

UN DESA Global Policy Dialogue

Converging crises, shared solutions: Applying lessons from Asia and the Pacific to global challenges

Friday, 23 May 2025
2:45-4:30 p.m. ICT (Bangkok) /
09:45-11:30 a.m. CEST (Geneva) / 3:45-5:30 a.m. EDT (New York)

Theatre, Faculty of Arts, Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Building,
Chulalongkorn University
Bangkok, Thailand, and online

Introduction

As the world navigates an era marked by intensifying socioeconomic pressures, geopolitical tensions, and accelerating climate shocks, the need for a shared and actionable global vision has never been more urgent. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under such conditions requires not only renewed commitment but also deeper alignment between global and regional responses.

While shocks—economic, environmental, or political—often emerge locally or regionally, their ripple effects transcend borders due to the interconnectedness of our global systems. Whether it is a supply chain breakdown, a climate-induced disaster, or a regional conflict, the consequences now demand a coordinated global response informed by grounded, context-specific knowledge.

In May 2025, the UN High-level Advisory Board on Economic and Social Affairs (HLAB)—comprising thought leaders and practitioners from across regions and disciplines—will convene in Bangkok, Thailand, to explore emerging global socioeconomic trends, risks, and opportunities. This convergence of globally engaged experts in a dynamic regional setting presents a unique opportunity to foster a two-way exchange: how Asia-Pacific’s experiences and innovations can inform global strategies, and how the broader international agenda can be grounded in regional context.

To bring this high-level conversation to a wider, global public, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) will host a Global Policy Dialogue on “Converging crises, shared solutions: Applying socioeconomic lessons from Asia-Pacific to global challenges” on the margins of the HLAB meeting. Through a moderated, interactive format—including online polls and live Q&A—the public will hear from HLAB members on the socioeconomic opportunities and policy innovations from Asia-Pacific

that can contribute to addressing shared global challenges. By breaking down boundaries between local realities and global ambitions, this event aims to help shape smart strategies to navigate an era of converging crises and transition toward a more resilient, just, and inclusive future.

This dialogue is being held in partnership with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and is made possible by the UN Peace and Development Trust Fund. It is free to join, and all are welcome.

Format

The 105-minute event will include two panel discussions. The discussions will be interactive and led by a professional moderator. Time will be reserved during the event for audience questions and polls. The audience will also be invited to submit questions in advance when completing the Zoom registration.

Location

The event will be recorded in person at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok with an in-person and virtual global audience.

Platform

The event will be organized with the support of ESCAP and will involve the hiring of a professional video production team. The audience can watch the event in person and through Zoom, UN WebTV, or on [UN DESA's Facebook page](#). The audience also can access the Slido platform to participate in the polls, submit their own questions or vote up questions posed by others.

Language

The event will be held in English with multilingual captioning available in the six UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish) on Zoom.

Host/moderator

DESA will hire a professional journalist, Sandy Hanutsaha of NBT World TV and Radio Thailand, to facilitate this event.

Programme

Introduction

(4 minutes)

- Moderator welcomes the audience and provides logistical information
- Moderator launches interactive poll 1

Welcome remarks

- **Mr. Li Junhua**, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs **(3 minutes)**

Keynote remarks

(4 minutes)

- **Mr. Nopphol Witvorapong**, Dean of the Faculty of Economics, Chulalongkorn University

Discussion 1: Leveraging socioeconomic opportunities and perspectives of Asia and the Pacific to prepare for global challenges

(45 minutes)

Speakers:

- **Ms. Rola Dashti**, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
 - **Mr. Parfait Eloundou-Enyegue**, Professor of Global Development and Brooks School of Policy, Cornell University
 - **Ms. Anastasia Gage**, Professor at the Department of Global Community Health and Behavioral Sciences, School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, Tulane University
 - **Mr. Martin Kimani**, CEO of The Africa Center, New York
 - **Mr. Dhananjayan Sriskandarajah**, Chief Executive of New Economics Foundation, former Chief Executive of Oxfam, former Secretary General and CEO of CIVICUS
 - **Ms. Kori Udovički**, Head of Center for Advanced Economic Studies (CEVES)
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- Moderator launches interactive poll 2
 - Moderator to ask each participant 2-3 guiding questions – first looking at how the world can learn from Asia and the Pacific, and then looking at what Asia and the Pacific can learn from the experiences in other regions.
 - Moderator to take a few questions from the in person/online audience via the Slido platform

Video from UN DESA

(3 minutes)

Discussion 2: Best practices to prepare for a just transition in Asia and the Pacific

(40 minutes)

Speakers:

- **Ms. Xiaolan Fu**, Professor of Technology and International Development, University of Oxford
 - **Mr. Fadhel Kaboub**, President, Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity; Associate Professor of Economics at Denison University
 - **Ms. Raya Muttarak**, Professor of Demography, University of Bologna
 - **Ms. Åsa Persson**, Research Director and Deputy Director of the Stockholm Environment Institute
 - **Mr. David Christopher Smith**, Director, Centre for Environmental Management, The University of the West Indies
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- Moderator launches interactive poll 3
 - Moderator to ask each participant 2-3 guiding questions
 - Moderator to take a few questions from the in person/online audience via the Slido platform

Closing remarks

(5 minutes)

- **Mr. Navid Hanif**, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development and Chief Economist

Wrap-up and closing

(2 minute)

- Moderator's final remarks
- Exit survey will launch upon end of Zoom