



## Recognizing young people as powerful peace-builders

Around the world today, more and more societies are recognizing the role that youth play as agents of change and as critical actors in preventing conflict and building peace. Many of the world's 1.2 billion young people, are also affected by the horrors of conflict and war. It is against this backdrop that the International Youth Day this year will be celebrated under the theme "Youth Building Peace", considering matters of youth, peace and security from a social developmental perspective.

This year's theme also supports the recent work and commitments in the field of youth, peace and security by Member States, United Nations entities, youth and youth-led organizations.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has also emphasized that sustaining peace and preventing conflict is a crucial part of his work and he has moreover recognized the capabilities of youth to defend human rights, secure sustainable development and build peaceful societies.

The theme is particularly relevant given that many of those affected by conflict are often young people. The realization that lasting peace cannot be built without both

adequate protection of youth, as well as their engagement as stakeholders, provided impetus for the youth, peace and security agenda in recent years.

## Youth, peace and security

These developments, including the 2015 adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (Resolution 2250), mark a shift in the understanding of young people's roles in the larger context of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconciliation.

Resolution 2250 serves as a policy framework which underscores the positive role of young people in preventing and resolving conflict, countering violent extremism and building peace. It urges Member States to give youth a greater voice in decision-making at the local, national, regional and international levels as well as provide young people with the support and tools necessary to actively participate in conflict prevention and resolution efforts.

Resolution 2250 mandated a progress study on youth's contributions to peace processes and conflict resolution. Since the lack of comprehensive and reliable data on the positive role of youth in the field of peace and security impedes the development of context-specific policies, the recommendations provided by the upcoming study would be a valuable tool for policy-makers.

## Celebrating International Youth Day 2017

Commemorated on 12 August, this annual and often well-attended celebration, showcases the content of the World Programme of Action on Youth, a policy framework and guide for improving the situation of young people around the world.

The **official commemorative event** will take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 11 August 2017 and is organized by UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) and the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development's (UN IANYD) Working Group on Youth and Peacebuilding.

It will bring together youth, representatives of Member States, civil society and UN entities to discuss youth engagement in peacebuilding and violence prevention, echoing both the United Nations' work on youth on the topic and Resolution 2250.

The event will be broadcast live via **UN Web TV**. To follow the conversation via social media, the online audience is encouraged to use the hashtags **#YouthDay**, **#Youth4Peace** and **#ActOn2250**.

For more information:

International Youth Day 2017  
World Programme of Action for Youth  
UN Security Council Resolution 2250



## Strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management

Measuring each country's progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require innovative approaches to collecting and integrating data. We cannot keep the 2030 Agenda's promise of leaving no one behind if we do not count everyone first.

The 2030 Agenda's integrated approach to global problems ushered in a new era in thinking about sustainable development. The way countries collect, process and manage data must undergo a similar revolution to adequately inform decision-making and monitor progress towards the SDGs.

The seventh session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), which will be held at UN Headquarters from 2 to 4 August 2017, is a unique opportunity to strengthen the coordination and coherence of geospatial information.

More coherence and integration of data would allow for statistics, geospatial information, Earth observations, environmental and other big data to form a new "data ecosystem" for development.

Such an ecosystem, made up of comprehensive and integrated information systems, would enable us to effectively monitor the state of our planet and inform the decisions of citizens, organizations and governments with timely data.

The data challenges we face are immense, but the digital technology that allows the necessary transformation already exists.

UN-GGIM is advancing new approaches to data by implementing a global policy framework that will enable countries to better integrate geospatial and other key information into global development policies and into their own national plans to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Established in 2011, UN-GGIM sets directions for the production and use of geospatial information within national and global policy frameworks. The Committee of Experts works to develop effective strategies for building and strengthening geospatial information capacity of nations, especially of developing countries.

The Committee strives for countries to have access to more and better data, but also to make their information systems more integrated, interoperable and accessible. Only building an interconnected data ecosystem will allow states to properly plan for SDGs implementation, measure progress towards the Global Goals and compare themselves to others.

To help achieve that, the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in its resolution, “Strengthening institutional arrangements on geospatial information management,” adopted last year, called for “broadening and strengthening the mandate of the Committee of Experts as the relevant body on geospatial information consisting of government experts.”

Currently, the Committee supports countries in promoting the use of geospatial information and services for modern mapping and information systems, developing methodologies, national and regional capacity-building, standards-setting, data collection, dissemination and sharing, and better integration of geospatial and statistical information systems.

For more information:

Seventh session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM)

## HIGHLIGHTS



### Celebrating the world's indigenous peoples

Every year on 9 August, the international community comes together to celebrate the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, paying tribute to indigenous communities around the globe. Living across 90 countries, indigenous peoples make up less than five per cent of the world's population, represent some 5,000 different cultures and speak a majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages. The annual

celebration dates back to December 1994 when the UN General Assembly decided to hold yearly observances.

This year's commemoration will be dedicated to the Tenth Anniversary of the adoption of the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(the Declaration\)](#) and will take place on Wednesday, 9 August at UN Headquarters in New York.

The Declaration itself was adopted on 13 September 2007 by the General Assembly and it represented a culmination of tireless efforts by indigenous peoples and States, among others, to design an international human rights instrument that recognized both the individual and the collective rights of indigenous peoples.

From then on, the Declaration has become a major milestone to ensure the respect of indigenous peoples' rights around the world. It has also provided guidance to States and other stakeholders on how to effectively respect and promote those rights. For indigenous peoples, the Declaration has made it clear that they are in fact right holders and can assert each of the provisions outlined in the Declaration, according to already existing human rights standards.

Despite major progress in implementing the Declaration over the last decade at the international, regional and local levels, and the creation of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, reports that there is a continuing gap between formal recognition of indigenous peoples and implementation of policies on the ground.

Further political will, along with technical capacity and financial commitment, are all necessary to realize the Declaration. In the same way, the UN System, through the System-Wide Action Plan on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, needs to enhance coordination among UN entities to ensure a coherent approach.

Below are some steps to continue advancing the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples, considering that there is no 'one-size fits all' approach to applying the Declaration, and keeping in mind that a primary aspect of implementing it is to work together with indigenous peoples at the national, regional and local levels.

## Steps to advance the rights of indigenous peoples

- Constitutional reforms that recognize the identity and rights of indigenous peoples.
- Revisit and develop new policies and strategies. Especially by governments, the private sector, UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations.
- Promote capacity building and partnerships with judicial systems, parliamentarians and national human rights institutions in order to set precedent in legislation and jurisprudence.
- Allow indigenous peoples to participate in all decision-making processes that affects them.
- Include indigenous peoples in National Development Plans, in particular indigenous women.
- Urge States to implement recommendations made by the UN specialized mechanisms on indigenous peoples (UNPFII, EMRIP and SR).
- Last but not least, urge the UN System and its agencies to enhance their coordination to advance the rights of indigenous peoples, working together under the System-Wide Action Plan.

The event on 9 August will take place from 3 to 6 pm EDT and it will broadcast live via [UN Web TV](#). It will feature a high-level segment with interventions from UN officials and the Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as a panel discussion exploring the successes and challenges facing the implementation of the Declaration over the past decade. To follow the conversation via social media, use the hashtag [#WeAreIndigenous](#).

For more information: [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#)



## Be a part of International #YouthDay

Today's generation of youth is the largest the world has ever known. For many of them, growing up will not be a peaceful time, with armed conflict disrupting their lives and often uprooting them entirely. 12th August is the International Youth Day and this year we celebrate those young people who are working tirelessly to build and protect peace. Read on to learn how you can do your share.

### Join the conversation

How can young people build peace and prevent conflict? What are the best ways of making their voices heard? Share your ideas and experiences on this year's theme of Youth Building Peace. Join the conversation by using #YouthDay and #Youth4Peace or by following [UN4Youth Facebook page](#) and [@UN4Youth on Twitter](#).

### Take action

Download the International Youth Day [toolkit](#) to learn how you can stage events, build partnerships, advocate for peace, mobilize support and engage your local community. The toolkit is bustling with ideas and resources to get you started.

### Organize an event

Young people will mobilize governments, communities, youth organizations and ordinary citizens in every corner of the planet to take part in the International Youth Day celebrations on 12th August. Go to the [International Youth Day Map Of Events 2017](#) to find an event near you. If you are staging your own activity, register it on the map to let others know about it.

### Join the official celebration in New York

The official [celebration](#) of International Youth Day will be held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on Friday, 11th August 2017 from 10:00am to 1:00pm EST. [Register here](#) by 7th August 2017 for a chance to take part in the event. If you cannot make it in person, tune in to [UN Web TV](#) to watch it live.

### Get informed

Learn more about this year's theme of Youth Building Peace. There is a wealth of resources available on the [International Youth Day website](#) and the [Youth4Peace platform](#). Get to know the [United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250](#) on youth, peace and security, which marks the first time in history that the world's most powerful countries considered youth as a powerful force for peace.



## Geographical names: why do they matter?

Whether travelling to one of the world's 1,017 places called San Francisco or delivering disaster relief to the feet of Sagarmatha – also known as Qomolangma, Shengmu Feng and Mount Everest – standardized geographical names can mean the difference between “lost in translation” and getting lost. As the UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical

Names (UNCSSG) turns 50 this month, we sat down with Cecille Blake of UN DESA's Statistics Division who told us, why names of places are important for sustainable development.

### Why are geographical names important in our development efforts?

“Wherever we go in the world and whatever we do – walking around town, looking up a telephone number, surfing the internet, reading a recipe book or shopping for new clothes – we encounter names of places. They surround us, providing us not only with a sense of place but also with a means of finding our way about, searching for information and organizing the world we live in. For all of us, a place name is a reference point of our language and our identity.

Names of places and features are vital keys to existing in our digital world. They are an indispensable component of many geographically organized information systems – such as Waze, and Pokemon-Go. They enable politicians and managers to integrate digital data sets into every sector of business and government.

Accurate and standardized geographical names are more than just letters on a map; they are a fundamental means of communication, helping cooperation among local, national and international organizations.

Geographical names are also used by a wide range of administrative and planning agencies such as statistics for population and census planning, and development programs. Essentially, they provide a country with technical, economic, social and cultural benefits.”

How does the work of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) contribute to promoting social, economic and sustainable development?

“Datasets of geographical names are vital to supporting humanitarian aid, protection of life and property, responses to climate change, health issues and food provision, urban planning, infrastructure development, tourism, promoting indigenous rights and reconciliation and many more.

The UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names has been successfully encouraging Member States to take charge of their own geographical names and share lists of officially approved names with the public. The Group has also provided training in management of geographical names (toponymy) and issued standardization guidelines in addition to a host of other publications of reference.

The Experts' Group supported such development initiatives as the United Nations Second Administrative Level Boundaries project and the UN Habitat-led street naming, which helped urban slum-dwellers gain a sense of identity and empower them to improve slum infrastructure.”

### **What would happen if we did not have standardized geographical names?**

“It may seem trivial when an airline passenger confuses Dulles airport in Washington, D.C. with Dallas in Texas or when they arrive in Sydney in Canada’s Nova Scotia instead of Sydney, Australia. However, it is not trivial when duplication or lack of clearly recorded and easily available names result in confused instructions to emergency services, who cannot reach people in time.

Without standardized names, it is challenging to respond to crises. For example, following the devastating 2005 earthquake in Kashmir, little data was available on affected communities and their locations, hampering the efficient delivery of disaster relief.

In Somalia, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa has reported that the duplication, repetition and lack of standardized names for communities adversely affected resource use, security and decision-making in providing humanitarian aid.

To improve communication between peoples, countries and cultures, we need standardization of geographical names. At the national level, names standardization involves the selection of the most appropriate names in their written form, based on principles, policies and procedures established by the names authority in that country.

Worldwide, geographical names standards, such as the ones for converting a different writing system to the Latin script (Romanization), are equally important.

A national standardization programme saves time and money by increasing operational efficiency at all levels of government, industry, commerce and education.”

### **This year marks the 50th anniversary of this UNCISG. How will this milestone be celebrated?**

“The Statistics Division of UN DESA has been convening the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Names (UNCISG) every five years since 1967.

The upcoming conference, which will be held in New York from 8 to 17 August, will celebrate the achievements and major milestones of the past 50 years with a special exhibition. It will also include presentations from the Expert Group’s Bureau members and Divisional Chairs on their achievements and contribution to the standardization of names.

Former and current experts, who have been instrumental in advancing the Group’s work, will be recognized and – importantly – the delegates will reflect on the future work and operations of the Group.”

For more information:

11th UN Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, including the agenda, technical reports and webcast





## More than 40 countries report progress on SDGs but stronger partnerships still needed

A total of 43 countries reported on their progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the second High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which

concluded in New York on 19 July.

Each country's Voluntary National Review was followed by questions from other countries and from civil society representatives, in a unique process introduced by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"Having heard 43 voluntary national reviews, I am truly impressed with the political leadership and national commitments," said Wu Hongbo, UN DESA's former Under-Secretary-General.

"And I am equally encouraged by the integration of the SDGs into national legislation, national plans and indeed national conscience. Not only does this all show political will at the highest level, but also national ownership and engagement of all stakeholders."

In a Ministerial Declaration issued at the forum, countries reaffirmed their commitment to achieve the landmark 2030 Agenda. The 10-page ministerial declaration was adopted by consensus except for two paragraphs – on international trade and on peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation – which required a vote.

"The 2017 HLPF has yet again reaffirmed its place as a central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda," said Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava, former President of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

"The Ministerial Declaration set forth important recommendations and political guidance on all seven SDGs under discussion as well as on the voluntary national reviews and cross-cutting issues," he added.

Countries recognized that after almost two years of implementation "our individual and collective efforts have yielded encouraging results in many areas." But they acknowledged "that the pace of implementation must be accelerated as the tasks facing us are urgent."

The Declaration commits “to ending poverty and hunger and ensuring healthy lives,” and to “combating inequalities within and among the countries; and healing and securing our planet”. It also stresses “that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable.”

While the Declaration represents an early indication of the global resolve to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, many countries also expressed disappointment that various issues were not fully represented, or that certain issues were not represented as strongly as they wished.

The UN Secretary-General’s report submitted to the Forum found that the progress towards achieving the SDGs has been evident in many cases, but uneven across countries and regions and insufficient across many targets.

Over 1000 business leaders who attended the SDG Business Forum also issued a declaration, stating that business supports the SDGs as a framework of universally applicable goals to tackle the world’s most pressing social, economic, and environmental challenges, and vowing to step up action.

“Business drives innovation, provides a source of finance and constitutes an engine for economic development and employment. Strong and visionary business leadership is therefore essential to achieving the transformation required by the SDGs,” they wrote.

Participating in the High Level Political Forum were 77 ministers, cabinet secretaries, or deputy ministers and 2458 registered stakeholders. The Forum hosted 36 meetings, 147 side events, a partnership exchange event, and 10 learning courses and workshops.

The Forum takes place every year under the auspices of ECOSOC and every four years it also meets under the auspices of the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State and Government. The next forum at that level will be held in September 2019.

This year’s Forum focused on eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world. A set of SDGs—Goal 1 on poverty, Goal 2 on hunger, Goal 3 on health, Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 9 on infrastructure and industrialization and Goal 14 on the oceans—were reviewed in depth, along with Goal 17 on means of implementing the Goals, which will be considered each year.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, said in his remarks to the Forum: “We need global answers and we need multilateral governance forms. And we need to be able to overcome this deficit of trust, and that, in my opinion is the enormous potential of the Agenda 2030—because the Agenda 2030 is an agenda aiming at a fair globalization. It’s an agenda aiming at not leaving anyone behind, eradicating poverty and creating conditions for people to trust again—in not only political systems, but also in multilateral forms of governance and in international organisations like the UN.”

## Countries to assess their progress

The Forum allows countries to demonstrate how they are meeting their commitments to achieve the 17 Goals and ensure that “no one is left behind.”

The 43 countries that presented their Voluntary National Reviews were: Afghanistan, Argentina, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Botswana, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Malaysia,

Maldives, Monaco, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Slovenia, Sweden, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Uruguay and Zimbabwe.

Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava, former President of ECOSOC, noted that the Forum provides space for inclusive multi-stakeholder dialogue and opportunities for peer-learning and exchange.

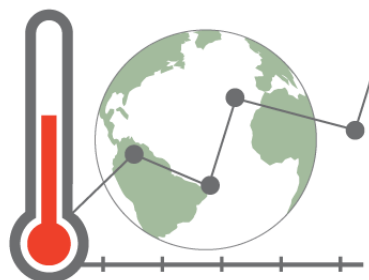
Wu Hongbo, UN DESA's former Under-Secretary-General, stressed that going forward, the SDGs had to be owned by all of society, not just the government.

For more information: [High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#)

## MORE FROM UNDESA

# Pace of progress must accelerate to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

**Record was set in 2016 for warming at 1.1 degrees centigrade above pre-industrial period**



@UNStats



If the world is to eradicate poverty, address climate change and build peaceful, inclusive societies for all by 2030, key stakeholders, including governments, must drive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a faster rate, says the latest Sustainable Development Goals Report launched on 17 July.

Using the most recent data available, the report provides an overview of the world's implementation efforts to date, highlighting areas of progress and areas where more action needs to be taken to ensure no one is left behind.

This year's report finds that while progress has been made over the past decade across all areas of development, the pace of progress has been insufficient and advancements have been uneven to fully meet the implementation of the SDGs.

"Implementation has begun, but the clock is ticking," stated Mr. Guterres. "This report shows that the rate of progress in many areas is far slower than needed to meet the targets by 2030."

Despite advances, acceleration is needed

While nearly a billion people have escaped extreme poverty since 1999, about 767 remained destitute in 2013, most of whom live in fragile situations. Despite major advances, an alarmingly high number of children under age 5 are still affected by malnutrition.

The Sustainable Development Goals Report  
2017



In 2016, an estimated 155 million children under 5 years of age were stunted (low height for their age). Between 2000 and 2015, the global maternal mortality ratio declined by 37 per cent and the under-5 mortality rate fell by 44 per cent. However, 303,000 women died during pregnancy or childbirth and 5.9 million children under age 5 died worldwide in 2015.

In the area of sustainable energy, while access to clean fuels and technologies for cooking climbed to 57 per cent in 2014, up from 50 per cent in 2000, more than 3 billion people, lacked access to clean cooking fuels and technologies, which led to an estimated 4.3 million deaths in 2012.

From 2015 to 2016, official development assistance (ODA) rose by 8.9 per cent in real terms to 142.6 billion US dollars, reaching a new peak. But bilateral aid to the least developing countries fell by 3.9 per cent in real terms.

## Progress is uneven

The benefits of development are not equally shared. On average, women spent almost triple the amount of time on unpaid domestic and care work as men, based on data from 2010-2016. Economic losses from natural hazards are now reaching an average of 250 billion to 300 billion US dollars a year, with a disproportionate impact on small and vulnerable countries.

Despite the global unemployment rate falling from 6.1 per cent in 2010 to 5.7 per cent in 2016, youth were nearly three times more likely than adults to be without a job. In 2015, 85 per cent of the urban population used safely managed drinking water services, compared to only 55 per cent of rural population.

“Empowering vulnerable groups is critical to ending poverty and promoting prosperity for everyone, everywhere,” stated Mr. Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

## Harnessing the power of data

Effectively tracking progress on the SDGs requires accessible, reliable, timely and disaggregated data at all levels, which poses a major challenge to national and international statistical systems. While data availability and quality have steadily improved over the years, statistical capacity still needs strengthening worldwide.

The global statistical community is working to modernize and strengthen statistical systems to address all aspects of production and use of data for the SDGs.

For more information: [Sustainable Development Goals Report 2017](#)

# Wealth of economic knowledge from 70 years holds key lessons for realizing the SDGs



A careful review of 70 years of the United Nations' economic advice reveals that the analysis still remains relevant to guiding countries through a difficult current global economic situation and for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, according to the World Economic and Social Survey launched by UN DESA on 13 July.

Individual countries have pursued widely different development paths during a period that has witnessed the fastest growth in global output and trade than any other period in the history of humanity—and have achieved varying results from the bleak to the miracle. An in-depth review of the UN economic analysis over the past seventy years has found that the free trade, development-friendly, country-specific advice of the Survey has proven to be accurate and prescient.

First published in January 1948, in the direct aftermath of World War II, the Survey is the oldest annual economic and social report of its kind and has promoted a broader understanding of development that emphasizes the importance of advancing the structural transformation of the economy, making progress in social development and ensuring environmental sustainability.

“This year’s Survey reviews 70 years of this flagship publication and draws lessons for the pursuit of sustainable development as we look ahead,” noted United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in the Survey’s preface.

“Despite significant changes in global development over the years, many parallels can be drawn between the current challenges facing the international community and those that confronted the world in the past,” he added, underscoring that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development “is a moral and economic imperative—and an extraordinary opportunity.”

Drawing on its long history of analysis, this year’s Survey, argues that development progress requires robust global economic growth, solid expansion of trade, and steady access to financial resources for development. The Survey contends that the current growth trajectory in the aftermath of the Global Financial Crisis does not provide the enabling environment for supporting progress in achieving the SDGs.

According to the Survey, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires greater and deeper international coordination in key policy areas including fiscal, monetary and trade.

But the Report finds that such challenges are not insurmountable. In the last 70 years, the world has witnessed episodes of economies experiencing remarkable economic development, which include: Germany and Japan in the 1950s and 1960s, followed by the Asian Tigers (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Taiwan Province of China). In recent decades, some ASEAN countries, Botswana, China and India, among others, have also experienced high and sustained economic growth and improved standards of living.

For more information:

World Economic and Social Survey 2017

Watch the video: 70 Years of World Economic and Social Survey

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>2-4 August,<br/>New York</b>        | Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management, Seventh session |
| <b>7 &amp; 18 August,<br/>New York</b> | 30th Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names         |
| <b>9 August</b>                        | International Day of the Indigenous Peoples                                       |
| <b>11 August</b>                       | International Youth Day (12 August)   |

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