



Development for all: The fight to end global poverty

The 2030 Agenda has come with a powerful vision for combatting poverty and leaving no one behind. As one of the main policy organs within the UN system for providing policy advice that can help Member States achieve this critical goal, the 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD55) will take place on 1-10 February at UN Headquarters in New York City.

Organized under the priority theme, “Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all”, this year’s Commission will pay special attention to the first Sustainable Development Goal, SDG 1, which calls for an end to poverty in all its forms by the year 2030.

“The Commission for Social Development chose to discuss poverty eradication this year since it is a central goal of the sustainable development goals,” said Mr. Philipp Charwath, Chair of the Commission’s 55th Session, “in particular because the main aim of ECOSOC is to give a coordinated input into the evaluation and follow-up to the 2015 summit and to the achievement of the sustainable development goals.”

Building on the people-centred development approach that guided last year’s Commission, CSocD55 will focus on combatting exclusionist policies preventing people’s full participation in society.

“We are at a point where if poverty is allowed to go on, we will tilt towards very tragic positions,” said Mr. Lot Dzonzi, a Vice-Chairperson of the Bureau for the Commission. “This is an opportune time for all of us at a global level to really enhance our efforts towards the eradication of poverty, not only bringing the poor to above poverty lines, but to also assist them in developing resilience and capacity to move on to sustainable living where they are able to make decisions that their children will also have the privilege of making.”

Formal deliberations will take place during three high-level panel discussions on topics of special interest to the Commission. “For this year...we chose to give a particular emphasis on youth and persons with disabilities, two groups who are not usually focused on in other forums,” said Mr. Charwath, “and we hope that this Commission can give an input specifically tailored to these groups.” The Secretariat has prepared three reports of the Secretary-General to aide their discussions.

The importance of Civil Society contributions to poverty eradication is widely accepted and they will be making contributions to the CSocD as usual. To prepare civil society participants for the Commission, the NGO Committee on Social Development hosted a Civil Society Forum on 30-31 January under the theme of “Social Protection, Including Floors.”

There are also over fifty side-events that will take place during the Commission. These events, organized by ECOSOC accredited organizations and Permanent Missions with the support of UN DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD), communicate a vision for poverty eradication that is multi-dimensional, with topics ranging from social protection programs and access to mental health services, to the role of media in promoting sustainable development for all.

The global fight to end poverty in all its dimensions and manifestations will take on the spotlight as Member States, civil society agents, and UN entities prepare to talk strategy at CSocD55. Despite the many structural challenges that prevent so many from breaking out of poverty’s vicious cycle, this year’s Commission for Social Development aims to ensure that the international community makes concrete progress toward fulfilling the first Sustainable Development Goal in the 2030 Agenda.

For more information:

55th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD55)



Preparing for major event to save our ocean

The Ocean Conference will be held at UN Headquarters in New York on 5-9 June 2017, seeking to spur action to ensure the continued health of the world's oceans. The conference will comprise of plenary meetings, partnership dialogues and a special event commemorating World Oceans Day. To prepare for this major event, the President of the General Assembly will be organizing a two-day

preparatory meeting on 15-16 February in New York.

The preparatory meeting will consider the elements of the “Call for Action” – an intergovernmentally agreed declaration to support the implementation of SDG 14 that will be one of the outcomes of the Conference – as well as the themes for the partnership dialogues.

The meeting will be chaired by the two co-facilitators in charge of overseeing the preparatory process, H.E. Mr. Alvaro Mendonça Moura, Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN, and H.E. Mr. Burhan Gafour, Permanent Representative of Singapore to the UN.

Based on the deliberations at the preparatory meeting and other inputs, the co-facilitators will present a concise draft “Call for Action” no later than in March 2017. The intergovernmental consultations on the text will be concluded by May 2017.

Oceans critical to sustainable development



“The Conference will be a great opportunity for Member States and stakeholders to assess challenges, identify opportunities and actions, as well as to strengthen partnerships to advance the

implementation of SDG 14,” said Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo at a recent briefing on the Conference.

Mr. Wu, who is also the Conference Secretary-General, also highlighted the significance of Oceans: “Oceans, seas and coastal areas form an integrated and essential component of the Earth’s ecosystem. They are critical to sustainable development. Oceans contribute to poverty eradication by providing opportunities for sustainable livelihoods and employment. Oceans are crucial for global food security and human health. They are also the primary regulator of the global climate.”

He also noted that despite their importance, oceans, seas and marine resources are increasingly threatened, degraded or destroyed by human activities, reducing their ability to provide crucial ecosystem services.

Stakeholder engagement

The Ocean Conference and its preparatory meeting will be open to a broad range of stakeholders including non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the scientific community, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and other actors. Pre-registration to the Preparatory Meeting is now open.

The conference is co-hosted by the Governments of Fiji and Sweden to support the implementation of SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

For more information:

[The Ocean Conference](#)

HIGHLIGHTS



Realizing the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants

At the United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants on 19 September 2016, the General Assembly committed to strengthening international cooperation on migration for the benefit of refugees and migrants, as well as for countries and communities of origin, transit and destination. By adopting the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants,

the Assembly also set in motion a process to improve the global governance of international migration.

By the end of January 2017, Member States are expected to have reached agreement on the modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations of a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, to be adopted at an intergovernmental conference on international migration in 2018. The draft modalities resolution lays out a comprehensive roadmap to guide the development of the global compact.

The Fifteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration will review the follow-up required to implement the New York Declaration and will contribute to the substantive preparations for the process of intergovernmental negotiations to elaborate the global compact on migration. Organized by UN DESA's Population Division, the annual interagency meeting will be held at UN Headquarters in New York on 16 and 17 February.

The objective of the meeting is to contribute to the implementation of the [New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#), focusing on the preparation of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. This year's meeting will contribute to the development of the Secretary-General's work plan for Member States, in part by reviewing processes, mechanisms and initiatives relevant to the preparation of the global compact. The coordination meeting will also take stock of the progress made in implementing the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Fifteenth Coordination Meeting will include high-level panels as well as interactive sessions at the working level. Sessions will focus on topics such as (a) the implementation of the NY Declaration, (b) regional and human rights-related dimensions of the global migration compact, (c) the nature and scope of the compact, and (d) recent, pertinent research findings on migration.

The role of the Global Migration Group in implementing the migration-related commitments of the 2030 Agenda will be the topic of another session, in which participants will present information about their latest projects and activities related to international migration and sustainable development.

Bringing together major entities of the United Nations system, other international organizations, civil society, the private sector and academia, as well as Member States, the Coordination Meeting has been the largest annual gathering of migration experts at the United Nations for the past several years.

For more information:

[Fifteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration](#)

GET INVOLVED



Join efforts to advance social justice

Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. Promoting gender equality, advocating for the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants, or removing barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability; these actions uphold the principles of social justice.

20 February is the World Day of Social Justice, when the world recognizes the importance of these principles. It is an occasion to look at what can be done to promote the activities and efforts that advance social justice and mobilize people and governments into concrete actions.

The adoption by the International Labour Organization of the Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization is just one recent example of the UN system's commitment to social justice. This Declaration focuses on guaranteeing fair outcomes for all through employment, social protection, social dialogue, and fundamental principles and rights at work.

Since its proclamation in 2007 by the UN General Assembly, the United Nations has marked the World Day of Social Justice with various activities and panel discussions on a range of subjects concerning social justice. As the first observance of the day came in 2009, on the heels of the global financial crisis, its main theme was “Assessing Quality and Pace of Recovery”.

Over the years, the discussions tackled many other important questions related to social justice, such as human trafficking and forced labour, inclusive growth and decent work, achieving social protection for all, as well as transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies.

One of the catalysts for promoting social justice is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and most specifically Goal 16, to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

With the world committed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the promotion of principles of social justice can contribute towards the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda for all segments of society.

For more information:

[World Day of Social Justice](#)

EXPERT VOICES



Celebrating seven decades of UN Member States support

This year, UN DESA will celebrate seven decades of serving UN Member States and the international community in their efforts to promote economic, social and sustainable development around the globe. We spoke with Lenni Montiel, UN DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, about this milestone and

upcoming celebrations.

This year, UN DESA will celebrate its 70th anniversary. Can you describe the events that are planned for this anniversary?

“2017 is a very special year for UN DESA.

It will serve to highlight and reflect upon seven decades of UN DESA working with governments and other development partners to find concrete solutions to economic, social and development challenges.

Last year we established the UN DESA History Initiative to ensure the widest possible dissemination of information to relevant audiences about UN DESA, about what UN

DESA does today and what UN DESA has achieved over the past seven decades. This reflection is also crucial for the future of UN DESA.

We want to enhance the way the role of UN DESA is understood. We want to make visible our contributions to the inter-governmental processes, to the policy and analytical work as well as to capacity development efforts we carry out. As we have had little time for preparations and no resources available for the anniversary celebrations, we will make this information available first and foremost through the UN DESA website and through our social media channels.



Starting in February, we will post short stories about our work. This will include brief analytical papers about relevant processes, landmark events and publications in the

history of UN DESA.

We will also share personal accounts from staff members; interviews with former and current UN DESA staff as well as photographs. We are also planning a major event in July. But we will share details about this later on.

It is very important to be aware that later this year, we will launch the World Economic and Social Survey (WESS) that UN DESA publishes every year. In 2017 the WESS will provide an overview of the substance of 70 years of WESS and the World Economic and Social Prospects (WESP). This will be a substantive and analytical effort to commemorate the 70 years of UN DESA.

A similar analysis, but simpler in terms of depth and details, is planned also on the Reports on the World Social Situation (RWSS).

There will be lots of activities. Keep your eyes open for details. Follow UN DESA on Facebook and Twitter for updates.”

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



UN Forum sets landmark target to increase world's forests by 120 million hectares by 2030

Countries reached agreement on 20 January on a plan that would significantly improve the outlook for the world's forests, including a target that would expand the world's forests by 120 million hectares—an area about the size of South Africa—by 2030.

The agreement, on the first-ever UN Strategic Plan for Forests, was forged at a special session of the UN Forum on Forests and provides an ambitious vision for global forests in 2030. The Plan features a set of six Global Forest Goals and associated targets to be reached by 2030, which are voluntary and universal.

Forests presently cover 30 per cent of the Earth's land area, or nearly 4 billion hectares. Sustainably managed forests are healthy, productive, resilient and renewable ecosystems which provide essential goods and services to people worldwide. An estimated 1.6 billion people – 25 per cent of the global population – depend on forests for subsistence, livelihood, employment and income generation.

“Recognizing the vital contributions of forests to people, planet and prosperity, the Strategic Plan includes a target to increase forest area by three per cent worldwide by 2030, signifying an increase of 120 million hectares, an area over twice the size of France,” said Hans Hoogeveen, Co-Chair of the Working Group that developed the UN Strategic Plan for Forests for 2017-2030.

Forests have been on the forefront of international policy and political agendas since 1992. Until now, the focus of the global community had been on reversing and reducing deforestation and forests degradation.

“This agreement to set a global target to increase global forest area by 2030 represents a bold, groundbreaking decision by the 197 Member States of the UN Forum on Forests,” said Manoel Sobral Filho, Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat. “The UN Strategic Plan for Forests builds on the vision of the 2030 Agenda and recognizes that real change requires decisive, collective action, within and beyond the UN System.”

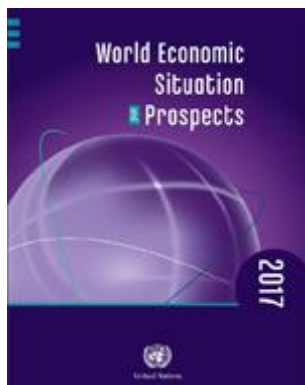
He added that the Plan envisions a world where forests are “sustainably managed, contribute to sustainable development and provide economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits for present and future generations.”

Forests provide goods such as wood, food, fuel, fibre, fodder, and other non-wood products. They provide a range of ecosystem services, from soil, land, water and biodiversity conservation to climate change mitigation and adaptation, from clean air to reducing the risk of natural disasters including floods, landslides, droughts, and dust and sand storms.

The Plan sets out a framework for action to safeguard the world's most productive land-based ecosystems and tackle key threats and challenges. The key mission of the Plan is to promote sustainable forest management and highlight the contribution of forests to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including by strengthening cooperation and political commitment at all levels.

For more information:

[UN Forum on Forests](#)



World Economic Situation and Prospects 2017

Although a modest global recovery is projected for 2017-18, the world economy has not yet emerged from the period of slow growth, characterised by weak investment, dwindling trade and flagging productivity growth, according to the United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) 2017 report launched on 17 January.

The report states that the world economy expanded by just 2.2 per cent in 2016, the slowest rate of growth since the Great Recession of 2009. World gross product is projected to grow by 2.7 per cent in 2017 and 2.9 per cent in 2018, a slight downward revision from the forecasts made last May.

Launching the report at the UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Lenni Montiel, UN DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development underscored the "need to redouble the efforts to bring the global economy back on a stronger and more inclusive growth path and create an international economic environment that is conducive to sustainable development."

According to the report, the moderate improvement expected for 2017/18 is more an indication of economic stabilization than a signal of a robust and sustained revival of global demand. As commodity prices trend higher, commodity-exporting economies are likely to see some recovery in growth.

Developing countries continue to be the main drivers of global growth, accounting for about 60 per cent of the world's gross product growth in 2016-18. East and South Asia remain the world's most dynamic regions, benefiting from robust domestic demand and supportive macroeconomic policies.

The report projects that growth in the developed economies will slightly improve in 2017, but headwinds arising from weak investment and policy uncertainty continue to constrain economic activity.

GDP growth in the least developed countries (LDCs) is projected to remain well below the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target of at least 7 per cent. This represents a key issue to address if the SDGs overall are to be attained. The report notes, specifically, that under the current growth trajectory and assuming no decline in income inequality, nearly 35 per cent of the population in LDCs may remain in extreme poverty by 2030.

For more information:

[World Economic Situation and Prospects \(WESP\) 2017](#)

WESP 2017 – balanced policy mix

www.bit.ly/WESP

BALANCED POLICY MIX

#WESP2017
#UNDESA70

Source: World Economic Situation and Prospects 2017

Self-Perpetuating Cycle?
Close linkages between demand, investment, trade, and productivity growth underlie the prolonged period of slow growth.

- Weak Investment**: Lower demand for capital goods restrains trade.
- Weak Demand**: Prolonged weak global demand reduces incentives for firms to invest.
- Low Wages**: Low productivity growth is a major constraint to wage increases.
- Low Productivity Growth**: Weak investment in new capital hampers productivity growth.
- Decline in Trade**: Lower trade hampers the rate of technological diffusion.

Breaking the Cycle
A more balanced policy mix is needed to restore a more vigorous global growth path. Macroeconomic policies should be fully integrated with structural reforms and policies that target poverty, inequality and climate change.

Countries need to move beyond the excessive dependence on monetary policy.

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 1-10 February, New York** 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD55)
- 15-16 February, New York** Preparatory Meeting for the Ocean Conference
- 16-17 February, New York** Fifteenth Coordination Meeting on International Migration
- 21-23 February, Nassau** Bahamas Symposium
- 28 February, New York** ECOSOC Substantive session, Operational activities for development segment

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