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“We need to eradicate poverty at a faster pace”

Only a week into her new role, DESA’s Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Ms. Shamshad Akhtar, met with DESA News. “With fast changing global events, magnified by recurring crises, the UN has a unique role to play in nurturing stronger multilateral framework, based on cooperation, innovative solutions and solidarity to safeguard our planet,” she said.



Shamshad Akhtar was appointed by the UN Secretary-General as Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and she took office on 9 July. Ms. Akhtar has previously served as Governor of the Central Bank of Pakistan, Vice President of the Middle East and North Africa Region of the World Bank and she has also held prominent positions within the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

When meeting in her office, Ms. Akhtar shared her initial thoughts on this new assignment, highlighting what great opportunities lay within the UN framework and also underscoring the role of the UN Secretariat, which can cultivate, facilitate and nurture stronger ownership of the strategic development agenda at the inter-governmental platform. Being associated with the development business and looking at the growing empirical evidence, she is convinced that “upfront ownership and cross fertilization of good practices is critical for countries to achieve ground results.”

When asked how she viewed the UN job when approached, Ms. Akhtar said that “the emerging debates on global sustainability led by the UN and the Secretary-General’s vision in this context, along with the futuristic agenda to modernize the UN, offers a good opportunity for those engaged in the development business.”

Experiences gained from crisis mitigation and prevention

Ms. Akhtar brings vast experience to DESA. At the World Bank, she spearheaded its response to the Arab Spring and prior, she was engaged in the Asian financial crisis on behalf of the Multilateral Development Banks. Talking about some of the most important lessons learned, she highlighted the critical

importance of “governance”, whose failure was at the heart of both the political and economic crises in these regions.

When faced with such unprecedented crisis, the first order of priority of the affected countries and international community is to focus on crisis mitigation. But as we learn from one crisis after the other, the preferred approach is to build defense mechanisms for crisis prevention. Ms. Akhtar elaborated that “economic history is full of recurring crisis, albeit of different dimensions and nature, and learning from these episodes is critical to develop better strategies for crisis mitigation and prevention, as economic losses and human aggravation is substantive.”

Underlying most crises, she pointed out, is the failure of governance, be it political, economic, social or legal/regulatory. Responding to a question, she also outlined the difference between recent events in the Arab world, where the underlying issue triggering a struggle for political change, was the lack of fundamental rights and respect for citizens. In this part of the world, based on public sector driven social contract, citizens were denied access to information, rights and basic services despite the hydrocarbon wealth in the region.

The Asian financial crisis on the other hand, occurred due to a failure of regulatory and supervisory governance which allowed special interests to overexpose the financial institutions. Ms. Akhtar explained that these events have brought about a new awakening among economists and development thinkers. “The significance of getting the governance frameworks right and strengthened would go a long way as the crises have a huge financial, economic and human cost.”

Opportunities and challenges ahead

When discussing opportunities and challenges ahead, Ms. Akhtar also stressed the need to see how the department is positioned to deliver the medium term strategy outlined by the Secretary-General. “The key thing for us is to take stock as to whether we are well positioned to deliver that mandate,” she said. “DESA’s leadership and team can be proud of playing a critical role for UN’s success in steering the Rio summit. It has been a complex process but more challenges will emerge as we delve into the nuts and bolts of the broad development agenda at hand. For DESA it is an opportunity to illustrate its capabilities and capacities further to support the post 2015 agenda.”

Ms. Akhtar highlighted the benefits of strategizing to become more results-oriented and creating synergies among UN agencies with staff of different backgrounds and expertise, coordinating and collaborating. “DESA has a very important role to play in this post 2015 agenda. Not only by contributing in the thinking process, intellectually, but also making sure we are nurturing partnership with various players or developing institutional arrangements to coordinate this work.”

Potentials for new financing and green growth

In light of DESA just releasing the World Economic and Social

Survey, presenting innovative ideas to raise new funds for development, Ms. Akhtar shared some of her views on this topic. “There has been a range of innovation in financing for development, but it is important to recognize that a large proportion of people and businesses are outside the ambit of the financial system. In addition, the climate change agenda requires not only extensive financing but also that the costs of innovations are shared,” she said.

Ms. Akhtar also discussed the benefits seen globally of extending the coverage of microfinance. She mentioned that there are some interesting innovations under way such as public-private partnerships in raising debt and equity for financing micro-businesses, tapping guarantee mechanisms to leverage funding, as well as the use of technology and risk management frameworks to reach out to clients. Experiments are yielding good results as large proportions of clients are women. Ms. Akhtar also highlighted the instrumental role of SMEs in promoting employment. “We need to be more proactive in reaching out and deepening and broadening the access to small and medium enterprise financing,” she said, adding that “only very small formal credits go to these businesses.”

She also addressed another dimension of financing, connected with the climate change agenda. “I can not but underscore the significance of mobilizing sustainable financing for developing countries, or for that matter developed countries, and innovative approaches to financing a green growth agenda,” she said. “I say this, because some of these propositions are very expensive and its affordability out of range given the fiscal situation across a number of countries. If we were to promote solar technology, which is very important in promoting green growth, it is very critical for us to look at more innovative mechanism of financing in this area.”

Biggest award is seeing results

Ms. Akhtar has won two consecutive awards as Asia’s Best Central Bank Governor from Emerging Markets and the Banker’s Trust and she has been named one of the top ten professional women of Asia by the Asian Wall Street Journal. Although it brings satisfaction to be recognized professionally, Ms. Akhtar confessed that the most important thing is seeing the ground results of your efforts.

“To me, the biggest reward is when you see people getting micro finance. I am very fortunate that I travel to see the villages. I sat with communities and with practitioners and policymakers and I have seen the benefits of the work that we did and its advantages and benefits to the poor people and to the economic system.”

Concluding our interview, Ms. Akhtar shared her hopes for the uplift of the world community, “I think it is a very exciting period for all of us who are engaged in the development business. Our task is to focus on economic, social and environmental sustainability with the objective of reducing poverty, alleviating stress on the basic services and making sure people are fed properly. We cannot achieve these goals unless

we equip countries to manage and implement development programs at high governance standards and ensuring programs that benefit people.”

For more information:

[Bio of Ms. Shamshad Akhtar](#)

Partnering with young people to build a better world

“We need a top-to-bottom review so our programmes and policies are working with and for young people. We don’t have a moment to lose. We have the world to gain,” said UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon earlier this year. Many activities are currently under way to address and involve youth, including International Youth Day on 12 August.



This year’s theme is “Building a Better World: Partnering with Youth”. The theme relates to the announcement that the Secretary-General made in January, where he committed to “address the needs of the largest generation of young people the world has ever known” by making “working with and for women and young people” a priority in his Five-year Action Agenda.

Ban Ki-moon also revealed the development of a System-Wide Action Plan on Youth as well as the appointment of a Special Advisor on Youth and a UN Volunteer youth initiative. Five thematic areas were highlighted developing these initiatives: employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, citizenship and protection of rights, and education, including on sexual and reproductive health.

Enhancing partnerships for and with youth crucial

The need to enhance partnerships both with and for youth was underscored in the outcome document of the General Assembly’s High-Level meeting on Youth last year and it has been the topic of many events and discussions throughout 2012.

A special event was for example arranged by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in February on “Breaking new ground: Partnerships for more and better jobs for young people”. The Council President Miloš Kotorec then described the tough situation for many of today’s young people, affected by the global jobs crisis.

“These are alarming trends. Alarming because young people are our future promise...our innovators, our academics, our entrepreneurs, and our political leaders. The future rests squarely on their shoulders. It will be through their agency and their vision that we will successfully emerge from the wrenching economic crisis we are now experiencing. For this reason, we need to offer them hope, and more importantly, we need to offer them solutions,” Mr. Kotorec said.

With this in mind, International Youth Day 2012 aims to highlight the many ways the UN, Member States, the private sector and other stakeholders can partner with and for youth, with a focus on the five thematic areas described.

Action plan developed based on youth input

One example of how the UN is partnering with and for youth is in the development of the System-Wide Action Plan (SWAP) on Youth. In order to prepare this plan, the Intern-Agency Network on Youth Development, led by the permanent co-chair of DESA’s Social Policy and Development Division (DSPD), has established three newly established thematic sub-working groups.

These groups are clustered around the priority areas identified by the Secretary-General: (1) employment and entrepreneurship; (2) health and education, including education on sexual and reproductive health; and (3) participation, including political inclusion, active citizenship and protection of rights. The aim of the thematic sub-working groups is to lead the development of the SWAP in their respective areas and to coordinate input from youth and other stakeholders.

Youth input to the development of the SWAP is of utmost importance, which has also been emphasized by the Secretary-General. To ensure that young people’s input is reflected in the elaboration of the SWAP, the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development has launched an online consultation with youth-led organizations and other stakeholders. The inputs received will feed directly into the work of the sub-working groups preparing the plan. The link to this survey is also provided below.

Global online initiative calling on young people

In the lead-up to International Youth Day 2012, the UN will undertake a global online initiative, calling on young people around the world to commemorate the International Day by organizing events in partnership with civil society, Member States, the private sector, academia and philanthropists, especially in the areas of employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, citizenship and protection of rights, and education, including on sexual and reproductive health.

DSPD-Youth has developed a [world map](#) to mark International Youth Day events and also invites everyone who will be organizing an event to contact the Division at youth@un.org so that these events can be added to the map.

During the second week of August, DSPD-Youth will conduct an online campaign by organizing six live Google+ Hangouts, covering the following topics: 1) employment; 2) entrepreneurship; 3) political inclusion; 4) citizenship and protection of rights; 5) education; and 6) education on sexual and reproductive health; and how they relate to partnering with and for youth.

The aim of the Hangouts will be to share information and good practices, and to provoke discussion on the role of the UN, Member States and Civil Society on how to better ensure and develop partnerships between and with young people, the UN, Member States and the private sector in these important areas. DSPD-Youth invites young people around the world to join these discussions and submit their questions using Twitter and Facebook.

It is the intention that the outcomes of the activities leading up to and taking place on the day, will feed directly into the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Youth Development, developing the System Wide Action Plan on Youth (SWAP).



For more information:

[International Youth Day 2012](#)

[World map of International Youth Day events](#)

To add your own event to the world map, send details to: youth@un.org

To join the International Youth Day online initiatives, follow on Twitter at [@UN4Youth](#) and on Facebook at [facebook.com/UNyouthyear](https://www.facebook.com/UNyouthyear)

To participate in the survey, click on the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/BFKH85W>

ECOSOC: Placing full employment front and centre

“In 2012 as I approach the end of my term, the need for accelerated progress in sustainable development has moved to the top of the global agenda. The High-level Segment has achieved results. We now have a powerful international jobs road map, one which is affirming the world’s remarkable commitment to ending poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals,” said Sha Zukang.



Mr. Sha, who retired from his post as DESA’s Under-Secretary-General on 31 July, delivered these remarks as ECOSOC’s High-level Segment was closing on 10 July. He continued praising the achievements saying, “the Declaration sets out unequivocally our collective resolve to place full employment front and centre of policy making. We need a strong ECOSOC, a strong United Nations, but above all we need a steadfast commitment to solving global problems together so we can achieve a sustainable future, a future we all want.”

After the Ministerial Declaration was adopted, ECOSOC President Miloš Koterec also summarised the importance of the segment by remarking, “we have come a long way in the adoption of the text. Unemployment is the biggest challenge of our time. When you see young people on the streets yearning for work, then you realize how important it is for us to get our act together”.

For more information:

[Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#)

[ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration](#)

Global Dialogue on Development

Empowering indigenous voices

The 18th commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples will be held on 9 August at UN Headquarters in New York

The event will be organized by the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues within DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), the UN Department of Public Information, and the NGO Committee on the Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

There will be statements delivered on behalf of the Secretary-General, DESA's Under-Secretary-General, the Director of DSPD, the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and others.

An interactive dialogue on "Indigenous Media, Empowering Indigenous Voices" will take place from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm in the ECOSOC Chamber. Some short clips and videos will also be screened during the commemoration.

Those who wish to attend the interactive dialogue but do not hold UN grounds passes must confirm their participation by sending an email to Ms. Nataliia Grushevska at grushevska@un.org by noon (New York time) on 2 August indicating your name, affiliation and contact information. After successfully registering, participants should pick up their passes at the UN Visitors' Lobby from 1:15 pm until 3:00 pm on 9 August.

This commemoration is an afternoon event and the Secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues does not issue any invitation letters for participation in this event. Representatives of Member States, UN Agencies, indigenous peoples', other non-governmental organizations and the media are invited to attend.

For more information:
[International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#)

Celebrating International Youth Day 2012

International Youth Day will be commemorated on 12 August under the theme "Building a Better World: Partnering with Youth"

The theme relates to the announcement in January when the Secretary-General committed to 'Address the needs of the largest generation of young people the world has ever known' by making

"Working with and for women and young people" a priority in his Five-year Action Agenda.

He also announced the development of a System-Wide Action Plan on Youth as well as the appointment of a Special Advisor on Youth and a UN Volunteer youth initiative. In addition, five thematic areas were highlighted in the development of these initiatives: employment, entrepreneurship, political inclusion, citizenship and protection of rights, and education, including on sexual and reproductive health.

The need to enhance partnerships both with and for youth was underscored in the outcome document of the General Assembly's High-Level meeting on Youth last year and it has been the topic of many events and discussions throughout 2012.

With this in mind, International Youth Day 2012 aims to highlight the many ways the UN, Member States, the private sector and other stakeholders can partner with and for youth, with a focus on the five thematic areas described.

For more information: [International Youth Day](#)

Protecting the rights of older persons

The third substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing will take place in New York on 21-24 August

In December 2010, the UN General Assembly established an open-ended working group aimed at strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons. It was mandated to consider the existing international framework and to identify possible gaps and how best to address them. The open-ended working group held two working sessions in April and August 2011.

During the first session, the working group focused on the international and regional human rights structure and how it addresses the specific situation of older persons. A number of fissures in the protection system were identified. The second session was devoted to considering some specific thematic human rights issues relevant to older persons, such as multiple discrimination, the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, violence and social exclusion.

The topics of the upcoming third substantive session will include (a) age discrimination, (b) abuse and violence against older persons, (c) life in dignity, social security and access to resources, (d) access to justice, and (e) older persons, autonomy, independent living and health care. The session is open to all Member States, UN system organizations and accredited NGOs.

Participants have consistently noted various gaps within the international human rights framework including normative, implementation and information gaps. These disparities contribute to challenges faced by older persons in the enjoyment of their lives and their rights. So far, some Member States called attention to normative gaps and the importance of universal standards to effectively enhance the protection of older persons, while other Member States underlined that existing instruments could be better implemented and used for more effective monitoring.

For more information:

[Open-ended Working Group on Ageing](#)

Development challenges in focus of the ECOSOC's month-long session

The substantive session of ECOSOC, which took place in New York, concluded on 27 July following four weeks of work on a wide range of issues on the UN's development agenda

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) ended its annual session on finding solutions and proposing policy recommendations to global issues, from employment and decent work to global partnerships, development cooperation, education, poverty reduction and sustainability, and humanitarian assistance.

“We have reached the end of four, remarkable weeks of high-level engagement and dialogue, review and deliberation, and, importantly, decision-making,” said Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs. More than 40 ministers and heads of development cooperation agencies, and the UN system attended the session.

Chaired by ECOSOC President Miloš Koterec, the High-level Segment opened on 2 July, featuring the Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) on productive employment and decent work and the two-day Development Cooperation Forum, focusing on making advances in poverty reduction and sustainable development through partnerships among countries, civil society organizations and the private sector.

“The Forum (DCF) is making its mark on the development landscape, demonstrating its worth as a marquee destination for policy discourse and guidance,” said Mr. Koterec. “And with calls for more inclusive development cooperation growing ever louder, the DCF's star will, no doubt, only shine brighter in the years ahead”.

Two major reports were released during the High-level segment – “The 2012 progress report on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)” and the “World Economic and Social Survey (WESS): In Search of New Development Finance” – and nine countries held voluntary presentations. A high-level panel discussion was also arranged on transparency and sustainable development.

The High-level segment concluded on 10 July with the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration focusing on ‘promoting productive capacity and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of inclusive, sustainable and equitable economic growth at all levels for achieving the Millennium Development Goals’.

The Coordination Segment examined commitments and goals related to education, including the role of partnership to boost results and the future of education goals in the post 2015 context., as well as follow up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, with a particular focus on innovative financing for development.

2012 will feature the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of the operational activities for development, an exercise that relates to the work of all UN system entities delivering support on the ground. At its operational activities segment, the Council started the QCPR process with a wide range of panels and keynote addresses. The process will continue at the forth coming General assembly session. An independent evaluation of the UN's Delivering as One progress was also presented to ECOSOC.

How coordination of humanitarian assistance could be strengthened in a changing world was on the agenda for the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, whereas the General Segment dealt with a number of issues including the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the economic and social situation in African countries emerging from conflict, the international assistance to South-Sudan as well as long-term support to Haiti.

A number of online [Face-to-Face](#) live conversations were also arranged on topics related to the global jobs crisis. Video material highlighting ECOSOC and its annual session is stored online and can be accessed via ECOSOC's Youtube page. The link has been included below.

The 54-member EOCOSC coordinates the work of the 14 UN specialized agencies, 10 functional commissions and five regional commissions, receives reports from ten UN funds and programmes and issues policy recommendations to the UN system, as well as to Member States. It meets every year, alternating between New York and Geneva.

For more information:

[Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#)
[Adopted draft Ministerial Declaration](#)
[Media Centre](#)
[ECOSOC on Youtube](#)

Promoting public service excellence

The 2012 UN Public Service Day, Awards Ceremony and Forum on “Innovation and Citizens Engagement for Effective Governance” held in New York on 25-27 June, resulted in a Final Communique, containing a set of recommendations to Member States and the UN

The suggestions were the result of active interactions and dialogue held across four parallel capacity development workshops and a ministerial round-table by over 400 government officials from 96 Member States on the respective themes of: 1) Institutions and Leadership Capacities to Innovate and Engage Citizens in Service Delivery; 2) Preventing Corruption in Public Administration: Engaging Citizens in the Fight Against Corruption; 3) E-Government: From Policy to Practice; 4) The Dividends of Women in the Frontline of Service Delivery: Good Governance and Citizen Engagement.

The recommendations were outlined along the following respective thematic areas:

- Localizing public priorities and build institutional mechanisms that allow for two-way communication and active listening to engage citizens in service delivery;
- Promoting excellence in public service through national awards and recognition systems, i.e., naming and faming;
- Creating a global academy for leadership capacity-building;
- Implementing e-government strategies through collaborative government approaches by building partnerships with private sector and civil society which would ensure sustained investment in e-government;
- Improving public sector human resource capacity development for preventing corruption and engaging citizens in anti-corruption initiatives;
- Promoting a system to manage the transfer of knowledge among countries that are seeking for innovations and those that have already implemented innovative practices.

For more information:

[Division for Public Administration and Development Management \(DPADM\)](#)

Trends and Analysis

Mapping the world for development

The Second Session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) will be held at UN Headquarters in New York on 13-15 August

The official announcement of the second session has been communicated to all the Permanent Missions to the United Nations. It will bring together government experts from all Member States to consult and deliberate on a number of substantive activities.

Issues to be addressed include the implications of the Rio+20 Conference, the strategic considerations of future trends in geospatial information management (the five-to-ten-year vision) and the drafting of a statement of ethics for the global geospatial information community. The session is also expected to discuss the development of a knowledge base for geospatial information and to study the status of mapping in the world.

For more information:
[United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management](#)

Share your 90 seconds forest story

The UN Forum on Forests Secretariat (UNFF) has launched a short film contest together with Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and leading nature filmmakers to highlight vital role of forests (Deadline: 15 December 2012)

Everyone is invited to take part in this first-ever global multimedia initiative. One that will unite 200 million people in 193 countries to remind all of us just how vital forests are.

Forests for People is a short film contest that invites people from every part of the world, to create and share a personal film about their own relationship to the forest. How it inspires you. Shelters you. Nurtures you. Contributes to your life, or even makes life possible.

The contest was launched with a campaign film featuring Oscar-winning director Nick Park, Emmy winners Dereck and Beverly Joubert, acclaimed photographer Cristina Mittermeier, distinguished nature director Alastair Fothergill, pioneering cinematographers Louis Schwartzberg and S. Nallamuthu, renowned director/photographer and GoodPlanet founder Yann Arthus-Bertrand, and British film icon John Boorman with his son Charley, who is also a UNICEF ambassador.

How you make your film is entirely up to you. Use whatever you have to tell your story in 90 seconds or less. Every type of media,

from video cameras to mobile footage, animation to photos, is welcome. You don't have to be a professional filmmaker. The more stories that are told, the richer and more diverse our portrait will be.

How to enter

Once you've created your film, entering it is easy. Just upload your film to YouTube, then complete the [short entry form](#), which will ask you for the YouTube link to your film. Each film entry will open a unique window on our diverse human connections to the forest. Together, they will help everyone see the forests in a compelling new light.

Judging and finalists

After the contest ends on 15 December 2012, an international jury will select 15 semi-finalist and five finalist films to be premiered at the April 2013 meeting of the United Nations Forum on Forests in Istanbul, and at the 2013 Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival. The five finalists will also be invited to attend the film premiere at the United Nations Forum on Forests meeting in Istanbul, with travel support to be provided. All semi-finalists and finalists will be contacted after the judging is complete.

For more information:
[Forests for People: UN International Short Film Contest Contest Terms and Conditions](#)
[Campaign film clip](#)

Capacity development

Developing skills for parliamentary libraries

A skills development activity for parliamentary libraries of the Arab region will take place in Helsinki at the Parliament of Finland on 8-10 August

The Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), through the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament, the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments and the Parliament of Finland are co-organizing this event.

The Skills Development Activity envisages the participation of Heads of Parliamentary Libraries in the one-day workshop “Strategic Management of ICT in Parliamentary Libraries” on 8 August and the participation in the Annual Conference of the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments on 9 and 10 August.

The one-day workshop will focus on the use of new technologies to provide more effective information services to the parliament and the public, and on the creation, management and preservation of digital collections in parliamentary libraries. It will also provide an opportunity for parliamentary libraries of the Arab region to discuss common tools to be developed within the Arab Parliamentary Libraries Network. The Annual Conference of the IFLA Section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments will pay special attention to innovation in research services that support members of parliament, and innovation in library and information services for citizens.

During these events, the Handbook “Information and Communication Technologies in Parliamentary Library”, prepared by the Global centre for ICT in Parliament and published by the United Nations, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) will be launched and distributed to participants.

For more information:

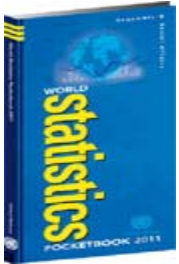
[Global Centre for ICT in Parliament](#)

[The Library of Parliament in Finland](#)

Publications and Websites

Statistical compilations

World Statistics Pocketbook 2011



The World Statistics Pocketbook 2011 is the thirty-first in a series of annual compilations of key statistical indicators prepared by DESA's Statistics Division. Over 50 indicators have been collected from more than 20 international statistical sources and are presented in one-page profiles for 216 countries or areas of the world.

This issue covers various years from 2000 to 2011. For the economic indicators, in general, three years – 2000, 2005 and 2010 – are shown; for the indicators in the social and environmental categories, data for one year are presented. The topics covered include: agriculture, balance of payments, education, energy, environment, food, gender, health, industrial production, information and communication, international finance, international tourism, international trade, labour, migration, national accounts, population and prices.

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 monthly and/or bimonthly, quarterly and annual 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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In addition to regular monthly tables, this issue includes the following quarterly and bi-monthly tables:

- 8. Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials
- 12a. Earnings in non-agricultural activities, by sex
- 18. Fuel imports, developed economies: unit value and volume indices; value
- 19. Indicators on fuel imports, developed economies
- 37. External trade conversion factors
- 39. Manufactured goods exports: unit value indices, volume indices and value
- 51. Selected series of world statistics

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

Meeting records

Report of Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development

The outcome report on the conference which was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on 20-22 June 2012 acknowledged that, as part of a “Common Vision”, democracy, good governance and the rule of law, at the national and international levels, as well as an enabling environment, are essential for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and hunger. It reaffirmed that to achieve sustainable development goals, institutions at all levels need to be effective, transparent, accountable and democratic.

With respect to the institutional frameworks for sustainable development, the report recognized that effective governance at the local, subnational, national, regional and global levels, representing the voices and interests of all is critical for advancing sustainable development and that the strengthening and reform of the same should not be an end in itself, but a means to achieve sustainable development. The divisions' work programme on governance is consistent to the areas raised in the outcome report and DPADM will make further reference in a bid to strengthen the same.

For more information: <http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/>

Outreach material

Social Development Link Newsletter (SDLN)

The July issue is now available online highlighting the ECOSOC sessions including the Development Cooperation Forum as well as the International Day of Cooperatives 2012. The newsletter is published by the Civil Society and Outreach Unit of DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), is now available. It aims at providing a sharp and synthetic summary of major activities carried out by DSPD and serve as a link between DSPD and its major partners, from civil society actors to social development practitioners and scholars.

For more information:
<http://social.un.org/index/Newsletters/SDLNewsletter/July2012.aspx>

Youth Flash Newsletter

The July issue is now available featuring the story “Youth: a Hot Topic at the UN”, presenting the activities of DESA in keeping youth issues sizzling. The newsletter is a service of the Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) Focal Point on Youth to help keep the public informed about the work of the UN on youth issues. It is prepared with input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes, and from youth organizations all over the world.

For more information:

<http://social.un.org/index/Youth/YouthFlashNewsletter/2012/July.aspx>

Discussion papers

Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects

The July issue highlights the deceleration of international trade which mirrors weakening global demand, reduced industrial production and interconnected slowdowns among trading partners resulting from macroeconomic uncertainties and policies in developed countries. The briefing also highlights the progress made in EU bank recapitalization and growth pact as well as the slowing growth in Brazil and India.

To download:

http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_mb/wesp_mb45.pdf

Working papers

Should global goal setting continue, and how, in the post -2015 era?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were introduced to monitor implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration which set out a vision for inclusive and sustainable globalization based on human rights principles. This paper critically assesses the MDG experience including their policy purpose, ethical commitments, political origins, and consequences. It proposes that post-2015 goals should be based on principles of equity, sustainability and human security and address key contemporary challenges such as climate change, unemployment, inequality and global market instability.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2012/wp117_2012.pdf

Websites

Launch of a new web portal: United Nations Social Development Network (UNSDN)



DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) has launched a new web portal (as a pilot project) called United Nations Social Development Network (UNSDN) to

share knowledge and good practices among social development professionals worldwide on ageing, civil society, cooperatives, disability, employment, family, indigenous peoples, poverty, social integration, technology and youth.

UNSDN is uniquely positioned to disseminate information and knowledge produced by the United Nations system in the area of social development, particularly on the three core issues of poverty eradication, employment generation and social integration. UNSDN will act as a major interface between DESA's work in the area of social development and that of its partners involved in advancing the global social development agenda.

To browse: <http://unsdn.org/>

Publications in other languages

The following publication has been translated into Russian and Spanish:

Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services 2010 (MSITS 2010)
ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/86/Rev.1, Sales No.: 10.XVII.14

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

Website additions and updates

Online updates to “2011 International Trade Statistics Yearbook Volume I – Trade by Country” provides an overview of the world trade in 2011 and detailed information on the merchandise trade of 174 countries (or areas).

For more information: <http://comtrade.un.org/pb/>

UN e-Government Survey recognized

The Economist Intelligence Unit published “Smart policies to close the digital divide: Best practices from around the world” and have mentioned the UN E-Government Survey and quoted Haiyan Qian on improved access due to mobile technology.

The report, based on extensive desk research and wide-ranging interviews with experts from more than ten developed and emerging-market countries, presents best practices that have been adopted by governments and the private sector globally to bridge digital divides.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/Home/tabid/420/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

Comings and Goings

Goings



Sha Zukang, who served as Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs for five years, completed his term at the end of July 2012. In addition to his role as head of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and Convenor of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Sha served as Secretary-General for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), which took place in Rio de Janeiro from 20 to 22 June 2012.

A career diplomat before joining DESA, Mr. Sha held many leadership positions for the Chinese Foreign Ministry over the years, and chaired intergovernmental meetings in different international organizations, including the UN Conference on Trade and Development and the Human Rights Council.

For more information: [Bio of Mr. Sha](#)



On 30 June, after many years of service, **Jomo Kwame Sundaram** left his position as Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development at DESA. During his tenure, Mr. Jomo was involved in all areas of the Department's work enhancing performance, impact and accountability whilst holding a broad range of managerial responsibilities.

Mr. Jomo led the UN system response to the 2005 Summit, supporting Member States to implement National Development Strategies, and in 2007 he was responsible for coordinating a major budget reform to enhance human and other financial resources for the UN Secretariat's development work. In 2010, he was selected by the UN Secretary-General as his G20 'sherpa', and was also appointed G20 'Finance Deputy' for the UN.

In response to the global financial crisis, Mr. Jomo initiated the UN system-wide supplementary Macroeconomic Advisory Capacity and later served on the [Stiglitz] Commission of Experts on Reforms of the International Monetary and Financial System. Additionally, Jomo represented the UN SG at the IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee and the World Bank-IMF's Development Committee until 2011.

In his different capacities, Mr. Jomo worked to build and broaden international consensus to enhance the impact of collective action by the international community. Most recently he was instrumental in coordinating efforts to articulate a post-2015 UN Development Agenda.

For more information: [Bio of Mr. Jomo](#)

The following staff members also retired in July:

Patricia David, Administrative Assistant, Division for Social Policy and Development

Anna Marie Francia, Administrative Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

Erlinda Go, Statistician, Statistics Division

Maria Dolores Tanpinco, Technical Co-operation Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in July:

Amal Abou Rafeh, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Guenther Gross, Chief, Communications and Information Management Service

Charles Hoag, Staff Assistant, Development Policy and Analysis Division

Felice Llamas, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Francesca Perucci, Chief of Branch, Population Division

Calendar

August

Skills development activity for parliamentary libraries of the Arab region

Helsinki, Finland, 8-10 August

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

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

9 August

<http://social.un.org/index/IndigenousPeoples/InternationalDay.aspx>

x

International Youth Day

12 August

<http://social.un.org/index/Youth/InternationalYouthDay.aspx>

Second Session of the UN Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM)

New York, 13-15 August

http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html

Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

New York, 21-24 August

<http://social.un.org/ageing-working-group/>

September

Fifth session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

New York, 12-14 September

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=46&pid=1595>

General Assembly, 67th session

New York, 18 September - 31 December

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

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.