

A portrait of Angélique Kidjo, a woman with short blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark grey blazer over a colorful patterned blouse with orange, blue, and white geometric designs. A small microphone is clipped to her blouse. The background is a blue wall with a grid pattern.

# 21ème SIÈCLE

The in-depth feature magazine  
produced in French by the United Nations

Presented by Angélique Kidjo

[tv5monde.com/21esiecle](http://tv5monde.com/21esiecle)

**TV5MONDE**

The world-wide cultural channel in French





A world-wide cultural channel in French, subtitled in fourteen languages, representing the 80 member states of the International Organisation of La Francophonie, TV5MONDE is proud to be a partner of the UN, notably through 21ème Siècle (21st Century), its international features magazine broadcast via its nine regionalised channels in 196 countries on five continents to some 290 million households.

It is evident that TV5MONDE shares the universal values of the United Nations, values that are also those of the French-speaking area. And we also share a concern for multilingualism and maintaining global presence in a world where these values are today under threat simply for what they are. This programme and partnership, together with TV5MONDE broadcasts within the UN in New York, all are highly

symbolic of our action. And who better than Angélique Kidjo to embody today's globalised 21st century, one that she represents across the entire planet, from her native Benin to New York, from Paris to Australia? With three Grammy Awards in her suitcase, and her commitment as goodwill ambassador for Unicef, Oxfam, African women, development, intellectual rights for artists (as Vice President of CISAC, the International Confederation of Authors and Composers Societies), she shares the concerns of both the United Nations and TV5MONDE.

**Yves Bigot**  
TV5MONDE Director General

The United Nations is delighted to continue our cooperation with long-standing partner TV5MONDE. With new presenter Angélique Kidjo on-board, we hope that the fifth season of UN Television's flagship programme "21ème Siècle" will be able to reach its biggest audiences yet. Partnerships like this one with TV5MONDE help us to raise global awareness of the many important issues on the UN agenda.



**Cristina Gallach**  
UN Under-Secretary-General



## A 360-degree approach

**"21ème Siècle"** places a spotlight on the world's most significant issues, many of them vastly under-reported by other media. Framing these issues, each episode utilizes character-driven, human interest narratives to explain the meaning of these stories and their impact on the world and our lives today.

**"21ème Siècle"** travels to all corners of the globe, benefitting from UNTV's often unique access to stories and people in the field, highlighting forgotten humanitarian crises, human rights, climate change, immigration and refugees, life-saving cooperation between nationals from warring countries, the untold story of people leaving terror groups, medical breakthroughs, struggles of former slaves, and much more.



### Episode 1

#### THE VAN BOVEN PRINCIPLES

During the 70s and 80s, many Latin American governments waged war on their own people – disappearing, torturing and killing at will. For the first time ever, due in part to UN initiatives, states began to be held accountable for their crimes – and they still are.

#### DETAINED IN ITALY: MISERY FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

In Europe it's the biggest movement of people since World War II. Hundreds of thousands are fleeing war, hardship and persecution. Many end up in Italian detention centers.



### Episode 2

#### TEENAGE PREGNANCY IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Becoming a mother when you're little more than a child yourself can ruin your life. While the number of teenagers getting pregnant around the world has fallen, in one region it's on the rise. Here's our story from the Caribbean island of the Dominican Republic.

#### BRAZIL: DESCENDANTS OF SLAVES IN A STRUGGLE FOR LAND

In Brazil, descendants of slaves have lived for centuries on land occupied by their ancestors. But in recent years their right to the land has been challenged. Here's our story...

#### ABBIE: GREEN CAMPAIGNER – IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Climate change, pollution and melting glaciers. What can one individual do? Filmmaker Abbie Barnes' story – in her own words.



# Angélique Kidjo

*A committed artist and ambassador*

**Ms. Kidjo** is widely considered one of the greatest artists in international music today, a creative force with thirteen albums to her name. *Time* has called her "Africa's premier diva". The BBC has included her in its list of the continent's 50 most iconic figures, and in 2011 *The Guardian* listed her as one of their Top 100 Most Inspiring Women in the World. *Forbes* has ranked Angelique as the first woman in their list of the Most Powerful Celebrities in Africa. She is the recent recipient of the prestigious 2015 Crystal Award given by the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

As a performer, her striking voice, stage presence and fluency in multiple cultures and languages have won respect from her peers. Kidjo has cross-pollinated the West African traditions of her childhood in Benin with elements of American R&B, funk and jazz, as well as influences from Europe and Latin America. Her newest album, *Sings* with the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg (Savoy/429 Records), is an historic work blending European classical music traditions and the powerful rhythmic excitement of the sounds of her native land.

Ms. Kidjo travels the world advocating on behalf of children in her capacity as a UNICEF and OXFAM goodwill Ambassador. She created her own foundation, Batonga, dedicated to support the education of young girls in Africa. She is also a published author and in January 2014 released her memoir titled *Spirit Rising: My Life, My Music* (Harper Collins).



## "Images often show the problem, I want showing solutions to be possible as well"

*- Interview with Angélique Kidjo*

**Angélique Kidjo is so much more than a singer of African origin, she is also a strongly committed woman. Educating girls in Africa, fair trade, vaccines, she is an artist who likes to attack on all fronts. A total commitment that she now pursues on television, with TV5MONDE.**

*You are probably one of the most respected artists in African music. How does this affect your work with "21ème Siècle"?*

For me, it's a bonus. Everything is going well in my artistic life. I have a certain reputation and if I can use that to become someone who brings information to others, then I'll be delighted. Particularly since TV5MONDE carries considerable weight on my continent, in Africa. I know that every piece of information provided by the channel has a huge worldwide impact, far greater than most realise. It's something I notice whenever I am in Africa. So I know that a magazine such as "21ème Siècle" can have a considerable effect, it gives us an opportunity to inform differently, everywhere. And that, that's important.

**What was it that attracted you to the "21ème Siècle" project?**

This is a news magazine of a different type, with a driving force based firstly and foremostly on the subjects it addresses and the way in which it approaches them. As an ambassador for Unicef I am frequently out in the field and I am often interviewed when I'm travelling. The press agencies sometimes repeat my words, but then very quickly move onto something else. In today's world, images are stronger than any word. And whereas the images often show the problem they rarely show the solution. I am aware of it every day when I travel for Unicef. Yet sometimes there are solutions. But they are rarely shown. I want it showing them to be

possible, to study a question in depth, to enter into the heart of a subject and look at it from every angle. This is our aim with "21ème Siècle", the aim of both TV5MONDE and the UN since this is a co-production between the channel and the United Nations. It was Yves Bigot, President of TV5MONDE who suggested my name when he was looking for someone to present the programme. He knew of my work with UNICEF and thought of me. I said yes without hesitating.

**By its very nature, as an assembly of nations, the UN is a complicated institution where diplomacy is paramount. Yet you, with "21ème Siècle", succeed in avoiding all the empty rhetoric. How do you manage to do that?**

It is complicated but at the same time, because the United Nations understands that images and articles can make things happen, it's also very exciting. We have to follow things right through to the end to respect all points of view. In the first episode, there is an item on the migrants in Italy. There have been hundreds of features about the migrants, but for us, because the UN knows that we will not content ourselves with just scratching the surface of the subject, we had a level of access that had never been possible before. For the first time, we heard the stories of the migrants themselves, their hopes and their suffering. They live through hell on a daily basis. No television programme has previously shown as much detail as we did. We were in the camps with them, we saw their appalling living conditions. We gave them a voice so they could cry out their feelings of helplessness and confusion. And we also saw the other side, the position of the local police who are also totally overwhelmed, not knowing what the long-term solutions are and certainly not able to implement them. And there we have a situation before us that is also





found in the highest spheres of the United Nations. The UN cannot make decisions; it cannot put itself in the place of the countries concerned, whether it is the country of origin of these people, the countries they travel through or the country of arrival. What we show perfectly illustrates the problem itself, from every angle.

*I agree with you there, but do you really believe in the power of images at a time when we are bombarded with them from all sides?*

I do, but perhaps not in the short term. Let's take a look back at History and I'll try to explain my answer. Images of the Holocaust exist. It is therefore easy to measure the amplitude of such a historic catastrophe. It will never be forgotten. But there are no images of slavery. Even if we are all aware of the extent of the horror that was slavery, even if we know that it was one of the most atrocious periods in the history of humanity, it is more difficult to measure its extent simply because we have no visual testimony. This is why I think that, even if we are on the brink of saturation in terms of images, we must never stop showing, denouncing and explaining. And this is the work of a magazine such as "21ème Siècle". But never with any sense of voyeurism, ever... There's a line between voyeurism and information that is often crossed, sometimes with good intentions, to try to shake people up. But it always has the opposite effect. Today the public has

almost become desensitised to it. They watch without understanding, without realising what it all implies, what the images really mean. We need to find a balance as far as that is concerned. For the subjects addressed by "21ème Siècle", this balance is respected and that is something that I truly appreciate.

*Judging by the first broadcasts, I have the impression that you always try to leave a glimmer of hope at the end of each subject. How do you manage that given the state of the world today?*

It is hard, it's very hard. I realise that we are currently in a state of global fear that is extremely worrying. And in fear, we can never find a solution. It's terrible to see how fear prevents us from going towards others, to seeing the humanity in others. Despite the problems of today's world, despite the terrorism, the wars, the loss of freedom, despite all that, we must never lose our humanity. We have to fight to ensure that we never lose it. When we talked to the migrants during one of our first topics, they told us that they only wanted one thing: the chance of a better life. But they are not allowed to leave the camp to find work, they are not allowed to glimpse the end of the tunnel. Humanity is just that, the light at the end of the tunnel. We all need the possibility of at least having a glimpse of it. This is something we are fully aware of in "21ème Siècle".

*Interview by Didier Allouch, 18 March 2015.*



## About UNTV

**United Nations Television (UNTV)** produces and provides video to the news broadcasting industry as well as to the interested public around the world. UNTV provides and is the pooling agency for the live video coverage of UN meetings and events at United Nations Headquarters in New York. UNifeed provides packaged video news stories from the field for use in newsrooms. UNTV produces original programmes for television, including the award-winning monthly news magazine "21st Century" and its short feature series "UN in Action". The UN Web TV platform carries UNTV's live video feeds as well as UNTV's original programmes. UNTV Channel may also be seen on Time Warner Cable, a local cable service company in New York.

**United Nations Television** has garnered many international awards, including an Oscar and an Emmy-nomination amongst many others.

## TV5MONDE

## About TV5MONDE

*One of the largest global television networks*

With its 9 general channels and its 2 thematic channels (Youth/Lifestyle), **TV5MONDE** is broadcast in over 200 countries and territories, is available to some 291 million homes and is watched on average by more than 50 million viewers every week (cumulative weekly audience). Its programmes are subtitled in 14 languages: Arabic, Traditional and Simplified Chinese, Dutch, English, German, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, and in French.

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