



Inauguration of the Children's Meeting Place on the grounds of United Nations, Nairobi, Kenya

AT GIGIRI, NAIROBI, 19–20 SEPTEMBER 2001

PLACE OF MEETING

A tree at UNON, which will be dedicated to children of the world - a place for their dreams, visions, ideas, hopes, worries and suggestions for the future. The tree has been decided by UNEP and it is an Acacia Xanthopholea of the Mimosaceae family, known as the "Fever Tree".

PARTICIPANTS

Total 250 children and accompanying adults e.g. teachers and others. They come from Nairobi, Western and Southern parts of Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Finland and Sweden.

PREPARATIONS

All invited children are asked to bring; a hand full of earth from any area they care for, a small bowl of water from a water place they care for, personal messages/contributions to the Tree– "The Children's Meeting Place" in any way they wish. These contributions could be dreams, visions, ideas, hopes, wishes, worries and suggestions in any form they choose; written, painted, photographed, digital, created in a three dimensional way, real or abstract. The children should also bring songs, poetry, old or new stories, myths, legends, plays or anything else which they hold important.

19th September

PREPARATION DAY

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| 10:00 | Mama Gitahi from SOS Children's Villages tell a Kenyan story on trees and explain how important trees used to be for our ancestors |
| 10.30 | The children find a place for their messages in and around The Tree as a preparation for the Children's inauguration ceremony |
| 13.00 | Our Uniting Water Ceremony
Every child honor The Tree with a cup of water and a hand full of soil. A cup of Our Uniting Water and the United Soil is handed over to UNEP Executive Director Mr. Klaus Toepfer together with a Thank You to UNEP for The Tree given to the children |

- 13.20 Speech by Mr. Klaus Toepfer
- 13.30 Lunch
- 14.30 Children meet in smaller working-groups and discuss with one another:
- How do we wish to care for our Meeting Place?
 - Ideas for programs, ceremonies and other wishes for The Tree
- 18.00 Discussions: How can the new Children's Meeting Place can be used in the future?

20th September

DAY OF INAUGURATION

- 10.00 Odero Aghan from Museum Studio and Arts Center entertain the children and tell a story
- 10.30 Rehearsal of the program/Continuation of decorating the Tree
- 13.30 Lunch
- 15.00 Inauguration of The Tree – The Children's Meeting Place
- The children celebrate their Tree with songs, dances, music, poetry, stories, legends in which their wishes and hopes for their Tree was presented, how they wish to care for its roots, branches and seeds
 - They express their wishes and hopes on how to care for their new meeting place
 - A Thank You to the UN in Nairobi
- 16:00 Speech by UNCHS (Habitat) Deputy Executive Director Mr. Daniel Biau
- 16.10 Speech by Ms. Denise Shepherd-Johnson, Chief Programme Communication and Participation, UNICEF Kenya Country Office
- 16.15 Greetings to the children at their new Meeting Place from;
- Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi A. Annan
- Queen Silvia of Sweden
- Prime Minister of Sweden, Goran Persson
- Minister for the Environment in Sweden, Kjell Larsson
- The Ambassador of Sweden to the United States, Jan Eliasson
- The Governor of Aland, Finland, Peter Lindback and many, many more are read out a loud
- 16:30 Final remarks by H.E. Inga Bjoerk-Klevby, Ambassador of Sweden to Kenya
- 17.00 Departure