



Internet forum aims to build trust, while leaving no one offline

The Internet has become an integrated part of our lives, from accessing an education, to receiving healthcare services and to conducting business. The digital transformation we are experiencing is spreading across the most remote areas in the world. The frontier technologies are opening new boundaries and possibilities for development. As we move forward, our dependence on the Internet and technologies will grow even further.

Meanwhile, the Internet also brings risks and serious dangers to our lives: cyberthreats, fake news, information misuse by terrorists, sexual exploitation and data abuse. As our dependence to the Internet grows, it is high time to think and re-think: how much can we trust the Internet?

To address this concern, more than 3,000 representatives from governments, the private sector, technical community and the civil society will gather in Paris on 12-14 November 2018 at the annual global Internet Governance Forum (IGF) to look at a range of issues and actions that can be taken to ensure an “Internet of Trust.”

The IGF, convened by the United Nations Secretary-General, serves to bring people together from various stakeholder groups as equals in discussions on public policy issues relating to the Internet. The Forum promotes dialogue and encourages an exchange of ideas to better govern the internet so that it is a safe and trustworthy environment for all.

“With technology outracing institutions, cooperation between countries and among stakeholders will be crucial, including Member States, the private sector, research centres, civil society and academia,” UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, addressing the opening of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. “There are

many mutually beneficial solutions for digital challenges. We need urgently to find the way to apply them”.

The thirteenth session of the IGF will discuss some of the most pressing Internet Governance issues today: Cybersecurity, Trust and Privacy, Digital Inclusion and Accessibility, Emerging Technologies, Evolution of Internet Governance, Human Rights, Gender and Youth Development, Innovation and Economic Issues, Media & Content, and Technical and Operational Topics; and Trends such as Artificial Intelligence, Big Data, Virtual Reality, Fake News and Net Neutrality; and many others.

These discussions will act as inputs toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which relies on robust and strategic use of ICTs and sound Internet policies.

With its mandate renewed for 10 years by the UN General Assembly in December 2015, the IGF has consolidated its position as a platform for bringing together members of various stakeholder groups as equals.

While there is no negotiated outcome, the IGF informs and inspires those with policy-making powers in both the public and private sectors. Delegates will hold discussions, exchange information and share good practices with each other at the annual meeting for collectively shaping the digital future.

The IGF is also a truly global event, as the forum invites the online community to participate via remote hubs. Wherever you are in the world, find out how to join and register [here](#).

For more information:

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)



The geospatial way to a better world

Governments and businesses are challenged to combat hunger, poverty, water scarcity, climate change, disasters and other perils, and to provide peace and prosperity for its people, leaving no one behind. Addressing these challenges requires evidence-based policy making, which is achievable with the use of geospatial data, statistical data and applicable technologies. Everything – all our challenges – happens somewhere and can be located, mapped, viewed, measured,

analyzed, modelled and monitored. Geospatial tools when applied, allows us to gain insight into data, reveal patterns and relationships which helps us to make better decisions and chart the way to a more sustainable world.

To explore these opportunities further, 1,500 representatives from the global geospatial information management community will gather for the first UN World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) on 19-21 November 2018 in Deqing, China.

Ministers of governments, leaders from national mapping and geospatial information management organizations, the private sector, academia, international organizations and the UN System will examine critical new and emerging issues, exchange information, design solutions and create partnerships to ensure that geospatial information facilitate social, economic and environmental development.

“This is really the first event of its type,” said Stefan Schweinfest, Director of UN DESA’s Statistics Division, ahead of the event. He described how the Congress, by “bringing together all the multi-stakeholder community around the world for geospatial information, will “enable the private sector, academia and civil society to have a dialogue on how to support” the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The UNWGIC, arranged under the overarching theme ‘The Geospatial Way to a Better World,’ will feature a comprehensive and thought-provoking program of four plenaries on emerging topics such as “Sharing the Digital Economy” and “Building Smart Societies”; 35 parallel sessions; and four special presentations, implemented by a cast of prominent, inspiring and influential moderators and speakers.

The event will kick off with an opening ceremony featuring welcome statements by the Vice-Premier of China, UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General, the Minister for Natural Resources of China and other dignitaries.

A key element of the Congress will be the ministerial dialogue, which will examine the policy relevance, challenges, and role of geospatial technology and innovation to measure and monitor the Sustainable Development Goals and to enable economic development and social prosperity.

In line with efforts to ensure a more inclusive world in which all are counted, the Congress will also focus on enhancing international cooperation among Member States; examine the development and strengthening of geospatial information management systems and capacities; and demonstrate the importance of international coordination and cooperation for building data ecosystems for sustainable development.

A special session, the Young Geospatial Professionals Summit, will be held to incorporate the youth perspective to these global efforts. It will bring to the table, young and rising talents in the geospatial information field, who will share their ideas and solutions in addressing global development challenges.

While the UNWGIC plenary program covers three days, the overall Congress will span over five days and include industry exhibitions, technology showcases, global and regional meetings, and technical side events. The event will culminate with the release of the Moganshan Declaration, expected to inform the global geospatial information management agenda for the coming years.

For more information:

The United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress

United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management

HIGHLIGHTS



Gender statistics – for good measure

Over 150 statistics experts from around 40 countries will assemble in Tokyo from 14 to 16 November to discuss ways of improving data for evidenced-based gender policies. Coming on the heels of the UN World Data Forum, the 7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics will seek ways of filling the gender data gaps through international statistical standards and methods, latest technologies and by sharing best practices.

The adoption in 2015 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) brought with it an unprecedented demand for data – both in terms of quantity and quality. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development turned the world’s attention to the (in)availability of data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status and disability to ensure that everyone, including all women and girls, are accounted for.

“With a stand-alone goal on gender equality and almost a third of indicators relevant for gender analysis, it has also put significant pressure on countries’ statistical capacity to fulfil new SDGs’ gender data requirements,” said Stefan Schweinfest, Director of UN DESA’s Statistics Division, which is organizing the Forum, in collaboration with the Government of Japan.

“It is expected that this will translate into an increased demand for high-quality gender statistics that are produced regularly and that provide solid and objective evidence on the status of women compared to men,” he added.

Bringing together producers and users of gender statistics from national and international statistical offices and other government agencies, international organizations, academia, civil society and the donor community, the Global Forum on Gender Statistics is a prime platform for finding and sharing solutions for bridging the gender data gap.

The Forum participants will review methodological developments, take stock of national, regional and international practices and strategies and discuss effective communication methods. They will focus on the priority themes of women's economic empowerment through gender equality at work and through asset ownership and entrepreneurship; measuring unpaid work and time use; gender, climate change and the environment; gender equality and human rights; and international migration and gender.

In addition, the Forum will highlight non-traditional data sources and innovative methods, such as the use of satellite, mobile phone and internet activity data, to fill the gender data gaps.

The Forum will be preceded by the 12th Inter-agency and Expert Group Meeting on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) on 13 November, also held in Tokyo.

For more information:

7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics

GET INVOLVED



Take climate action!

The special report on global warming by the UN-run Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in October should be an “ear-splitting wake-up call” for the world to take climate action, UN Secretary-General António Guterres warned last month.

Limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C, compared to our current path of more than 2°C, would provide clear benefits to people and ecosystems alike. It would limit the negative effects of extreme weather and allow more time for countries to build resilience. Business-

as-usual scenarios predict that we may hit the 1.5°C threshold in as little as 12 years. Combatting climate change, therefore, requires rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society, from governments, to businesses, to individuals.

That's where you come in.

What we do as individual global citizens matters. If we each change our daily habits and consumption patterns to more ecologically-minded ways, it adds up to a big difference. For instance:

- Will you limit your food waste and only buy what you consume?
- Will you give up single-use plastics?
- Will you offset your greenhouse gas emissions by planting and protecting trees?

- Will you pick up trash that has washed up on a beach or riverbed near you?
- Will you choose to buy products from companies that make sustainability a priority?
- Will you take public transportation when possible?
- Will you the light off when you leave the room?
- Will you turn off the water when not actively using it?

Living more sustainably, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), doesn't have to be a chore. It makes financial sense—for instance, mindful use of energy or switching to clean energy sources can save you money. It can even be fun! Supporting local businesses, sharing and reusing items, and participating in community gardens are easy ways to meet your neighbours and connect with them around a common goal.

If humanity is to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must all change our consumption and production patterns, live sustainably, and we must start now.

For more inspiration and to see ways you can make a difference, visit: bit.ly/lazyguideUN

For more information about the SDGs, visit: sustainabledevelopment.un.org

EXPERT VOICES



Building strong and lasting partnerships, key to achieve the SAMOA Pathway

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are a distinct group of countries that face specific vulnerabilities and particular challenges. The SAMOA Pathway is their 10-year plan for improving sustainable development, and partnerships play a key role. The Samoa Partnership Dialogue, held on 29 October 2018 ahead of the Inter-regional Preparatory Meeting for the Mid-term

Review of the SAMOA Pathway, allowed SIDS and other stakeholders to forge new partnerships. UN DESA Voice spoke to Ola Goransson, who led the Samoa Partnership Dialogues for UN DESA, about how genuine and durable partnerships are a crucial component for achieving the SAMOA Pathway.

Partnerships play a key role in the SAMOA Pathway. Four years since its adoption, what are some new and innovative partnerships you've seen from SIDS countries?

“There have been many exciting new partnerships since the adoption of the SAMOA Pathway, which encompass all of the priority areas SIDS countries put forward. Some new directions include national transitions towards green and blue economies and projects that amplify women's voices. There are also youth-related partnerships in each of the regions, addressing issues specific to their challenges. We're also seeing some interesting private sector collaborations on renewable energy, transport and re-purposing plastic waste collected from beaches, such as athletic shoes.”

How are SIDS partnerships different from other partnerships?

“SIDS incorporate large swaths of ocean and relatively small land areas. They are also very vulnerable to climate change, particularly given the small land area that may limit options for adaptation. At the same time, SIDS are resilient, and also have many home-grown approaches to coping with extreme weather and managing their natural resources. There is strong collaboration between the SIDS regions on many issues, and this provides an opportunity for regions to learn from each other.”

What resources do SIDS need to build strong, long-lasting partnerships?

“Building genuine and durable partnerships is a learning process. There are a many challenges to working with a broad set of stakeholders in different communities, and often on different islands. Partnerships need to agree on common goals, build trust between partners, and maintain communications between all partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries. There also needs to be a good review and monitoring process.”

What’s next for SIDS partnerships?

“There will likely be new efforts to address some of the SAMOA Pathway priority areas that have thus far been under-represented, like poverty, inequality, trade, and sustainable transportation. Sustainable transportation both within and between countries is a challenge, particularly for those living on remote islands.

Sourcing innovative development finance for SIDS is both a priority, and an area that has not seen previous partnerships. So this may be another area of further focus.

In support of the the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway, the co-chairs of the Steering Committee on Partnerships SIDS, Belize and Ireland, have just developed a set of SIDS Partnership Criteria and Norms, which will help countries build lasting partnerships. Also, UN DESA’s Division for Sustainable Development Goals is collecting best practices from SIDS partnerships, and developing online learning materials on how to build effective, genuine and durable partnerships in SIDS.”

Photo: Asian Development Bank

For more information:

Strengthening the capacity in developing, monitoring and reviewing durable Partnerships for Small Island Developing States



World Data Forum wraps up with a declaration to boost financing for data and statistics

The second United Nations World Data Forum concluded on 24 October 2018, with the launch of the Dubai Declaration to increase financing for better data and statistics for sustainable development.

“While it is clear that the data revolution is having an enormous impact, it has not benefited everyone equally,” said United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed at the Forum. “Our task is to make sure data is available to all people. We must make sure it is harnessed to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels and in all regions and countries.”

“But we urgently need to bridge important gaps,” she added. “Funding for data and statistical systems remains limited. And beyond funding, we need political, technical and advocacy support in all areas.”

The [Dubai Declaration](#) calls for the establishment of an innovative funding mechanism for strengthening the national data and statistical systems for the 2030 Agenda. The mechanism will be open to all stakeholders and would mobilize domestic and international funds and activate partnerships and funding opportunities. The funding mechanism will be created under the guidance of statistical systems representatives and different data and donor communities.

“The UN World Data Forum is the best place to launch a declaration on financing for data and statistics,” said Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and head of UN DESA. “To achieve the ambitions set out in the Cape Town Global Action Plan, both increased domestic resources and international support will be needed.”

“My expectation is that the declaration, the outcome of the discussions at this forum, will help us shape the way forward to promote ‘more and better funding’ for data and statistics,” he added. “The immediate next steps will be translating those ideas into action and ensuring that we maximize the effectiveness of funding for sustainable development data, as this is crucial to fulfil the data needs of the 2030 Agenda.”

“We are delighted to have hosted influential leaders, decision makers and experts from around the world over the past three days here in the UAE,” said H.E. Abdulla Nasser Lootah, Director General of the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (FCSA) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

“The positive and insightful outcomes we’ve achieved during this important gathering are essential for unifying visions and empowering individuals, institutions and governments to embrace modern technologies and harness data to serve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) locally, regionally and internationally,” he added.

Over 2,000 data experts from more than 100 countries gathered at the Forum from 22 to 24 October, with participants from governments, national statistical offices, the private sector and academia, international organizations and civil society groups.

Across over 85 sessions during the three days of the Forum, many innovative solutions to the data challenges of the 2030 Agenda were proposed and partnerships were formed.

Innovative data solutions

Some highlights from the Forum include:

- The launch of a data interoperability guide, a collaborative effort led by the UN DESA Statistics Division and the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, which identifies practical steps to help countries and development partners integrate data from multiple sources for better monitoring and policymaking to achieve the 2030 Agenda.
- Important discussions on building trust in data and statistics showed that 70 per cent of the expert audience present in Dubai believed that there is a trust deficiency crisis in data. 35 per cent felt the leading cause is that statistics do not align with preconceived ideas, and 37 per cent said that improving data literacy was needed to tackle this challenge. These sessions highlighted an important area of work for the data community moving forward, particularly as it relates to data literacy for both the public at large and policymakers, and the need to ensure data relevance, openness and quality.
- A session organized by Data2x featured gender data impact stories, including a moving story of how the results of a survey on domestic violence in Viet Nam shocked government officials into enacting new legislation and awareness-raising campaigns, which have become a model across Asia. This story and others highlighted in this session demonstrated the impact data can have when communicated in a way that policymakers can understand. This data impact story is an important example for other data producers, civil society members and journalists on how data can be used to influence policy actions.

Switzerland to host Forum in 2020

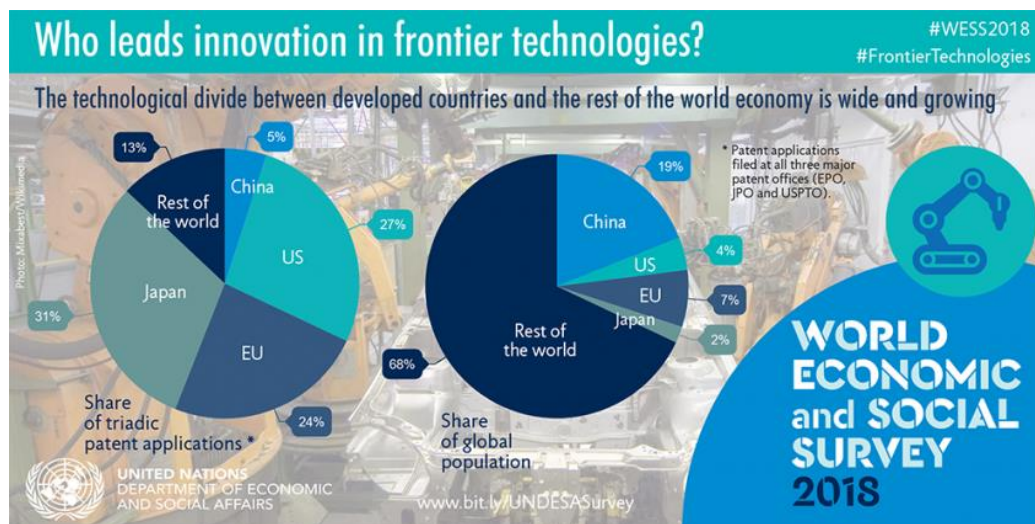
As this year’s event drew to a close, Switzerland was announced as the host of the next UN World Data Forum, which will be held in Bern from 18 to 21 October 2020. The announcement was made at a press conference today by Dr. Gabriella Vukovich, co-chair of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the group that oversees the organization of the Forum.

“We are looking forward to working with the colleagues from Switzerland to organize an exciting World Data Forum in 2020,” said Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the UN DESA Statistics Division. “The UAE has set a high standard of support, and the energy and engagement behind the Forum continues to build, as evidenced by growing attendance.”

For more information:

[UN World Data Forum 2018](#)

Frontier technologies have huge potential to drive prosperity and protect planet, but only if properly managed



New frontier technologies — everything from renewable energy technologies to biodegradable plastics, artificial intelligence and electric vehicles — hold immense potential to improve people’s lives and significantly accelerate efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and address climate change. But without appropriate policies, they can also drive greater inequality and increase social dislocations, according to a new report launched by the United Nations on 8 October 2018.

The World Economic and Social Survey 2018 produced by UN DESA found that renewable energy technologies and efficient energy storage systems are already enhancing environmental sustainability, allowing countries to “leapfrog” over existing technological solutions. New technologies have enhanced access to medicines and improved the wellbeing of the most vulnerable as mobile technologies and innovations in digital finance have made financial services accessible to millions in developing countries.

The Survey also found that while technological change has the potential to bring considerable benefits to people, the economy and the environment, when left unmanaged or mismanaged, new technologies will likely widen inequality within and between countries. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, and robotics automation, among other technologies, can enhance economic efficiency but at the same time create winners and losers.

The Survey found that while a country, a particular sector or an occupation may benefit from a new technology, others may gain little or even lose altogether as technological divides between and within countries are still significant and particularly acute in the area of rapidly advancing frontier technologies. Many developing countries are yet to fully utilize the technological breakthroughs of the past. Increasingly, innovations in frontier technologies are concentrated in a few firms and countries. Those who fall behind technologically will find it increasingly difficult to achieve equitable and sustainable development.

According to the Survey, countries can address many of the pitfalls presented by new technologies by adopting proactive and effective policies to minimize economic and social costs of adjustment. They need regulatory environment and institutional infrastructures to promote innovation, diffusion and use new technologies most needed for sustainable development.

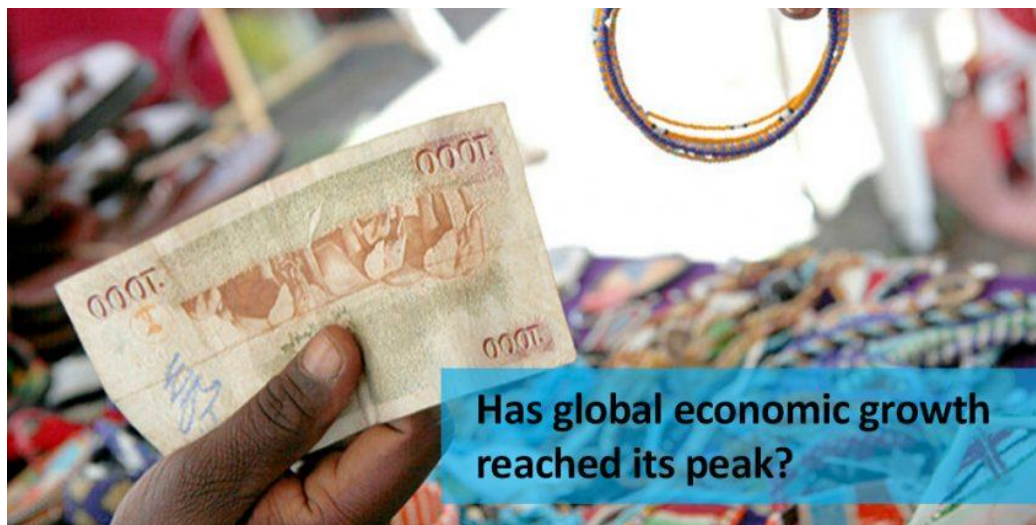
The Survey contends that international cooperation is an imperative to facilitate technology transfers and national innovation, promoting greater flexibility of the intellectual property rights regime and harmonizing technology standards. It also must address the issue of growing market concentration in order to ease access to many frontier technologies.

According to the Survey, the UN can provide an objective assessment of the impact that emerging technologies have on sustainable development outcomes, including their effects on employment, wages and income distribution. This would enable Member States to steer the pace and sequence of technological breakthroughs towards sustainable development.

For more information:

World Economic and Social Survey 2018: Frontier technologies for sustainable development

Has global economic growth reached its peak?



Over the past two years, the global economy has seen a strong and fairly broad-based recovery. Economic activity in developed economies – including the United States, Europe and Japan – accelerated amid a recovery in investment. Led by China, growth in East Asia remained strong; and several developing and transition economies emerged from recession as commodity prices gained ground.

But now there are emergent signs that global growth may have reached a peak and could start to moderate going forward. On the one hand, global indicators, such as industrial production and merchandise trade, are expanding less vigorously than in 2017. On the other, country-level indicators signal softening activity in many parts of the world economy, along with increased uncertainty and downside risks. While consumer and business surveys still paint a generally positive picture of current conditions, they show rising pessimism about the months ahead.

The recent worsening of expectations primarily reflects concerns in two main areas: international trade tensions and financial market stress. How the global economy will

perform in 2019 strongly depends on how these risks play out. The pressure is on policymakers worldwide to ensure that the current challenges are addressed, and global growth stays on track.

You can find the November issue, with more details on these trends, [here](#).

UN DESA's Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects is now in its 10th year of publication, bringing you the latest information on the global economy every month. The series is available at bit.ly/wespbrief

Photo: Georgina Goodwin/World Bank

Population and sustainable development in the 21st century



On 1 and 2 November 2018, UN DESA's Population Division will convene an expert group meeting to discuss current and future population trends and their implications for sustainable development. Experts from around the world will consider the following topics: (1) fertility, reproductive health and population change, (2) health, mortality and older persons, (3) urbanization, internal and international migration, (4) population-related SDGs and targets, and (5) the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The meeting is held in preparation of the 52nd session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) which will examine, in April 2019, progress and gaps in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. The CPD will also consider the contribution of the Programme of Action in achieving the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

While important progress has been made in the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action since it was adopted in Cairo in 1994, considerable gaps still exist. In 2011, the General Assembly extended the Programme of Action beyond 2014 with a view to fully meet its goals and objectives. In 2014, 20 years after "Cairo", the Secretary-General reported that progress in implementing the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action had been unequal and fragmented and that new challenges, realities and opportunities had emerged since its adoption.

The ICPD Programme of Action represented a fundamental shift in the international community's consideration of population and development issues. The Programme of Action was instrumental in moving population policies and programmes away from demographic targets towards a people-centered approach, grounded in the respect for

human rights and with a strong emphasis on environmental sustainability. Many of the objectives and actions of “Cairo” were subsequently incorporated into the Millennium Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The findings and recommendations of the expert meeting will inform the report of the Secretary-General for the 52nd session of the CPD, to be prepared by the Population Division.

For more information:

Expert group meeting on population and sustainable development in the 21st century

UN ECOSOC hones in on efforts to combat climate change



Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing our world. It is altering weather patterns and increasing the intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts. Climate change undermines development gains and, by exacerbating well documented drivers of conflicts, such as unequal access to resources and economic shocks and the impacts of these dynamics on women and youth, can raise the risk of conflict and undermine efforts to build and sustain peace.

Combatting climate change is at the top of the United Nations agenda. In 2015, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change brought together all nations around a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development similarly recognizes the need to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact, offering the opportunity to pave the way for a more sustainable world.

As part of these efforts, the United Nations Economic and Social Council will convene two meetings at UN Headquarters in New York on 13 November 2018.

Organized together with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), the first meeting – Linkages between Climate Change and Challenges to Peacebuilding and Sustaining Peace in the Sahel – will examine the interlinkages between climate change and conflict, looking closer at Africa’s Sahel region, one of the world’s poorest and most vulnerable regions.

The second meeting – Pathways to resilience in climate-affected Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – A Forward-Looking Resilience Building Agenda: Promises, results and next steps – will focus on commitments made and results achieved to date

in SIDS, vulnerable to shocks associated with natural hazards, and explore new and innovative approaches to financing climate resilience.

For more information:

United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1-2 November,
New York | Expert group meeting on population and sustainable development in the 21st century |
| 12-14 November,
Paris | Thirteenth Annual Meeting of the Internet Governance Forum |
| 13 November,
New York | Joint Meeting of ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) |
| 14-16 November,
Tokyo | 7th Global Forum on Gender Statistics |
| 19-21 November,
China | United Nations World Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) |

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