



Mauritius International Meeting : daily live web coverage will be available from 10-14 January beginning 10 am Mauritius time (GMT + 4 hours)

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Feature article

Small islands, big potential

Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury assesses the prospects for a new resurgence of the most vulnerable section of humanity at the Mauritius meeting

Ten years ago, the international community gathered in Barbados to agree on a broad-based plan of action for the sustainable development of the small island developing states (SIDS). The plan covers 40-plus such islands sprinkled all over our planet, ranging from Tuvalu (with the smallest population, of 10,000) to Papua New Guinea (the largest, with 5 million) – two big concentrations being in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Vulnerability – economic, environmental and social – continues to be a major concern for countries in their development efforts. No single group of countries is as vulnerable as these small

island states, and that places them at a distinct disadvantage compared to larger countries. Beyond their idyllic natural beauty lies a fragility that makes these countries so vulnerable that they needed to draw up a special global endeavour to overcome their complex challenges and make their development sustainable.

Their smallness is compounded by remoteness, isolation from the mainstream of the world economy and international trading system, ecological fragility and environmental degradation, marine pollution, and over-dependency on tourism as a major source of national earning. All these factors contribute to their slow and complex development process.

SIDS contribute the least to global climate change and sea-level rise, but suffer most from their adverse effects and could, in some cases, become uninhabitable, as indicated in the Barbados Programme of Action. It has been

rightly observed that 'As island societies strive to raise living standards for growing numbers of people and struggle to survive in a complex global economy, they often sacrifice the fragile ecosystems which are among the most valuable assets'. They continue to experience stress that they can hardly cope with by themselves.

Elusive promises

Both in its Millennium Declaration of 2000 and in the development goals identified in that historic document, the United Nations has recognized SIDS' special needs. The Barbados Programme of Action of 1994 is the first ever intergovernmental policy prescription to integrate the small islands into the world economy. But after decade-long serious efforts, this well-crafted and elaborate document has remained largely unimplemented. The well-intentioned commitments in 14 priority areas have failed to get the required political will to turn them into real actions.

The 'new and equitable partnerships for sustainable development' promised to them have remained elusive. The need for national-level action has been repeatedly emphasized, but it has been often forgotten that these countries have limited capacity to respond to the never-ending challenges they face and to recover from recurring disasters. Despite all the demanding national-level actions they have undertaken, the requisite external support has persistently evaded them.

A serious effort was made in September 1999 – at a two-day special session of the United Nations General Assembly – to conduct a five-year review of the Barbados Programme, but the outcome did not have the desired effect of galvanizing the global support the SIDS needed. Indeed the overall disbursement of international assistance to them has fallen from \$2.9 billion in 1994 to \$1.7 billion in 2002. Though the Millennium Declaration, the Monterrey Consensus and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation all recognized their special needs, international support to these countries has been minimal.

Now the General Assembly has decided to undertake a ten-year review at the International Meeting in Mauritius in August 2004. The host country is also the chair of the Alliance of Small

Island States, the group that has the responsibility of substantive negotiations on behalf of these countries. With nearly a decade's experience of the implementation process, the United Nations is well placed to articulate a worthwhile outcome at Mauritius.

We must keep the focus on an outcome that is practical, cost effective, benefits the neediest in society – and is, above all, implementable. Focus on key priorities through enhanced regional integration would surely be considered a pragmatic approach. As we engage ourselves in the ten-year review of the Barbados Programme, the prospects for enhanced international development assistance are not in any way significant. Hence, a greater degree of realism is called for in the exercise we are embarking upon, especially in the priorities that the SIDS intend to set for themselves. Importantly, we have to determine what worked against the effective and speedy implementation of the Barbados Programme.

The smallness and the remoteness of SIDS continue to pose serious problems in providing international aid and enhancing foreign investments. In many cases projects and programmes are not viable when targeted for specific countries. However, many of the social, economic and human development projects and programmes could prove viable and yield better results when SIDS band together to integrate their economies and meet common challenges.

The small island developing countries need to increase their efforts to hasten the pace of regional economic integration. However, it is worth noting that, at the regional level, they have made advances in putting appropriate policy frameworks and arrangements into place to integrate their economic, social and environmental approaches to a sustainable development focus. These actions – including significant initiatives by the Pacific Islands Forum and the Caribbean Community – will undoubtedly help them to maximize the opportunities available.

Overcoming obstacles

Attracting more foreign direct investment to take advantage of SIDS' economic potential and to strengthen the hands of the domestic private sector is easier said than done. Their inherent

handicaps – particularly small populations, lack of technological sophistication and narrow resource bases – pose obstacles in competing for the foreign direct investment needed if they are to avail themselves of the opportunities offered by the globalization process. Globalization is based on opportunities for cost reduction and economies of scale, which small islands cannot easily offer. Special and creative ways and means must be found to attract foreign investments.

The effectiveness of the monitoring mechanism is key in implementing any negotiated document among governments. It is also important to set the right tone by sequencing a congenial and practical negotiating process among all stakeholders. Regional meetings in Samoa, Cape Verde, Seychelles, and Trinidad and Tobago brought in an elaborate set of recommendations, which were blended together in a SIDS strategy paper at an interregional gathering in the Bahamas in January this year. There was then a three-day preparatory meeting in New York in mid-April involving SIDS and all their development partners.

If the Mauritius meeting is to have a meaningful outcome that has the maximum support of the international community, it is essential that the donor countries, relevant United Nations entities, multilateral financial institutions, the private sector and civil society enthusiastically

participate in and contribute to this process. The spirit of partnership is the most important ingredient in making the outcome worthwhile and its realization possible. The international community, equipped with the lessons of the last ten years, now needs to come together to support – in real terms – the genuine aspirations of the small island developing states and their determined effort for a new resurgence in Mauritius to bring true benefit and progress for the women, men and children of this most vulnerable segment of humanity.

Recognizing this reality, our slogan for the Mauritius International Meeting should appropriately be ‘Small Islands, Big Potential’.

Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury is the United Nations High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and Secretary-General of the Mauritius International Meeting.

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The draft strategy for the further implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action, along with other conference documentation, is available online at <http://www.un.org/smallislands2005/>.

Global dialogue on development

General Assembly Second Committee concludes 59th session with focus on financing for development, conflict and development, combating corruption, and review of operational activities

The Second Committee concluded its work on Friday, 17 December. The Committee made significant strides in the areas of innovative sources of financing, peace and development, combating corruption and the triennial comprehensive policy review of UN system operational activities for development. It also introduced important improvements and innovations in its own working methods. Altogether, forty-one resolutions were adopted this year of which four went to a vote: on trade and development, commodities, promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area, and permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people.

The Committee devoted considerable attention to innovative sources of financing. The recent initiative by the Presidents of Brazil, Chile, France and Spain, the United Kingdom proposal for an International Finance Facility, and the joint DESA-UNU report have helped broaden the scope for exploring new sources of financing. While this is a significant step forward, there was still lack of consensus on which issues should be pursued in depth and the appropriate forums in which they should be addressed.

The launching of the report of the High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change focussed the Committee's attention on the relationship between conflict and development, led by the keynote address of Paul Collier (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2004/gaef3076.doc.htm>). It was generally recognized that the UN's work in the area of development would have to be re-oriented and made conflict-sensitive. The discussions will continue during the 60th General Assembly session, following the Secretary-General's comprehensive report on the Millennium Declaration.

After lengthy negotiations, the Committee adopted a comprehensive resolution on the triennial policy review of operational activities

for development of the United Nations system. Notable aspects of the text are a strong emphasis on the need for an inclusive approach to UN reforms, requiring the involvement of the entire UN development system in the effort to improve country level coherence and impact of the system's contribution to the national development efforts of developing countries. Funding of operational activities for development of the UN system is addressed with renewed vigour and the resolution calls for a regular oversight of this issue by the Economic and Social Council and a discussion next year of possible innovations in funding modalities to enhance the predictability, long-term stability and adequacy of funding for the UN system's development cooperation. It also calls for enhancing evaluation of the effectiveness of UN operational activities and joint efforts in this area with clear benchmarks and results.

This was very much a transition year for the Second Committee. Several improvements and innovations in its working methods were introduced, including question time for discussion on reports, clustering the agenda around major themes like globalisation and interdependence, poverty eradication etc., and setting deadlines not only for the presentation but also adoption of resolutions under each cluster. This helped to enhance the functioning of the Committee and to avoid accumulation of unfinished resolutions towards the end of the session. The improvements in the work of the Committee were welcomed by all Member States, including the United States and the European Union. However, these changes still fell short of making the negotiating process more efficient. There is a general feeling that business as usual will no longer do and working methods should be further reviewed in order to ensure that negotiations on resolutions are not dragged until the end of the Committee.

The Bureau of the Committee is expected to undertake informal consultations on the working modalities and submit its recommendations on 1 April 2005 to the President of the General Assembly, who will look at them in the broader context of continuing improvements in the work of the General Assembly.

Contact: Mr. Navid Hanif, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 212/963-8415.

DPADM adds:

The latest General Assembly resolution on public administration (A/59/L.27/Rev.1) was adopted on 2 December 2004. In it, the General Assembly decides to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the resumed 50th session of the General Assembly on public administration and development during its 61st session in 2006, and calls for increased visibility of the United Nations Public Service Awards, as well as of the World Public Sector Report. The resolution stresses the contribution that the Global Forum on Reinventing Government has made to the exchange of lessons learned in public administration reform.

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

32nd session, New York, 10-28 January 2005
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/cedaw/>

At this forthcoming session, the Committee will review the reports of eight States parties to the Convention including: Lao People's Democratic Republic, Samoa, Algeria, Croatia, Gabon, Italy, Paraguay, and Turkey.

Pre-sessional working group for the 33rd session New York, 31 January-4 February 2005

The pre-sessional working group will have a closed meeting to review reports from Benin, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Gambia, Lebanon, Burkina Faso, Guyana, Ireland, and Israel. Representatives from the United Nations system and from non-Governmental organizations may present their reports to the working group in a closed meeting the morning of 31 January.

Working group on communications under the Optional Protocol

New York, 31 January-2 February 2005

The working group on communications under the Optional Protocol will have a closed meeting to review communications received under the Optional Protocol.

Contacts: Division for the Advancement of Women - Ms. Philomena Kintu., + 1 212/963-3153 (32nd and 33rd sessions); Ms. Eleanor Solo, + 1 212/963-1524 (optional protocol).

Commission for Social Development

43rd session, New York, 9-18 February 2005
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/>

The 43rd session of the Commission for Social Development will be held from 9-18 February 2005. The first three days will be devoted to the 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen 1995) and will include: (1) a high-level panel discussion with the International Labour Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank; (2) a high-level panel discussion of the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions; and (3) presentation of the outcome of the Fourth International Forum for Social Development. An NGO forum will be held on Tuesday 8 February immediately before the Commission. The two-day high level segment of the Commission begins on 10 February and will consist of three simultaneous high-level roundtables on the three core issues of the Social Summit: poverty eradication; promoting full employment and fostering social integration. The high level segment will conclude on 11 February after the general debate.

Items to be discussed during the second part of the Commission (from 14-18 February) include: (1) renewal of the term of the Special Rapporteur on Disability; (2) panel discussion on youth issues in the context of the World Programme of Action for Youth; (3) discussion on review of the methods of work of the Commission; (4) proposed programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007; (5) matters pertaining to UNRISD, including the nomination of three new Board Members; and (6) a high-level NGO briefing on the 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development.

Contacts: Division for Social Policy and Developme - Diane Loughran, nt, + 1 212/963-1707 (first part of the session); Mr. Bob Huber, + 1 212/963-3936 (second part of the session).

Secretary-General's report on youth

<http://www.un.org/youth>

The report of the Secretary-General on youth, also called the "World Youth Report 2005" (A/60/61- E/2005/7), will be presented at the Commission for Social Development in February 2005. The report contains an overview of the achievements made in the implementation of the

World Programme of Action for Youth since its adoption in 1995. It also includes several new recommendations for global youth policy. An advance, unedited version of this report is available online.

Contact: Mr. Joop Theunissen, Division for Social Policy and Development, + 1 212/963-7763.

Report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Social Development

Monitoring the implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

Contact: enable@un.org

Commission on the Status of Women

49th session, New York, 28 February-11 March 2005

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/>

At its forty-ninth session, the Commission on the Status of Women will focus on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000” gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”. The review and appraisal will focus on implementation at the national level, through the expanded use of interactive dialogue, and with broad-based participation of the high-level governmental delegations, civil society and organizations within the United Nations system. There will be an emphasis on the sharing of experiences and good practices in overcoming remaining challenges to implementation.

Contact: Ms. Roselyn Odera, Division for the Advancement of Women, + 1 917/367-4352.

Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

5th session, New York, 24 January-4 February 2005

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/rights/ahc5.htm>

Contact: enable@un.org.

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

2005 regular session, New York, 5-18 January 2005

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>

During the two-week session, the Committee will review ninety-two applications of organizations requesting consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, fifty deferred applications, fifty-seven new quadrennial reports and eight 8 deferred reports. A number of other matters falling into the purview of the Committee’s responsibility will also be considered including reinstatement of status of an organization. The Committee held two-day informals in mid-December during which its members had a preliminary review of new applications.

It is worth noting that at the 2005 regular session, the “Paperless Committee”- an electronic record management and meeting system will be implemented successfully for the 4th consecutive sessions since May 2003. Through the Paperless Committee system, the members of the Committee on NGOs can access all documents and records electronically in the meeting room and remotely from their offices facilitating informal consultations. The equipment for the project on the “Paperless Committee” is supported by World Job and Food Bank, Inc. The 19-member Committee meets twice a year. The resumed session of the Committee is scheduled to be held in May. The Chair of the Committee is Ms. Paimaneh Hastaie from Iran.

Contact: Ms. Hanifa Mezoui, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1212/963-8652.

Trends and analysis

Expert group meeting on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development

New York, 15 November 2004

DESA organized a one day expert group meeting on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development on 15 November at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The meeting was chaired by the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Ocampo. A cross-section of experts from the United Nations, academia, practitioners, and IFIs participated as keynote speakers and discussants.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Ocampo stated that DESA was actively involved in issues of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and development, but often in a fragmented and disparate way. There was need now for a framework to deal with the issues in a more coherent manner within DESA and for it to contribute more effectively to other UN departments. The main objective of the meeting was to reflect upon how to build such a DESA framework.

The meeting focused on the following thematic areas: (1) Structural causes of conflict and the role of sustainable development: conflict prevention and peace-building perspectives (a) socio-economic development policies and conflict prevention, (b) natural resource governance and conflict prevention; (2) socio-economic and institutional challenges of post-conflict peace-building and development: a long term perspective; (3) partnerships and civil society: roles and capabilities in conflict prevention and peace-building; (4) institutional approaches and mechanisms for conflict prevention, peace-building and development.

Experts at the meeting identified several challenges in determining approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding through development. Firstly, the relationships between underdevelopment and violent conflicts were complex requiring multidimensional analyses and approaches. Secondly, to arrest and reverse the growing trend of the business sector involving itself in conflict issues, the existing forums should embrace the concept of involving all actors in their efforts to prevent conflicts. Thirdly, efforts on conflict prevention, until now,

have been very narrowly focused at the national level. There is a widely recognized need to develop sub-regional, regional and global approaches. In this context, the global policy framework for development should be rendered conducive to the integration of conflict-prone, and countries emerging from conflict in the global economy. Fourthly, embedded systemic causes of conflict should also be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Fifthly, translating into operational practices, the considerable amount of work done on the conceptual side of conflict prevention and peacebuilding is a challenge. Finally, integration and coordination within the UN system and with outside actors should be pursued through flexible and efficient means rather than through rigid structures. Such flexibility was warranted by the very nature of the complexity and multi-dimensionality of the inter-face between security and development issues.

The meeting represented the first attempt by DESA to bring together UN departments, think-tanks, and Bretton Woods institutions, and exchange views on how to strengthen and systematize the integration of development with conflict prevention and peace-building. Every division of DESA participated in the exercise, helping to mainstream conflict prevention and peacebuilding within DESA's work. Participants were unanimous in acknowledging DESA's efforts at broad-based participation and open-ended consultations on evolving its own framework on this issue.

The interdivisional task force that organized the meeting is currently in the process of analyzing the contributions of the meeting and will continue consultations on the development of its framework on integrating development with peace, taking into account recent developments in this regard, in particular the report of the high-level panel on threats, challenges and change.

Contact: Mr. Navid Hanif, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1212/963-8415.

Biotechnology: implications and realities for developing countries

New York, 18 January 2005

The Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination is organizing an event on biotechnology for developing countries,

sponsored by the Congress of Racial Equality and the Permanent Mission of Nigeria. The event will bring together experts, from academia and civil society, and high-level officials from the private sector and government, to engage in an interactive dialogue on this issue with member state delegations.

Contact: Mr. Ajit Yogasundram, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 212/963-5737.

International workshop on free, prior and informed consent and indigenous peoples
New York, 17-19 January 2005
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/pfii>

The Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is organizing an international workshop on free, prior and informed consent and indigenous peoples, mandated by the Permanent Forum at its third session in May 2004 and confirmed by the Economic and Social Council in its decision 2004/287. Free, prior and informed consent regarding indigenous peoples has been identified as an important methodological priority by the Permanent Forum and an inter-agency paper was presented to the Forum's second session to facilitate discussions. The January expert workshop will contribute to further progress on this issue and will prepare recommendations for the Permanent Forum's fourth session.

Participation in the workshop is limited to expert indigenous organizations, members of the Forum, United Nations agencies and interested governments.

Contact: Ms. Mariana Lopez, Division for Social Policy and Development, + 1 212/963-5161.

Expert group meeting on achievements, gaps and challenges in linking the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Declaration, and the MDGs
Baku, Azerbaijan, 7-10 February 2005

The Division for the Advancement of Women is currently preparing an expert group meeting on "Achievements, gaps and challenges in linking the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs" to be held in February 2005 in Baku,

Azerbaijan. The outcome of the meeting will consist of an independent expert report, containing conclusions and action-oriented policy recommendations, which will support the Commission on the Status of Women in the review and appraisal at its forty-ninth session from 28 February to 11 March 2005, as well as in preparing its contribution to the high-level event on review and follow up to the Millennium Declaration, scheduled to take place later in 2005.

Contact: Ms. Heike Alefsen, Division for the Advancement of Women, + 1 917/367-0157.

Advisory expert group on national accounts
2nd meeting, New York, 8-16 December 2004
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/aeg.htm>

The Group will make decisions on recommendations for the updating of the 1993 system of national accounts on various issues including databases, originals and copies, mineral exploration, non-performing loans, cost of capital services from government owned assets, treatment of land, change of economic ownership, the application of accrual principles to debt arrears, the meaning of the term "predominant center of economic interest", multi-territory enterprises, holding companies, special purpose entities and trusts.

Youth and the Millennium Development Goals
<http://www.mdgyouthpaper.org/>

The UN programme for youth recently assisted in the creation of a report entitled "Youth and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): Challenges and Opportunities for Implementation". This working paper, written by an ad-hoc international taskforce of youth experts, has been submitted to Professor Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the UN Millennium Project for consideration in the final drafting of the Global Plan to Achieve the MDGs. The paper provides examples of existing youth participation, case studies on youth in development, as well as recommendations as to how young people should be included in the implementation of the MDGs at all levels.

Contact: Ms. Julie Larsen, Division for Social Policy and Development, + 1 917/367-6036.

Expert group meeting on improving criteria for the identification of least developed countries

New York, 9-10 February 2005

The Expert Group Meeting will begin preparations for the triennial review of the list of least developed countries which is scheduled to take place in 2006. The meeting will focus on improving the criteria for the identification of LDCs, including examining the possibility of including additional criteria, such as the remoteness of countries. In addition, the Expert Group will review the quality and availability of the data required for the triennial review and will examine the vulnerability profile of a country that has already been identified as a possible candidate for graduation from the list of LDCs. The report of the meeting will be submitted to the seventh session of the Committee for Development Policy, to be held in New York from 14 to 18 March 2005.

Contact: Anatoly Smyshlyaev, Development Policy and Planning Office, + 1 212/963-4687.

World Summit on the Information Society

Thematic meeting on measuring the information society

Geneva, Switzerland, February 7-9, 2005

<http://measuring-ict.unctad.org/>

Organized under the umbrella of the "Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development" (UNCTAD/OECD/ITU/UIS/UN Regional Commissions/UN ICT Task Force/World Bank), the main goal of this global meeting is to consolidate the outcomes of regional workshops on information society indicators that were held in the 4th quarter of 2004, and agree on a final list of core ICT indicators to be collected by all countries, including on basic access and usage by households and individuals, businesses and schools. It will also discuss developing country technical assistance needs as regards the compilation of ICT indicators, identify ICT indicators relevant to achieving the MDGs, and present ongoing work concerning the creation and maintenance of an international database on ICT indicators. The outcome of the meeting will provide concrete suggestions on how to measure

information society developments, as an input to the second phase of WSIS and its follow-up.

Contact: Ms. Daniela Giacomelli, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 917/367-2432.

Africa regional preparatory conference, pre-conference meeting on internet governance
Accra, Ghana, 28-29 January 2005

The United Nations ICT Task force in partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa will organize a conference on internet governance in Accra from 28-29 January. The conference will be attended by representatives from governments, private sectors, civil society organizations and academia as well as IT engineers and ICT experts, who will exchange their views on the technical, ethical, societal and legal dimensions of the global Internet Governance from an African perspective. Of particular focus will be WSIS phase II scheduled to take place in Tunis 16-18 November 2005 as well as domain name management and technical issues, opportunities and challenges of the current IPR regime, inputs and recommendations to the Working Group on Internet Governance, the role of stakeholders in national and global ICT policy making processes affecting Internet Governance and human and institutional capacity building.

Contact: Mr. Samuel Danofsky, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 917/367-2424.

Consultative meetings with youth organizations

Coimbra, Portugal, 31 January-4 February 2005

In preparation for two plenary meetings to be devoted to youth at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, the UN programme for youth is organizing two consultative meetings with youth organizations and youth representatives in early 2005. The first meeting will be hosted by the Government of Portugal from 31 January to 4 February 2005 and will consult large international, membership-based organizations.

Contact: Ms. Charlotte van Hees, Division for Social Policy and Development, + 1 917/367-4053.

The second consultative meeting will be held from 14 February to 17 February 2005 in New York to coincide with youth activities during the Commission on Social Development. This meeting will consult with new and emerging youth structures and networks.

Contact: Ms. Julie Larsen, Division for Social Policy and Development, +1 917/ 367-6036.

United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality

4th session, New York, 22-25 February 2005

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/ianwge>

The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality will hold its fourth session from 22 to 25 February 2005 at UN Headquarters. At the meeting, the Network will consider a number of issues including: integrated and coordinated follow-up to Beijing, the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and major conferences as they relate to the ten-year review of the Platform for Action at the Commission on the Status of Women; the five-year review of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals; gender statistics and indicators; beyond the ten-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action; review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of ECOSOC agreed conclusion 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes of the United Nations system; human rights issues; and human resources and the status of women in the UN system. A one-day workshop on “Ten-year review of gender mainstreaming: The way forward” will also be held.

Participants will include gender focal points of entities of the United Nations system. The Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Assistant-Secretary-General Ms. Rachel Mayanja, is the Chair of the Network.

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Technical cooperation

Africa South of the Sahara

Regional forum on reinventing government in Africa: repositioning the public sector for the challenges of NEPAD

Johannesburg, South Africa, 17-19 January 2005
http://www.unpan.org/directory/conference/guest/browseoneconference.asp?conference_id=1775

The Regional Forum on Reinventing Government in Africa will be held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 17-19 January 2005. It is organized by DPADM/DESA and the United Nations Development Programme, and hosted by the Department of Public Service and Administration of the Government of South Africa. The purpose of the Forum is to highlight the visionary leadership attributes as well as the innovative approaches that are required to reinvent government within the region, and thereby enhance the capacity of governance and public administration to attain the objectives of the New Partnership for African Development.

The specific objectives of the Forum are to:

- Highlight and discuss the role of visionary leadership, good governance and effective public administration in responding to the challenges of NEPAD and sustainable development and poverty reduction in Africa;
- Assess the efforts made within and across countries to reform governance and public service practices, spearhead public administration innovation, and reposition the public service for the NEPAD challenges;
- Examine critical capacity factors accounting for success or failure of programmes to reinvent government within the Africa region;
- Suggest modalities for the establishment of knowledge networks (including institutional arrangements which would enable think-tanks, universities, training and research institutions, and representatives of the government to share knowledge and experiences); and

- Identify areas of common concern and a framework for regional and national cooperation on the implementation of NEPAD and the African Peer Review Mechanism.

Participants will include high-level government officials, particularly from Ministries and Departments responsible for the public service and public sector modernization in African countries, resource persons, representatives from international institutions, the academia and regional institutes and civil society organizations, as well as experts from UNDP and UNDESA.

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International conference on parliaments' information management in Africa: challenges and opportunities of ICTs to strengthen democracy and parliamentary governance

Nairobi, Kenya, 9-11 February 2005
<http://www.parliaments.info>

DPADM is organizing an international conference on parliaments' information management in Africa to be held in Nairobi, Kenya from 9-11 February 2005. The conference aims to provide African parliaments with analyses, strategies, tools, guidelines and regulatory frameworks for a successful and sustainable deployment of information and communication technologies. More specifically, the conference will deal with the following issues:

- Access to information – It is necessary to bring up to date the legal framework that should regulate the access to public information.
- ICTs regulation – Many African countries do not yet have legislation concerning Information and Communication Technologies. Parliaments need to be aware of the issues that this new scenario will bring and of the regulatory frameworks that could discipline it.

- Pan-African interoperability framework – Common standard-based framework should be agreed upon to allow legislatures to exchange digital information easily and quickly and enhance their cooperation.
- Sustainability of parliamentary information systems – It is necessary to set in place a series of organizational and technical enabling activities to support and empower Parliaments with the tools and resource to manage ICTs adoption.
- Parliamentary information systems and the open source option – The use of a common IT system, that can be customized and translated in local languages to respond to the individual requirements of national Parliaments, would allow greater sharing of experience and expertise among Parliaments, as well as improve the long-term future and sustainability of the systems.

authorities conference in Rio de Janeiro from 22-23 February 2005. The event is co-hosted by the Rio de Janeiro State Government, Rio de Janeiro States Industry Federation and W2i. The objective of the meeting is to establish a thorough understanding and prospective roadmap of emerging standards and regulatory provisions affecting municipal authorities, to explore, based on case studies, the potential benefits of broadband wireless applied to local communities and to identify and discuss practical solutions to wireless access challenges.

Contact: Ms. Enrica Murrura, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 212/963-5913.

Participants will include representatives from the Parliaments of Angola, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda, and other national Parliaments, the Pan African Parliament, regional and subregional assemblies, international and regional organizations, and Parliamentary organizations; and speakers from the Pan African Parliament, the NEPAD e-Africa Commission and the Africa Peer Review Mechanism, the European Parliament, Parliaments of Africa, Parliaments of Europe, Development and International Organizations.

Contact: Mr. Kristinn Helgason, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, + 1 212/963-8418.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The wireless internet opportunity for underserved communities in Latin America: a Brazilian perspective

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 22-23 February 2005
<http://www.w2i.org>

The United Nations ICT Task Force and the Wireless Internet Institute (W2i) in cooperation with UNITAR and the Federación Latinoamericana de Ciudades, Municipios y Asociaciones de Gobiernos Locales will organize a global municipal government and local

Publications and websites

Monographs

World Economic and Social Survey 2004

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/index.html>

The World Economic and Social Survey 2004 was produced in two parts. The first part discusses the state of the world economy in 2004, and was issued in November (sales no. E.04.II.C.1). The second part (sales no. E.04.II.C.3), issued in December, focuses on international migration. It examines the surge in migration at the end of the nineteenth century, developments in migration flows since 1960, national policies and international agreements regarding migration, and the economic and social impacts of migration in both source and destination countries.

Contact: Mr. Ian Kinniburgh, Development Policy and Planning Office, +1 212/963-4838.

Statistical compilations

Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

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

Provides monthly statistics on 60 subjects from over 200 countries and areas, together with special tables illustrating important economic developments. Quarterly data for significant world and regional aggregates are included regularly.

ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/381, Vol. LVIII, No. 9
September 2004

Special features in this issue: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; Fuel imports, developed economies: unit value indices, volume indices and value; Indicators on fuel imports, developed economies; Registration of new motor vehicles; External trade conversion factors; Manufactured goods export: unit value indices, volume indices and value; Exports by commodity classes and by regions: developed economies; Selected series of world statistics.

ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/382, Vol. LVIII, No. 10
October 2004

Special features in this issue: World shipbuilding; Civil aviation traffic: passenger-km, cargo net ton-km; Total exports and imports by countries or areas: volume, unit value, terms of trade and purchasing power of exports, in US dollars.

Contact: Ms. Mary Jane Holupka, Statistics Division, +1 212/963-1606.

Statistical Yearbook, forty-eighth issue

ST/ESA/STAT/SER.S/24, sales no.
E/F.04.XVII.1

This annual compilation of statistics for over 250 countries and areas of the world is organized in four parts: world and region summary; population and social statistics; economic activity; and international economic relations. The latest issue of the Yearbook presents 84 tables on a variety of subjects including population, education, nutrition and childbearing, culture and communication, national accounts, industrial production, finance, labour force, wages and prices, agriculture, forestry and fishing, manufacturing, transport, energy, environment, science and technology, intellectual property, international merchandise trade, international tourism, balance of payments, and development assistance. In general, the data presented are those which were available as of mid-December 2003, and whenever possible, cover the ten-year period from 1992-2001 or 1993-2002.

Contact: Ms. Mary Jane Holupka, Statistics Division + 1 212/963-1606.

Central Product Classification, version 1.1

ST/ESA/STAT/SER.F/81, sales no. E.03.XVII.3

The Central Product Classification constitutes a complete product classification covering goods and services. It serves as an international standard for assembling and tabulating all kinds of data requiring product detail, including industrial production, national accounts, service industries, domestic and foreign commodity trade, international trade in services, balance of

payments, consumption and price statistics. Statistics based on CPC Version 1.1 are useful in studying transactions in goods and services in detail and as a basis for developing lists of goods and services for specific purposes, such as price statistics surveys. It has broad acceptance as an international standard and facilitates the maintenance of constant categories of products.

Contact: Mr. Ralf Becker Statistics Division, +1 212/ 963-4600.

Discussion papers

Promoting an Enabling Environment for Digital Development: forthcoming

The United Nations ICT Task Force is compiling a number of contributions on the subject of Enabling Environment for ICT for Development that is building upon the discussions of the United Nations ICT Task Force Global Forum, which was held on 18-19 November 2004. The publication, to be released in February, will address a wide range of issues including financing ICT for development, policy and regulatory issues and the role of stakeholders in fostering enabling environment.

Contact: Ms. Enrica Murrura, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 212/963-5913.

Websites

Online discussions at WomenWatch

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/forums/review/>

The Division for the Advancement of Women, in collaboration with the members of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, has been hosting a series of online discussions regarding the critical areas of concern and key issues to provide input into the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The discussions started in October 2004 and will run through January 2005.

Summaries from these consultations will be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women in February.

Contact: Ms. Sylvie Illan Cohen, Division for the Advancement of Women, +1 212/963-0058.

Youth website in Russian

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/uniyin/russian/>

The website of the programme on youth is now available in four languages: English, French, Russian and Spanish.

Contact: Mr. Fred Doulton, Division for Social Policy and Development, + 1 212/963- 4466.

Comings and goings

Comings



Jomo Kwame Sundaram of Malaysia has been appointed Assistant-Secretary-General for Economic Development, and is expected to take up duties effective 1 January 2005. Mr.

Jomo will lead and coordinate statistical, demographic, and macroeconomic data gathering and analysis, and serve as senior economic adviser to the Department's Under-Secretary-General. Mr. Jomo is currently a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore, and Professor in the Applied Economics Department at the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur.

Goings



Joseph Chamie, Director of the Population Division, retired on 31 December 2004, after more than a quarter-century serving the Organization, first in Beirut and then in New York. As the United

Nations chief demographer, Mr. Chamie provided intellectual leadership on a wide array of population and development issues, particularly in areas of international migration, below-replacement fertility, population ageing, and the determinants and consequences of population trends. Mr. Chamie served as the Deputy Secretary-General of the International Conference for Population and Development in 1994, playing an important role by assisting Member States reach consensus on sensitive and contentious issues. Mr. Chamie has been a strong proponent of outreach to the media, and his efforts have demonstrated that the results of scientific, objective research are newsworthy.

Calendar

January

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations
2005 regular session
New York, 5-18 January 2005

International Meeting for the 10-year Review of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States
Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

- 32nd session
New York, 10-28 January 2005
- Pre-sessional working group for the 33rd session
New York, 31 January-4 February
- Working group on communications under the Optional Protocol
New York, 31 January-2 February 2005

Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities
5th Session
New York, 24 January-4 February 2005

February

Commission for Social Development
43rd Session
New York, 9-18 February 2005

Commission on the Status of Women
49th session
New York, 28 February-11 March 2005

Special events

Special event on governance for sustainable development of small island developing States
Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-15 January 2005

The Division for Public Administration and Development Management together with the Italian Government are organizing a special

event on governance for sustainable development of small island developing States to be held in conjunction with the upcoming Barbados + 10 meeting in Mauritius. The event will present the experience and lessons learned by DESA and the Government of Italy in supporting governance and state reform efforts in the Caribbean and Pacific subregions.

Speakers will include Ambassador M. Spatafora of Italy to the United Nations, Mr. J.A. Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General of DESA, and Mr. Greg Urwin, Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

Contact: Mr. Shabbir Cheema, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, + 1 212/963-4533.

International Council for Caring Communities conference on integrated communities, and student finalists' exhibition
New York, February 11, 2005
<http://www.international-iccc.org/>

In support of the World Summit for the Information Society, the International Council for Caring Communities is organizing a conference on ICT and the opportunities and challenges presented by "a society for all generations". ICCC recognizes that the fastest growing population, older persons, is often excluded from the revolution in ICT, and so works to stimulate dialogue and action on that subject. Special reports to be presented at this conference will be "Harnessing the Generations through Telecentres" and "Use of Abandoned Space".

ICCC will also introduce the winners of the 2004 Architecture Award and, in conjunction with the United Nations ICT Task Force and other partners, launch the international 2005 ICT student design contest. The competition invites students around the world to develop ICT solutions for integrating older persons into the fabric of the community and including them in all social, cultural and productive activities.

Contact: Ms. Enrica Murrura, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, + 1 212/963-5913.

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of coordination of economic and social development policies. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social

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Contact: Communications and Information Management Service, + 1 212/963-4587.