UNV strengthens its cooperation with the Russian Federation

Today, the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation signed their first Memorandum of Understanding. This partnership agreement officially launches an initiative to bolster the participation of Russian nationals in United Nations activities as fully funded international UN Volunteers. The signatures under the agreement were delivered by Mr Alexander Grishko, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, and Olivier Adam, UNV Executive Coordinator.

Earlier this month, with the financial support of the Government, UNV announced a call for applications for Russian citizens to become international UN Volunteers. Successful candidates will be assigned to different UN entities to help address the challenges of peace and sustainable development around the world. Already this fall, 19 Russian nationals will become UN Volunteers and travel to 16 countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States, Africa, Asia and the Middle East.
“Signing this Memorandum of Understanding is a very important stage in the development of the partnership between UNV and the Government of the Russian Federation. Thanks to this initiative, we will provide Russian citizens with more opportunities to obtain international volunteer experience and contribute to peace and sustainable development. This cooperation is especially relevant, given that 2018 has been declared the Year of Volunteers in Russia and the volunteer movement is actively developing. --Olivier Adam, UNV Executive Coordinator

Currently, UNV hosts 15 UN Volunteers from Russia. Natalya Pyagay joined the Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Turkey as an international UN Volunteer last year.

Natalya is serving as Programme Officer for the SDG Philanthropy Platform, focusing on the engagement of philanthropy and private sector in the ongoing Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) processes, as well as partnership development and application of innovative methods and tools for the achievement of the SDGs.

“I have always been interested in international development and aimed to contribute to the achievement of a decent life for all through my work. For this reason, I pursued my professional career with the UN, first as a national staff and later as an international UN Volunteer. My experience as a UN Volunteer has been very empowering. It has provided me with the great opportunity to become part of the global initiative that helps optimize resources and efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. --Natalya Pyagay (Russia), UN Volunteer with UNDP, Turkey

Tatiana Fedorchenko is serving as a UN Volunteer Associate Programme Officer with the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) in Dakar, Senegal. Tatiana joined UNV last year as well and focuses on assessment, planning, project development, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of UNHCR operations in the countries covered by the Regional Representation for West Africa.

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Working for a good cause and helping UNHCR to protect the rights and wellbeing of refugees is a very rewarding experience. We, as UN Volunteers, have a unique opportunity to discover the world, gain professional skills, expand our vision and sense of self. I am glad to see that this year more Russian citizens will get the same opportunity to learn, grow and give back to people in need as I did. --Tatiana Fedorchenko (Russia), UN Volunteer with UNHCR, Senegal.

Sustainable Development Goal: **SDG 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions**