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**International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations  
and for the Dignity of Victims  
24 March**

**Secretary-General's Message for 2013**

On International Day for the Right to the Truth, the world pays tribute to the memory of Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero, who was murdered in El Salvador on this day in 1980. Monsignor Romero devoted his life to defending human rights and promoting human dignity.

The day is also an occasion to preserve the memory of victims of gross human rights violations around the world and to honour those struggling to defend, promote and protect human rights for all.

The right to the truth is both an individual and a collective right. Each victim has the right to know the truth about violations against them, but the truth also has to be told more widely as a safeguard to prevent violations from happening again.

The UN supports truth-seeking mechanisms, such as truth commissions, to promote justice, propose reparations and recommend reforms of abusive institutions. Last year's appointment by the Human Rights Council of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence has contributed to efforts to serve justice, provide remedies to victims, and promote the rule of law.

On this day, let us pledge to help victims, their families and society realize their right to truth and protect those who fight to see the truth prevail.

Ban Ki-moon