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With a mission to reduce harms of pollution and waste

2011 has been described as a critical year for the environment. This is the time when the world has to get ready for the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Brazil. At the UN, preparations are well under way and on 2-13 May crucial issues for a greener and healthier planet will be addressed.

There are many pressing issues facing the world today and there is a need to resolve them, and to do it fast. Starting on 2 May, the 19th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19) will take place in New York to tackle some of the critical challenges at hand.

The Chair of CSD-19 and the Minister of Environment and Forests of Romania, László Borbély, states the following in his message prior to the meeting: "The next 10 years are critical for sustainable development. Recent crises created a new sense of urgency. In our globalized world, the impacts of local crises that occur in one geographic area have effects at regional or global scale. The themes of the current CSD cycle provide an opportunity to initiate coordinated and coherent action on several increasingly challenging dimensions."

The topics on the agenda for the Commission to act on this year include transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the

ten year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production.



Call for leaded gasoline phase-out and mass transit schemes

Current trends within transportation development are not sustainable and the need to reduce pollution levels and cut emissions has been widely recognized. If the global community does not act on these issues, it may result in environmental and health problems. Transportation is also expected to be a major force behind a growing world demand for energy. Urgent action is therefore needed to promote integrated transport plans and to accelerate the phase-out of leaded gasoline.

The international community also needs to forge partnerships to strengthen infrastructure and to support the use of non-motorized transport. Moreover, there is a call for innovative mass transit schemes and the effective use of public transportation. At previous CSD sessions, countries have stressed the importance of efficient and affordable transport systems for poverty

alleviation and the need to mitigate harmful externalities to health and the environment.

Need for safe handling of chemicals and waste

Within some of the world's most important industrial areas, there has been gross chemical contamination, gravely affecting people's health and genetic structures as well as the environment. The use of chemicals is essential to meet the social and economic goals of the world community, and these can be used with a high degree of safety when best practices are followed. However, much remains to be done. Two of the major problems are the lack of sufficient scientific information for risk assessment and shortage of resources for evaluation of chemicals for which data are available.

Another potential threat is hazardous waste. Effective control through the whole process – from its generation to its disposal – is very important. To prevent the creation of hazardous wastes and to rehabilitate contaminated sites are also key elements, requiring knowledge, financial resources and technical and scientific capacities. CSD will also discuss solid waste, which includes domestic refuse and non-hazardous waste.

Three priority areas for mining

The main constraints to sustainability in the mining sector stems from the ever-increasing demand for mined resources, the consumption of resources to extract and process metals and the increasing pollution generated. Given its importance to revenue and employment in some developing countries, the sustainability of this industry remains crucial.

To improve sustainability, three priority areas have been identified: Address the environmental, economic, health and social impacts and benefits of mining throughout their life cycle, including workers' health and safety; Enhance the participation of stakeholders, including local and indigenous communities and women; Foster sustainable mining practices through the provision of financial, technical and capacity-building support to developing countries and countries with economies.

Shifting to green consumption and production

Transitioning to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production is also crucial. DESA's Division for Sustainable Development has been a co-leader to implement and contribute to a 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, also referred to as the Marrakesh Process. The 10-year plan will now be presented before CSD.

The Commission has many important issues to address and the result of its work will feed into next year's important conference Rio+20, taking place on 4-6 June in Brazil. Although many challenges remain to be solved to make our planet greener and healthier, efforts undertaken around the world ignite hope.

CSD-19 Chair László Borbély also states: "We should not forget that the core of sustainable development is human development and progress. By improving the quality of life, by using natural

resources in a sustainable manner and by promoting a healthy environment, we will succeed in preserving the Earth's life-support systems for present and future generations."

For more information:

19th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development:
http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd19.shtml

The 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20):
<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

To stay updated on topics and events leading up to Rio+20, subscribe to [Rio+20: Making it Happen](#)

Strengthening the voice of indigenous people

Today, there are over 370 million indigenous people in about 90 countries worldwide. They have unique cultures and ways of relating to other people and the environment with social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from the dominant societies in which they live. Despite cultural differences, the various indigenous peoples around the world share common problems related to the protection of their rights as distinct peoples.



Indigenous peoples look to the international community to promote, protect and respect their ways of life and their right to traditional lands, territories and natural resources. However, these rights continue to be violated. Indigenous peoples are among the most disadvantaged and vulnerable populations today. The international community has recognized this and is working to protect their rights.

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is one of three UN bodies mandated to deal specifically with indigenous peoples' issues. The Forum acts as an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council to discuss indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights.

The first session of the Forum was held in May 2002 and it continues to meet annually for two weeks each year. According to its mandate, the goal of the Forum is to: provide expert advice and recommendations on indigenous issues to the Council; raise awareness and promote the integration and coordination of activities related to indigenous issues within the UN system; and prepare and disseminate information on indigenous issues.

The Forum will meet this month for the tenth session to review recommendations and implementation made at previous sessions. Since the last session, fourteen new members have joined the Forum, while only two have served previously. Hundreds of participants are expected to attend the event to discuss topics related to Economic and Social Development, the Environment and Free, Prior and Informed Consent.

Recommendations and Implementation

At the first nine sessions, the Forum made hundreds of recommendations to the UN System and Member States as well as to indigenous organizations. Roughly half of the Forum's proposals have been acted upon. During this time, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was adopted while the UN Development Group issued Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples Issues. The international community has made some progress and become increasingly involved in recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples. However, these rights are not always implemented. This gap between recognition and realization has been called the implementation gap and will be one of the key points emphasized by the Permanent Forum.

Water

Water is a human right and a necessity to sustain life. In recent years, there has been a stronger and growing demand for access to safe drinking water and sanitation to be considered as a human right. In 2010, the General Assembly adopted a resolution that called upon States and international organizations to provide financial resources, build capacity and transfer technology to improve efforts to provide safe, clean accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all.

At the tenth session, the Permanent Forum will devote a half day discussion on the right to water and indigenous peoples. This discussion is expected to highlight some of the issues that indigenous peoples currently face as well as bring forward input into current UN processes involving water rights.

A regional focus on Latin America and the Caribbean

Each year the Permanent Forum devotes a half day discussion to a specific region. This year, the Forum will discuss indigenous peoples' issues in the Latin America and Caribbean region. This will include the participation of indigenous peoples from the region in an active engagement of the UN system. Some of the issues that are expected to arise include constitutional reforms, intercultural and plurinational states, the criminalization of protest and the cocoa leaf.

In July 2010, the Forum conducted a mission trip to Colombia, at the invitation of the Colombian government, to observe the situation and threats to indigenous people. The Forum looked specifically at victims of abuse related to the armed conflict and in danger of extinction and the Awá people. Many of the Awá people are displaced and facing many hostilities, while others are at risk of losing their land due to a lack of education. At the conclusion of this visit, the Forum made about 60 recommendations to the Government as well as the UN system.

Looking to the Future

The General Assembly has decided to organize a World Conference on Indigenous Peoples in 2014 on the realization of the rights of indigenous peoples, including pursuing the objectives of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Permanent Forum will play a key role in determining the modalities of the World Conference.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>

Hearing highlights civil society's role in LDC development

video



“The unique capacity of civil society to forge grand coalitions that transcends borders, running from the grassroots to the international level needs to be put to the service of the development cause of LDCs”, stated Ambassador Cheick Sidi Diarra, Secretary-General of the [Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries](#) (UN LDC IV) at an Interactive Civil Society Hearing on 1 April.

The General Assembly hearing was held in preparation for UN LDC IV, taking place on 9-13 May in Istanbul. Discussions focused on the results of the 10-year action plan adopted in 2001 and on how to further strengthen new measures for sustainable development of LDCs.

Full coverage:

<http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2011/04/general-assembly-interactive-civil-society-hearings-in-preparation-for-un-ldc-iv-english.html>

Event:

http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home/template/events_item.jsp?cid=25213

Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries:

<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>

Global Dialogue on Development

Transport, chemicals and waste among topics for CSD-19

The 19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19) will take place in New York on 2-13 May

As a Policy Year for the Commission, Member States will discuss the following issues: Transport, Chemicals, Waste Management (Hazardous and Solid Waste), Mining and a 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption & Production Patterns (SCP).

Current transportation development trends are not sustainable and the need to reduce pollution levels has been widely recognized. Urgent action is needed to promote integrated transport plans and to accelerate the phase-out of leaded gasoline. There is also much that remains to be done when it comes to the safe use and handling of chemicals. Two of the major problems are the lack of sufficient scientific information for risk assessment and a shortage of resources for evaluation of chemicals for which data are available.

CSD-19 will also discuss the importance of preventing the creation of hazardous wastes and rehabilitating contaminated sites, as well as solid waste management. It will moreover address priority areas for sustainable mining and transitioning to more sustainable patterns of consumption and production within a 10-year framework of programmes, also referred to as the Marrakesh Process.

CSD was established by the UN General Assembly in December 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Some policy documents from CSD-19 will feed into the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) processes.

More information: http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd19.shtml

High-level Symposium on effectiveness and results in development cooperation

The Mali Symposium on “Gearing development cooperation towards the MDGs: Effectiveness and Results” is the first milestone in preparing for the 2012 Development Cooperation Forum and will take place on 5 – 6 May in Bamako, Mali

The event is arranged during a time when prospects for global economic recovery remain uncertain, and the world’s poorest citizens continue to suffer from delays in reaching the MDGs. The crisis is dramatically reducing commitments by OECD donors and leading them to stress the need for greater results from aid. However, sustainable results can be achieved only through developing country leadership and mutual accountability between donors and developing countries.

The Mali Symposium will allow high-level participants and practitioners from all stakeholder groups to debate how to scale up tested solutions to improve development results by improving the quality of aid, through interactive dialogue among and within different groups.

The results are expected to be agreement on: how best aid can achieve development results and how this should be measured; how broad-based country ownership can best ensure that these results are sustainable in different country contexts; proposals for a development cooperation accountability framework on aid between LDCs and their donors, in light of planned monitoring and follow-up to LDC-IV; proposals for improving country-level mutual accountability between developing countries, donors and other stakeholders; and measures to enhance accountability for development results produced by aid to education.

The recommendations will help prepare for the 2012 UN Development Cooperation Forum in late June/early July 2012, as well as provide inputs into the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul on 9-13 May and contributing to the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness organized by the OECD-DAC in Busan, the Republic of Korea in November/December 2011.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/dcfmali.shtml>

LDC-IV Conference to assess results and adopt new strategies

The UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC) will hold its fourth session in Istanbul, Turkey on 9-13 May

The purpose of the conference is to assess the results of the 10-year action plan for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which was approved in 2001 and to adopt new measures and strategies for the sustainable development of the LDCs into the next decade. The outcome of the regional and national level preparations will be included in global preparations and generate consensus ahead of the conference.

Thematic reviews at the global level will allow UN agencies and other international organizations to contribute with expert knowledge. While providing for interaction at all levels, the conference will have the following main components: Inter-governmental track involving LDC governments and their development partners; Parliamentary track concerning members of the legislature from LDCs and their development partners; Civil society track with activities by civil society organizations; Private sector track relating to private sector activities organized in cooperation with the UN.

There will be many important side events taking place during the Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Istanbul. The high-level events organized or co-organized by DESA are listed below.

“Macroeconomic Policies for LDCs: From Economic Recovery to Sustainable Development”

This high-level event will take place at the Tophane Hall, Istanbul Congress Centre on 10 May, 6-8 pm

Organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the panel discussion will deliberate the role of macroeconomic policies in promoting and fostering economic growth and sustainable development. The high-level panel will identify a set of macroeconomic policies that are particularly relevant for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and present alternative perspectives on how sound macroeconomic policies can promote inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The event will also help inform LDC leaders about the efforts of the UN system to assist LDCs in the design and implementation of alternative and development-oriented macroeconomic policies.

“Optimizing Support Measures for LDCs: Access, Utilization and Effectiveness - Launch of the LDC Information Portal & the publication of ‘Out of the Trap’”

The event will be held on 11 May at 1-3 pm at Topkapi B, the Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre

The event will feature the launch of the Least Developed Countries Information Portal - www.un.org/ldcportal - which was created to enhance LDCs’ access to information and utilization of the existing international support measures provided by development

and trading partners.

The publication “Out of the Trap” will also be presented. It contains analysis of the development impact of existing international support measures and lessons for the future to assess the impact of membership in the LDC category on the development of LDCs. The Conference hopes to offer multi-stakeholders the opportunity to get a comprehensive overview of available international support measures.

The event is organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Committee for Development Policy (CDP) Secretariat and Fondation pour les Etudes et Recherches sur le Développement International (FERDI). It will also feature a panel discussion on the main findings of the two initiatives related to optimizing international support measures for LDCs chaired by Mr. Jomo Kwame Sundaram, DESA’s Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and moderated by Mr. Richard Jolly, Member of the Eminent Persons Group for LDC IV and Honorary Professor of the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex.

“Illicit Financial Flows: Perspectives on issues and options for LDCs”

This special event will be arranged on 11 May at 6:15 pm - 8:00 pm in Istanbul, Turkey

The event, which will be hosted by the Deputy Prime Minister of Turkey, aims to sensitize participants to the issue of illicit capital flows as a development issue and the potential scale of the problem and its impact on LDC development. It will also highlight component aspects of the problem, including flows relating to tax avoidance and evasion and issues in the repatriation of assets, practical ways of addressing illicit flows and selecting and implementing appropriate responses.

A UNDP commissioned analytical study which attempts to quantify the magnitude and nature of illicit financial flows from LDC economies using one methodological approach will be presented along with some best practices to ensure that tax revenues are collected and wisely budgeted for development purposes from the “South-South Sharing of Successful Tax Practices (S4TP)” project. The UN’s Economic Commission for Africa will also present recent efforts to promote more coordinated international, regional and national efforts to address the negative effects of illicit financial outflows on the African continent.

The event is co-organized by UNDP and the Republic of Benin with support from UNDP-Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, UNDESA and UN ECA. It will be chaired by Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development Mr. Jomo Kwame Sundaram of UNDESA and feature opening

remarks by Mr. Shahid Najam, RC/RR UN/UNDP Turkey; Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for HHRLLS; Ms. Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator and Chair of the UN Development Group (UNDG) and the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey.

“Mutual Accountability for LDC: A framework for aid quality and beyond”

The special event will take place in Camlica Hall at the LDC-IV conference venue on 12 May at 6:15 pm - 8 pm

The Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination (OESC) is organizing this special event with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development – Development Assistant Committee (OECD-DAC) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

LDC-IV provides a unique opportunity to review how the development concerns of LDCs and MDG challenges can be better met by increasing aid, improving its quality and strengthening mutual accountability frameworks between donors and programme countries for development results. This event aims to reflect on how mutual liability between LDCs and their donors can contribute to the realization of international commitments, including those contained in the draft Istanbul Programme of Action.

The event will address aid quality and effectiveness from the perspective of LDCs and explore whether the frameworks aimed at ensuring mutual accountability between LDCs and their donors on aid commitments fully reflect the concerns and needs of LDCs. It will also build on findings of the High-level Symposium in Mali the week before on “Gearing development cooperation towards the MDGs: effectiveness and results”.

The outcome will highlight issues of critical concern and ways to review and promote progress. It will also inform the next UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) in June/July 2012 and contribute to preparations for the fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in November 2011.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

For more information on the LDC IV Conference: <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>

Regional ministerial conference to tackle questions facing education

The meeting will convene under the theme “Key Education Challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean: Teachers,

Quality, and Equity” on 12-13 May in Buenos Aires, Argentina

The event is arranged in preparation for the 2011 ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) to be held at UN Headquarters in Geneva in July 2011 on the theme “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”.

Themes to be discussed include: educational agenda of the LAC region; teachers, teaching and its dimensions; ICTs in Education; assessment of education quality, and equity in education. The conference will assess regional progress towards the EFA goals, highlight major obstacles impeding continued progress and explore various strategies to overcome them.

The conference is hosted by the Government of Argentina, in cooperation with the UNDESA, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). A diverse group of stakeholders consisting of governments, civil society, UN system institutions and the private sector will be brought together.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

Advancing the rights of indigenous people

10th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) will take place in New York on 16-27 May

This session will be especially significant since this is the review year and since special emphasis will be placed on the implementation of UNPFII recommendations on economic and social development; the environment; and free, prior and informed consent.

Human rights issues will be addressed and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples has been invited along with the members of Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. A plenary panel will also focus on the right to water and indigenous peoples. Other events arranged include a discussion on the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples; discussion on Rio +20; and a follow up on recommendations and actions on the various studies that will be presented during the Forum.

The special regional focus will be on indigenous peoples of the Central and South America and the Caribbean region. Other special features of the session will include a discussion on the Permanent Forum’s mission to Colombia; a half-day discussion on the right to water and indigenous peoples; discussions on a number of studies completed this year by the UNPFII.

The event is expected to attract a large number of participants representing governments, the UN, other inter-governmental organizations and Indigenous Peoples' Organizations (IPOs), NGOs and academia. So far, 1,300 participants representing organizations and academia have pre-registered.

About 50 side events will take place during the session, organized by Member States, UN entities, other intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, the Secretariat and others. There will also be a photographic exhibition on the theme indigenous peoples and water.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_tenth.html

Commission agrees on resolution on “Fertility, reproductive health and development”

44th session of the Commission on Population and Development was held in New York on 11-15 April

The work of the Commission, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Brian Bowler, Permanent Representative of Malawi, was completed successfully with two decisions and a resolution on the session's theme of “Fertility, reproductive health and development” being passed by consensus.

The resolution on “Fertility, reproductive health and development” provides a strong endorsement of the recommendations contained in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Key Actions for its further implementation adopted at the 21st Special Session of the General Assembly. The resolution reaffirmed that gender equality cannot be achieved without promoting and protecting the right of women to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health.

The resolution urges Governments to protect and promote the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of age and marital status, including by eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls and women, and stressed the need to strengthen health systems and ensure that they prioritize universal access to sexual and reproductive information and health-care services, including family planning, prenatal care, safe delivery and post-natal care to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

The need was stressed for Governments to ensure that all women, men and young people have access to information as well as to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning and to give full attention to meeting the reproductive

health-care service and education needs of adolescents to enable them to deal in a positive and responsible way with their sexuality.

The Commission emphasized the need to strengthen policy and programme linkages and coordination between HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health and their inclusion in national development plans as well as to scale up significantly efforts to meet the goal of ensuring universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. It also called upon the international community to help Governments meet the family planning needs by increasing the financial resources needed to implement the Programme of Action.

Welcoming the General Assembly's decision last December to extend the Programme of Action adopted in Cairo at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014, the Commission called on all Governments to make every effort to mobilize the required resources to ensure that its objectives were met. At the same time, the Commission reaffirmed the sovereign right of States to implement the Cairo Programme's recommendations, in accordance with national laws and development priorities, and with full respect for religious, ethical and cultural values.

Two decisions were also adopted by the Commission. The first was the Provisional Agenda for 2012 and the second decision was that the special theme for the forty-sixth session in 2013 would be New Trends in Migration: Demographic Aspects and that the forty-seventh session in 2014 would be devoted to an Assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/aboutcom.htm>

Several countries on track to achieve education goals

The ECOSOC 2011 Annual Ministerial Review Africa Regional Meeting was held on 12 April in Lomé, Togo on the theme “The right to Education for All in Africa: Reinforcing quality and equity”

The programme was set around four main sessions on: education and the MDGs; a rights-based approach to inclusive, quality education; country experiences and best practices; and key policy messages for the 2011 ECOSOC AMR. Ministers of Education and a broad cross section of regional stakeholders discussed trends, challenges, and policies and programmes on education in Africa and their impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Among the key messages emanating from the discussion were that the situation of education in Africa is hopeful with several countries being on track to achieve universal primary education and gender equality in education by 2015. Another note was that progress in Africa remains threatened by slower economic growth, reduced public and international expenditure on education, and by the complex demands placed on systems struggling to cope with increased enrollment. Moreover, the most significant underlying causes for the current shortcomings and challenges to education in Africa are the lack of equity in the delivery of education services and the low quality of education.

Recommendations need to approach education from the perspective of a fundamental human right and focus on “including the excluded”; eliminate school fees for primary education, with additional support for the marginalized; introduce early-childhood programmes wherever possible, to give children a fair and early chance to learn; expand school feeding programmes to promote retention; and strengthen capacity to recruit and retain good teachers.

The meeting was co-organized by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs in cooperation with UNESCO, UNICEF, UNECA and in collaboration with the Government of Togo. It is part of the preparatory process for the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review on “Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education”.

A summary report of the meeting is being prepared and will be presented by the Education Minister of Togo at the high-level segment of ECOSOC.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

Call for quality improvements and skill training

The 13th session of the Committee for Development Policy took place on 21-25 March in New York

This year, the meeting focused on the review of the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review on the Internationally Agreed Goals and Commitments in regards to Education, the UN development agenda beyond 2015, the status of Least Development countries (LDCs) and issues on international migration.

While progress has been made, the Committee concluded that more implementation needs to occur. Discussions stressed the need for quality improvements in education, attention to post-primary education and skill-training by effectively placing education policies in the broader context of microeconomic and development strategies. Regarding migration, it was urged that negative consequences be addressed and regulatory measures be improved to ensure adequate working and living conditions of migrants.

The outcome of the session is part of a larger research programme whose main conclusions and recommendations are expected to be forwarded to ECOSOC in 2012. In addition, further refinements to the indicators of LDCs will be made to better reflect the structural vulnerability of countries to climate change.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/index.shtml>

Trends and Analysis

Briefings put spotlight on girls, young women and indigenous issues

Two new youth sessions will take place in New York highlighting Girls and Young Women on 6 May and Indigenous Issues and Youth on 19 May.

The International Year of Youth briefing events continue to bring attention to different youth issues in the lead up to the High Level Conference on Youth to be held on 25-26 July at UN Headquarters in New York. The next session in line is on “Girls and Young Women” and will take place at the UN in New York on 6 May from 1:15 pm -2:45 pm. It will feature panelists from UN Women, United Nations Population Fund and young people from NGOs working on these issues.

On 19 May, the topic for discussion will be “Indigenous Issues and Youth” focusing on the role indigenous youth play in issues of concern to them, highlighting initiatives and projects undertaken by young people. This session will be held in the UNICEF house from 1:15 pm - 2:45 pm and is co-organized by the UN Programme on Youth, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UNICEF and the Youth Caucus on Indigenous Issues.

The UN Programme on Youth has just finished its Facebook consultation with young people on the topic of "Girls and Young Women" and has now launched its new discussion on "Indigenous Issues and Youth". Young people are encouraged to speak out and contribute to the consultations. Please circulate the link information below around your youth networks.

UN Programme on Youth's Facebook discussion on "Indigenous Issues":

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=294853750812>

For more information on the briefing sessions:

<http://social.un.org/youthyear/briefings.html>

Role of youth in international migration

Symposium on “Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development” will be arranged in New York on 17-18 May

UNICEF, the current Chair of the Global Migration Group (GMG), of which DESA is also a member, is organizing this two-day Symposium immediately prior to the informal thematic debate on international migration and development, organized by the

President of the General Assembly on 19 May.

The Symposium will consist of three plenary sessions and four parallel roundtables focusing on the role and participation of youth in international migration, the impact of international migration on youth, and the need to improve the protection and well-being of young migrants.

Each session is being organized by one or more members of the Global Migration Group. DESA and the World Bank are co-organizing the first panel on “Globalization, Cooperation and Youth: Newly Emerging Trends”. Under-Secretary-General of DESA, Mr. Sha Zukang has been invited to participate in a high-level panel together with Mr. Joseph Deiss, the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Peter Sutherland, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration and Development, and other senior officials.

The Symposium will bring together experts and practitioners who will present the latest evidence on the relationship between youth, migration and development and share good practices in leveraging the benefits of international migration for youth and young migrants and addressing its negative impacts. Participants will include representatives from the UN system and other intergovernmental organizations, Members States and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including representatives of academic institutions, the private sector and youth organizations.

Mr. Anthony Lake, UNICEF's Executive Director and current Chair of GMG, will present the main outcomes of the Symposium during the informal thematic debate on international migration and development on 19 May. GMG members will prepare background papers for the sessions and roundtables of the Symposium.

For more information:

http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/gmg_symposium2011.htm

Platform to exchange knowledge and experience on ICTs

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2011: Open Consultations on Thematic Aspects and New Innovative Format will be held in Geneva on 18 May

The Sixth Facilitation Meeting of Action Lines C1 on the role of public governance in the promotion of ICTs for development, C7 on e-government and C11 on international and regional cooperation, will be held during the WSIS on 18 May. The meeting is open to all stakeholders from the public and private sectors, civil society and international organizations. The purpose is to provide a platform for exchange of information and

experiences; to identify the propriety areas for implementation within the Action Lines; and to create synergies among different stakeholders for more effective knowledge sharing and collaboration in order to ensure the implementation of WSIS at the international, regional and national levels.

The meeting could also contribute to further coordination of major stakeholders' activities to support strategic planning and the implementation of accessible, inclusive and participatory government. One of the current trends for e-government development is active and strong citizens' and businesses' involvement in public services delivery. This tendency is based on an unprecedented accessibility and openness of public administration data and possibilities for citizens and businesses to build value added public services on top of it. It is also one of the challenges for governments to have a reliable set of indicators and methodologies to measure new emerging effects of development.

WSIS is a unique two-phase UN summit that was initiated in order to create an evolving multi-stakeholder platform aimed at addressing the issues raised by information and communication technologies (ICTs) through a structured and inclusive approach at the national, regional and international levels. The goal is to achieve a common vision, desire and commitment to build a people-centric, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society where everyone can create, access, utilize and share information.

For more information: <http://groups.itu.int/wsisis-forum2011/About/WSISForum2011.aspx>

Cyber-security, cyber crime and safeguarding citizens

The Fourth Parliamentary Forum on Shaping the Information Society will take place in Geneva on 18-20 May

DESA, through The Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, together with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), will be hosting this event entitled "The Triple Challenge of Cyber-Security: Information, Citizens and Infrastructure".

The Forum will focus on the representative, law-making and oversight responsibilities of members of parliaments regarding the issues of cyber-security. It will address the particular challenges posed by the illicit use of information and communications technologies, such as the safeguarding of citizens in the connected environment; the protection of State information, data and infrastructures; and the transnational response to cyber crime.

The aim of the Forum is to further the dialogue among legislators on the different strategic and political priorities implemented at the national level and outline a broad perspective of different national engagements directed at responding to the challenge discussed. Its goal is also to delineate the role and responsibilities of parliaments in their legislative and oversight functions with respect to the topics addressed, identify good parliamentary practices and prepare recommendations for action by legislatures.

The Forum is expected to attract 150 members of parliament with responsibilities for Information Society issues from all over the world, as well as senior representatives and officials of international organizations, and experts from agencies, governments, the ICT industry and academia.

For more information: <http://www.ictparliament.org/>

Panels to highlight cooperation on migration and contribution of migrants to development

Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development will take place at the UN in New York on 19 May

The President of the General Assembly is organizing this one-day informal thematic debate, providing an important opportunity for Member States to review their policies on international migration and development and to assess progress towards international cooperation on international migration ahead of the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which will be held in 2013.

The debate will consist of two interactive panels with invited speakers. The morning panel will focus on the contribution of migrants to development and will be chaired by Mr. William Swing, Director General of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

The afternoon panel will address the issue of improving international cooperation on migration and development and will be chaired by Dr. Khalid Koser, Geneva Centre for Security Policy. The President of the General Assembly will open and close the debate. The Secretary-General will also make opening remarks. Peter Sutherland, SRSG on International Migration and Development will make a substantive summary of the debate. Mr. Anthony Lake, UNICEF's Executive Director and current Chair of GMG, will participate in the afternoon panel and deliver a statement on behalf of the Global Migration Group.

The first High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held in 2006, established that international migration can contribute to development if supported by the right policies. Since 2006, Governments and the international community have been pursuing a variety of policies and programmes to maximize the development impacts of international migration, and to reduce its negative effects.

International migration is increasingly being mainstreamed in national development plans and poverty reduction strategy papers. To date, over \$240 million has been allocated to multilateral activities on international migration and development.

The interactive debate provides a unique opportunity for Member States and other stakeholders to take stock of achievements to date, to identify the factors that reduce the benefits of migration, and to suggest ways to reduce or eliminate these factors ahead of the 2013 High-level Dialogue.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/migration.shtml>

Workshop on the benefits of e-governance

The international workshop “Greater Government Transparency and Citizen Engagement to Promote Effectiveness and Accountability in Public Service Delivery” will be held in Geneva on 19 May

DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), in cooperation with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), will organize this workshop during the 2011 annual follow-up meetings of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

It will serve as an enabling platform of WSIS for an international and multidisciplinary group of experts and national practitioners to share their experiences and exchange practices on e/m-government, including strategies for designing, implementing, and evaluating government services, that have proven viable and have brought about lasting development results in different socio-economic and cultural contexts. The workshop sessions will provide opportunities for participants to interact with speakers, in order to develop new capacities for designing and implementing successful programmes and policies for better government transparency and citizen engagement, as well as to create or strengthen international networks of stakeholders and practitioners.

The one-day workshop will include one plenary and three thematic sessions on selected topics on citizen engagement and electronic government including the Government 2.0 platform. Each session will provide presentations followed by open discussions.

The sessions will include the following:

Plenary: Discussion on overall approaches, trends, best practices and key challenges in greater government transparency and citizen engagement to promote effectiveness and accountability in public service delivery. Session I: m-Government: Benefits and outcomes for citizens, government and business
Session II: Open (Linked) data and social networks services for public services delivery

Session III: Strategies for ubiquitous, inclusive, equitable and efficient public service delivery.

The workshop is expected to be attended by 40 participants including government and public administration officials, key citizens’ e/m-government experts from academia and research institutions, civil society and private sector representatives and staff from the UN system.

For more information:

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan045437.pdf>

CEPA meeting on improving quality of life for all

The 10th Session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) was held in New York on 4-8 April

The session focused around the theme “Public governance for results”, particularly in relation to improving the quality of life for all, in post-conflict and post-disaster countries, and in social protection policies for vulnerable populations. The Committee also considered performance management in governance in relation to internationally agreed development goals and commitments, in particular in regard to education of the 2011 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council. In addition, the Committee made its annual review of the UN Programme on Public Administration and Finance.

The Committee, established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in its resolution 2001/45, is comprised of 24 members who meet annually at UN Headquarters in New York. The Committee is responsible for supporting the work of ECOSOC concerning the promotion and development of public administration and governance among Member States, in connection with the UN Millennium Development Goals.

For more information:

www.unpan.org/DPADM/CEPA/10thSession/tabid/1446/language/en-US/Default.aspx

Evaluating ICT mechanisms for inter-parliamentary cooperation

Exchange Network of Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean (RIPALC) met in Panama City on 14-15 April

Secretaries General of 17 parliaments from across Latin America and the Caribbean gathered to exchange views and evaluate the establishment of a formal mechanism of inter-parliamentary cooperation for the region. The workshop entitled “Leveraging

ICT to establish a collaborative network among Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean” was built upon the experience of parliaments in other regions, as well as on the outcomes of meetings held in recent months in Barbados and Chile. Issues such as the digital revolution in Latin America and the Caribbean and its impact on the legislative branches were also discussed.

During the event, a proposal was presented for the establishment of RIPALC (Red de Intercambio de Los Parlamentos de America Latina y El Caribe - Exchange Network of Parliaments of Latin America and the Caribbean). The Secretaries General discussed and deliberated on the establishment of bylaws for the operation of RIPALC, basing it on the model and good practices of the European Centre for Parliamentary Research and Documentation (ECPRD) and the African Parliamentary Network for Knowledge (APKN). With this new platform, resolutions and studies by Latin American and Caribbean Parliaments will be open to the general public, offering greater transparency about actions taken by Parliaments and ensuring a democratic space for discussion.

Delegates from seventeen countries signed the agreement to form RIPALC. The Network's web page, which offers tools for sharing information, was developed by the Brazilian National Congress. Provisional governance has been established as Brazil's Chamber of Deputies will act as the Executive Secretariat, with members of the Executive Committee including Barbados, Nicaragua, Panama, Brazil, and Uruguay.

The workshop was co-organized by the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament and the National Assembly of Panama.

For more information:

RIPALC:

<http://www.ripalc.org/>

Global Centre for ICT in Parliament:

<http://www.ictparliament.org/>

Capacity Development

Reaching consensus on structure for environment statistics

Second Meeting of the Expert Group on the Revision of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES) will be held in New York on 4-6 May

The main objective of the second meeting of the Expert Group is to discuss and reach agreement on the fundamental structure and main building blocks of the revised FDES based on the analysis of relevant key concepts, scientific, policy and statistical frameworks.

The meeting is expected to agree on the contents and detailed annotated outline of the revised FDES handbook. The experts will also discuss the criteria and process for the selection of a core set of environment statistics. The revised FDES is expected to be presented to the 43rd session of the Statistical Commission in February 2012.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes/fdes_egm.htm

Knowledge-sharing on census data use and dissemination in Arabic speaking countries

Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis for Arabic speaking Countries arranged in Amman, Jordan on 16-19 May

DESA's Statistics Division, in collaboration with the Jordan Department of Statistics and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics, is organizing a Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis.

The purpose is to provide a forum for sharing national practices and experiences in the dissemination and use of census data. Emerging trends, innovative approaches and technological tools employed in the dissemination of census data will be reviewed. The seminar will also aid in taking stock of national capacities and challenges for meeting the increasing requirements of census data users. In addition, the event is expected to help in identifying good practices and lessons learned in the dissemination and analysis of census data.

For more information: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd>

Assessing revised standard classifications

Meeting of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications to be held in New York on 18-20 May

The Expert Group will discuss a variety of topics, including a review of the International Family of Classifications and criteria for the development of international classifications, the assessment of the implementation of newly revised standard classifications, as well as ways to improve communication with users of classifications.

It will also review newly developed or revised classifications, their linkages with other standard classifications and evaluate the need for revision of a number of classifications, including the Classification by Broad Economic Categories (BEC), the Standard International Energy Product Classification (SIEC) and the Central Product Classification (CPC). The Expert Group is also expected to discuss necessary updates to its mandate to allow it to react appropriately to new demand in the area of classifications work.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2011/ac234-2.asp>

Knowledge-sharing on census data use and dissemination in Latin American countries

Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis for Latin American Countries arranged in Santiago, Chile on 31 May – 3 June

The Regional Seminar, which is being organized by DESA's Statistics Division in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), will provide a forum for sharing national practices and experiences in the dissemination and use of census data.

The Seminar will aid in taking stock of national capacities and challenges for meeting the increasing requirements of census data users as well as review emerging trends, innovative approaches and technological tools employed in the dissemination of census data. Furthermore, the Seminar is expected to help in identifying good practices and lessons learned in the dissemination and analysis of census data.

For more information: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd>

Publications and Websites

Handbooks



Handbook on the Least Developed Country Category: Inclusion, Graduation and Special Support Measures (now available in French)

This Handbook is now available in French and it aims at promoting a better understanding of the LDC category and the benefits derived from membership therein. It contains a comprehensive explanation of the criteria, procedures and methodology used by the Committee for Development Policy for establishing which countries are eligible for inclusion in, or recommended for graduation from, the LDC category. It also provides an overview of the international support measures that can be derived from having least developed country status and the implications of graduating from the list in terms of the potential loss of such measures.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_publications_archive.shtml

Statistical compilations



Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

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This month, the following tables, which are featured in the MBS on a quarterly or bimonthly basis, are presented along with the regular recurrent monthly tables: Fuel imports, developed economies: unit value and volume indices; value; Indicators on fuel imports, developed economies; Registration of new motor vehicles; External trade conversion factors; Manufactured goods exports: unit value indices, volume indices and value; Selected series of world statistics.

For more information: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs>



Demographic Yearbook 2008

Demographic Yearbook 2008, the sixtieth in a series since 1948, is now available in print. Through the cooperation with the National Statistical Offices, official demographic statistics are compiled in the Yearbook, as available, for more than 230 countries and areas of the world.

This edition of the Yearbook contains chapters on the population size and distribution, the population of capital cities, fertility, fetal mortality, infant and maternal mortality, general mortality, nuptiality and divorce. Live births and crude birth rates as well as deaths and crude death rates are displayed for the latest five years, together with the age-specific fertility and mortality rates for the latest available year. It also features two non-recurrent tables on general mortality, cause specific deaths and death rates, and probabilities of dying as of the latest official life tables reported for each country.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2008.htm>

Publications in other languages

The following publications are now available in other languages:

- Designing Household Survey Samples: Practical Guidelines (Chinese, Russian)
- Handbook on Geospatial Infrastructure in Support of Census Activities (Russian)

Meeting records

Final Report on the 49th Session of the Commission for Social Development

The Commission adopted draft resolutions entitled “Modalities for the second review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002”, “Policies and programmes involving youth”, “Further promotion of equalization of opportunities by, for and with persons with disabilities and mainstreaming disability in the development agenda”, “Preparation for and observance of the twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family” and “Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development”.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csocd/2011-resolutions.html>

Discussion papers

Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects

The April monthly briefing highlights the ripple effects of Japan's triple disaster (earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident) and of the political unrest in the Middle East and North Africa. Inflationary pressures resulting from rising oil and food prices have led many Governments to tighten monetary policies.

For more information:
http://www.un.org/esa/policy/publications/dpad_wespmbn.html

Websites



Identifying Asset Bubbles: The Role of a National Statistical Office

Asset price bubbles are the subject of much debate in economic circles after the

2008 global economic and financial crisis. While there is considerable interest in bubbles, their identification poses a number of challenges for the national statistical offices. The site serves as a global consultation forum with papers and presentations on “identifying bubbles” prepared for the Fifteenth Conference of the Commonwealth Statisticians.

To browse:
http://unstats.un.org/unsd/Identifying_Bubbles/Identifying_Bubbles.htm

Comings and Goings

Goings

The following staff member retired in April:

Ann Orr, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Financing for Development office

Calendar

May

19th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-19)

New York, 2-13 May

http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd19.shtml

Second Meeting of the Expert Group on the Revision of the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES)

New York, 4-6 May

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/fdes/fdes_egm.htm

Youth briefing session highlighting Girls and Young Women

New York, 6 May

<http://social.un.org/youthyear/briefings.html>

Mali Symposium on “Gearing development cooperation towards the MDGs: Effectiveness and Results”

Bamako, Mali, 5–6 May

<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/newfunct/dcfmali.shtml>

Fourth UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-IV)

Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May

<http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>

LDC-IV side event: High-level event on “Macroeconomic Policies for LDCs: From Economic Recovery to Sustainable Development”

Tophane Hall, Istanbul Congress Centre, Istanbul, Turkey, 10 May

LDC-IV side event: “Optimizing Support Measures for LDCs: Access, Utilization and Effectiveness - Launch of the LDC Information Portal & the publication of ‘Out of the Trap’”

Topkapi B, the Lutfi Kirdar Convention and Exhibition Centre, Istanbul, Turkey, 11 May

LDC-IV side event: “Illicit Financial Flows: Perspectives on issues and options for LDCs”

Istanbul, Turkey, 11 May

LDC-IV side event: “Mutual Accountability for LDC: A framework for aid quality and beyond”

Camlica Hall at the LDC-IV conference venue, Istanbul, Turkey, 12 May

Regional ministerial conference

Buenos Aires, Argentina, 12-13 May

<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

10th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

New York, 16-27 May

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_tenth.html

Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis for Arabic speaking Countries Amman, Jordan, 16-19 May

Amman, Jordan, 16-19 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd>

Symposium on “Migration and Youth: Harnessing Opportunities for Development”

New York, 17-18 May

http://www.globalmigrationgroup.org/gmg_symposium2011.htm

Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development

New York, 19 May

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/migration.shtml>

Meeting of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications

New York, 18-20 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2011/ac234-2.asp>

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Forum 2011: Open Consultations on Thematic Aspects and New Innovative Format

Geneva, 18 May

<http://groups.itu.int/wsis-forum2011/About/WSISForum2011.aspx>

Fourth Parliamentary Forum on Shaping the Information Society

Geneva, 18-20 May

<http://www.ictparliament.org/>

Youth briefing sessions highlighting Indigenous Issues and Youth

New York, 19 May

<http://social.un.org/youthyear/briefings.html>

Informal Thematic Debate on International Migration and Development

New York, 19 May

<http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/initiatives/migration.shtml>

International workshop “Greater Government Transparency and Citizen Engagement to Promote Effectiveness and Accountability in Public Service Delivery”

Geneva, 19 May

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan045437.pdf>

Regional Seminar on Census Data Dissemination and Spatial Analysis for Latin American Countries Santiago, Chile, 31 May – 3 June

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd>

June

Workshop in South Africa for the Institutionalization of Water Accounts and Statistics

Pretoria, South Africa, 6-8 June

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm

Observances

International Day of Families

15 May

The United Nations Programme on the Family is the focal point within the United Nations system on matters related to family. As focal point, its primary actions and activities are to:

- provide substantive servicing in the areas of family and family policy to United Nations intergovernmental bodies, particularly the General Assembly, Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council;
- promote the realization of the objectives of the International Year of the Family;
- promote the integration of a family perspective into policy-making at the national, regional and international levels;
- exchange expertise and experiences, disseminate information and support networking on family issues;
- support family research and diagnostic studies;
- encourage and support coordination on family policies and programmes within national governments and within the United Nations system;
- provide technical assistance and capacity-building support to developing country Governments, at their request, in the area of the family; and
- liaise and dialogue with Governments, civil society and the private sector on family issues.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. DESA News is issued every month. Please click [here](#) to send inquiries.