 to December 2015.

In his first message as the UN chief, Guterres called on all people across the globe to put "peace" above all else -- saying: "Let us resolve to put peace first."

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