



Sustainable transport on the agenda for global conference

Recognizing the fundamental role of sustainable transport in fighting climate change and achieving sustainable development, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will convene the first ever Global Sustainable Transport Conference on 26 and 27 November 2016 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. Around 1,500 participants, including Heads of State and Government, private sector CEOs, civil society leaders and UN officials will discuss all modes of transport – road, rail, air, and waterborne.

Improving well-being of people and planet

Sustainable Transport is an essential building block for sustainable development. It “helps drive inclusive growth, provide access to public services, jobs, markets, and it promotes trade,” said UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo, who is also the Secretary-General of the Conference.

“It empowers women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups to lead a productive life and livelihood”, Mr. Wu added.

The Conference will seek to identify measures that can help transform transport so that it contributes to healthy and fulfilled lives, inclusive economic growth, and environmental protection.

Major transport challenges

At present, the transport sector is responsible for almost a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to millions of premature deaths resulting from air pollution annually. More than 1.24 million people die every year in traffic accidents, 90 per cent of these in developing countries. Nearly 1 billion people worldwide still lack adequate access to road networks, which increases isolation and marginalization and can deepen social inequalities.

The promotion of sustainable transport and the establishment of affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound transport systems are crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and will be at the centre of the discussions at the Conference.

Sustainable transport and the SDGs

“A thread running throughout the Conference discussions will be the contribution of sustainable transport to the implementation of the sustainable development goals and targets,” said Mr. Wu. Several SDG targets are directly linked to transport, such as SDG target 11.2 on access to sustainable transport systems and target 3.6 on road safety. Sustainable transport also acts as an enabler to achieve other SDGs and targets, including on climate change, energy, equality, women’s empowerment, employment and health.

Some of the issues to be addressed at the Conference include rural and urban transport, multi-modal transport, public transport, the links of sustainable transport to climate change and energy, road safety, financing, and specific needs of countries in special situations. The concerns of developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, will receive particular focus.

The [report](#) of the High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport of the Secretary-General will be an important input to the Conference. The programme of the Conference has been published on the [Conference website](#), and registration for all categories of participants is now open.

Call for Commitments and Partnerships

The Secretary-General is encouraging all Member States, UN entities, major groups and other stakeholders to register commitments and partnerships for sustainable transport through the [Conference website](#). These registered initiatives will be an important outcome of the Conference.

In the margins of the Conference, a Treaty Event will be held, which will be used to ratify, accept, approve or accede to a number of transportation treaties. The Government of Turkmenistan will also host a business forum in parallel to the Conference on 27 November. More information on these and on official Side Events are available on the [Conference website](#).

For more information:

Global Sustainable Transport Conference



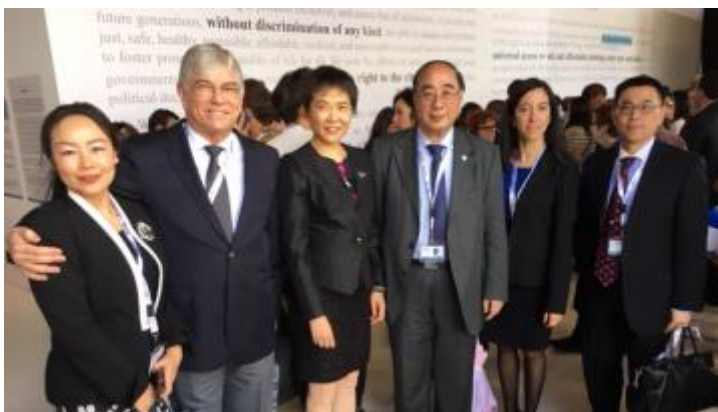
Promoting accessible and inclusive cities for all

“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the importance of the inclusion of disability in urban development,” UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo said as he addressed the opening of the High Level Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development, which took place on the eve of the UN Conference

on Housing and Sustainable Human Settlements (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, on 16 October.

Bringing together more than 100 global urban planning and disability experts, the event honed in on finding solutions to make urban development inclusive of and accessible to the world’s one billion persons with disabilities, many of whom live in cities.

Aimed at supporting States and related stakeholders in jointly advancing accessible and inclusive urban development, the event resulted in a set of key recommendations to build inclusive and accessible cities and implement the New Urban Agenda for all, including persons with disabilities.



“The achievement of a truly inclusive urban development requires a holistic and people-centered approach”, said Mr. Wu. “We must involve and engage persons with disabilities as both agents and beneficiaries of development. This is

essential for the collective good in urban development.”

Currently, for the world’s one billion persons living with disabilities, most cities and towns present significant barriers to inclusion and participation, ranging from inaccessible infrastructures, to lack of user-sensitive designed facilities or limited access to basic public services.

Inclusion and accessibility are preconditions to guarantee the development of fully integrated and sustainable cities in the framework of the new urban agenda.

Prior to the High Level Forum, organized by UN DESA and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Government of Ecuador, UN DESA released a new publication titled “Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development” to illustrate and encourage more initiatives and concrete actions from both developing and developed countries in advancing urban development to be accessible and inclusive to all, including persons with disabilities and other special needs.

Highlighting key experiences and lessons learned from 24 case studies, the publication contributes to the ongoing discourse around accessible urban development in light of Habitat III and the “New Urban Agenda”. It also provides specific recommendations to advance inclusive urban development for all.

For more information:

High Level Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development
Opening statement of UN DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo
Publication: “Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development”



UN DESA, WTO and ITC partner on ePing notification alert system

George, a farmer in Africa, produces peppers for export to a food processing company in Europe. Upon reaching the destination market George finds out that his produce cannot go through customs because his peppers do not meet newly introduced requirements and standards applied in Europe. George has to decide either to destroy his produce or ship it back home. George's situation is a made up story, but is too often a reality for many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries. For many exporters like George, this obviously can result in substantive costs, a possible loss of clients, as well as having an adverse impact on suppliers and on the employment of people working for them.

To avoid these situations, members of the WTO have to notify other members when they introduce changes before adopting new product standards that affect international trade and provide others with an opportunity to comment. These obligations are spelled out in the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement.

Each year the WTO receives more than 3,500 notifications proposing new SPS and TBT measures affecting international trade. For trade officials, producers and exporters in developing countries, keeping track of these notifications and reacting to them in due time is an enormous task.

ePing notification system alerting trade officials, producers and exporters on new requirements

The ePing system, an SPS and TBT notification alert system developed by UN DESA in cooperation with the WTO and ITC, helps people like George to navigate through the massive amount of notifications. [ePing system is a publicly available, free of charge online service.](#)

In the above scenario, with this new service George can now self-subscribe to free automatic emails listing notifications that deal with peppers and markets of interest to his business. The system will help him to track and provide comments on TBT or SPS measures that are being introduced and/or adapted to changing regulatory conditions. As a result, potential issues can be addressed at an early stage, avoiding disruptions in trade.

The ePing system will be officially launched on 8 November 2016 at the WTO, by UN Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development in UN DESA Lenni Montiel, WTO Deputy Director General Karl Brauner and the Executive Director of ITC Arancha González.

Once the ePing system is launched, the three organizations will focus on rolling it out. Promotion and capacity development activities will be necessary to ensure that the system becomes available to its intended users, like George, and reaches its full potential in helping to lower trade barriers.

For more information:
ePing system

GET INVOLVED



Join our Facebook chat:
How can climate change
resilience bring
opportunities to reduce
inequalities?

As the Paris Agreement on climate change is about to enter into force on 4 November 2016, don't miss the opportunity to discuss climate change resilience and how this can help reduce inequalities in the world, in a Facebook chat on 3 November from 10 am to 11 am EDT.

Our Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Lenni Montiel, and the team of authors behind the World Economic and Social Survey 2016: "Climate Change Resilience – An opportunity for reducing inequalities" in UN DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, will be on UN DESA's Facebook page to discuss the findings of this survey and answer your questions.

According to the survey, evidence is increasing that climate change is taking the largest toll on poor and vulnerable people, and these impacts are largely caused by inequalities that increase the risks from climate hazards.

- Find out how governments can play a vital role in reducing the risks of climate change to vulnerable populations;
- Deepen your understanding about the links between climate and development;
- Learn what type of policies would address root causes of inequalities and build climate change resilience.

"Building resilience to climate change provides an opportunity to pay extra attention and allocate additional resources to reduce inequalities once and for all," Mr. Montiel said ahead of the event. "Making communities resilient to climate change will therefore make sure we achieve all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals."

Join here on 3 November at 10 am EDT: <http://bit.ly/WESSchat>

Questions can be shared on the Facebook page in advance of the chat. To share comments and questions via Twitter, use the hashtag #WESSchat.

For more information:

World Economic and Social Survey 2016

EXPERT VOICES



Tracking gender statistics in pursuit of SDG 5

To deepen the understanding of the different challenges women and men face in today's world, statisticians use disaggregated data and gender statistics to allow for a unique insight into gender issues. The 6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics, organized by UN DESA's Statistics Division and Statistics Finland, focused on data and statistical methods for the follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It was an opportunity to take stock of progress towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment and to review data availability, data challenges and countries' capacities to measure and monitor gender-relevant issues.

Keiko Osaki Tomita, Chief of the Demographic and Social Statistics Branch in UN DESA's Statistics Division, seeks to ensure that gender statistics are available for policy makers, so that problems and concerns related to all aspects of women's and men's lives, including their specific needs, opportunities and contributions to society, can be addressed in a timely and constructed manner. She shared with UN DESA Voice her thoughts on the importance of gender statistics for sustainable development, and ultimately, the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development.

Why is it imperative to focus on gender-specific statistics?

"Relevant, reliable and timely gender statistics—cutting across traditional fields of statistics, including education, health and employment as well as emerging fields, such as climate change— are essential for understanding the similarities and differences between women and men in a given society. Such information is critical to policy- and decision-makers and to advancing progress towards gender equality."

What are the biggest challenges when collecting gender-statistics?

"Despite improvements over time, many challenges in gender statistics still exist in terms of data availability, quality, comparability and timeliness, even for basic indicators. For example, according to the latest UNSD flagship publication – the

World's Women 2015 – only 46 countries were able to provide reliable statistics on deaths disaggregated by sex, based on civil registration systems, at least once for the period 2011–2014. Further, while sex-disaggregated data is crucial, data collection instruments must be designed to accurately capture gender issues. For example, the questions in household surveys are not always properly phrased to capture work in subsistence agriculture, which is more likely to be performed by women than men.”

What are some of the biggest benefits that can be derived from the collection of gender-specific data?

“According to the World's Women 2015, gender statistics are more available now compared to 20 years ago, thanks to the growing number of data collection mechanisms such as population censuses, household surveys and administrative sources. With this growing availability, policy- and decision-makers can design sound policies that continue to improve the lives of both women and men.”

What are some of the specific areas of gender statistics that are particularly relevant right now?

“Topics that are particularly relevant for gender statistics include violence against women, women's and men's unpaid work, gender pay gaps, social protection measures, local governance, individual-level poverty measures, the impact of natural disasters and climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

The 6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics was recently held in Helsinki, Finland. What will be some of the key issues that the global statistical community will discuss here?

“Much of the discussion at the 6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics will focus on the Sustainable Development Goals Indicator Framework. Specifically, the global statistical community will assess all of the indicators with a gender lens (not just those under Goal 5 on gender quality) to ensure that the best data will be available to monitor progress toward achieving the goals. As part of this process, the forum will examine the challenges faced by National Statistics Offices to produce this data and ways forward.”

Photo: Shari Nijman – UN DESA

For more information:
6th Global Forum on Gender Statistics



“This is not your grandmother’s globalization”

Thomas Friedman, Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and New York Times Op-Ed columnist, delivered a keynote address at a joint meeting of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the General Assembly’s Second (Economic and Financial) Committee on 7 October 2016 on

the challenges and opportunities presented by recent trends in globalization.

In his presentation, Mr. Friedman identified three broad trends in globalization that need stronger, concerted action from countries and the multilateral system: the market, Mother Nature and Moore’s law. In his conception, markets represent globalization; Mother Nature denotes climate change and biodiversity loss; and Moore’s law is a proxy for technological acceleration. These three phenomena are reshaping the world as we know it, and leaving deep marks on our ethics, local communities, politics and international relations.

In the interactive panel discussion that followed, participants discussed options for addressing the shortcomings of the current approaches to globalization. From varied perspectives and with reference to each of the dimensions of sustainable development, it was agreed that there needs to be a push for a kind of globalization that is people-centred and rooted in solidarity.

This will require policy space at the national level that empowers countries to address the needs of its citizens. In particular, improved development cooperation and global frameworks for equitable globalization and sustainable development will ensure that the benefits of globalization are distributed more evenly among countries.

For more information:

Joint Meeting of ECOSOC and the Second Committee – “The changing political economy of globalization: Multilateral institutions and the 2030 Agenda”

UN Web TV coverage from the joint meeting



Mobilizing Sustainable Transport for Development

Greater investment in greener, more sustainable transport systems is essential for propelling the economic and social development that is essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, according to an expert panel report delivered to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 28 October.

Finding that global, national and local transport systems are hobbled by inefficiencies and a lack of sustainable investments, the expert panel issued a report entitled “Mobilizing Sustainable Transport for Development”, which provides 10 recommendations on how governments, businesses and civil society should re-direct resources in the transport sector to advance sustainable development.

The experts, members of the Secretary-General’s High-Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport, include representatives from aviation, road, rail, public transport and maritime industries and associations. The recommendations address issues of policy, technology and financing and grew out of the diverse perspectives and practical experience of the panel.

The report found that a transformational change to sustainable transport can be realized through annual investments of around US\$2 trillion, similar to the current ‘business as usual’ spending of US\$1.4 trillion to US\$2.1 trillion.

Investments in sustainable transport, the experts found, could lead to fuel savings and lower operational costs, decreased congestion and reduced air pollution. Additionally, it is estimated that efforts to promote sustainable transport can deliver savings of up to US\$70 trillion by 2050.

To access the complete report:

[Mobilizing Sustainable Transport for Development](#)



Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development

By 2050, it is expected that about 6.25 billion people, 15 per cent of whom are persons with disabilities, will be living in urban centres. Urbanization has the potential to be an engine for achieving sustainable and inclusive development for all. The new publication on “Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development”, illustrates and encourages more initiatives and actions worldwide in advancing urban development to be accessible and inclusive to all.

Highlighting key experiences and lessons learned from 24 case studies, the publication contributed to the work of the Third Global Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) and the “New Urban Agenda”, in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016.

“A city that is well designed is well designed for all. Accessibility, as a collective good that benefits all, should therefore be considered a central component of good policy to achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development,” highlighted a group of experts in their recommendations at the UN DESA – UN Habitat Forum on Disability Inclusion and Accessible Urban Development, held in Nairobi in October 2015.

For the 15 per cent of the world’s population who live with a disability, many of whom reside in urban areas, available evidence reveals a widespread lack of accessibility in built environments, from roads and housing, to public buildings and spaces.

Evidence also expose a lack of accessibility to basic urban services such as sanitation and water, health, education, transportation, emergency and disaster response, resilience building, and access to information and communications.

These accessibility limitations greatly contribute to the disadvantages and marginalization faced by persons with disabilities, leading to disproportionate rates of poverty, deprivation and exclusion. These disadvantages also impede the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other internationally agreed development goals.

The publication on “Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development” also provides specific recommendations to advance inclusive urban development for all.

To download the full publication:

[Good Practices of Accessible Urban Development](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 3-4 November,
Seoul** International Seminar on Data for Sustainable Development
Goals: Data Disaggregation
- 3 November,
10 am EDT** Facebook chat on World Economic and Social Survey 2016
- 15-17
November,
Kampala** Regional Meeting on Disability Measurement and Statistics
- 15-18
November,
Geneva** 4th Meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on
Sustainable Development Goal Indicators
- 26-27
November,
Ashgabat** Global Sustainable Transport Conference

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