



## Video

### **Inadequate global economic governance**

*Addressing the 2009 ECOSOC Spring Meeting on 27 April, the Secretary-General pointed out that the current global recession has revealed the shortcomings of global financial structures, calling for institutions to become more “representative, credible, accountable and effective.” Mr. Ban said that “the global economic and financial crisis is exposing dangerous weaknesses and flaws in the international economic system.” The United Nations, with its universal membership, must be fully involved in the reform process.”*

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/specialevents/2009/ecosoc090427am.rm?start=00:04:55&end=00:12:26> (8 minutes)

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Throughout the world, indigenous women continue to be discriminated against and marginalized. The threefold discrimination they suffer (for being women, indigenous and poor) marginalize them even further, compared with indigenous men, regarding economic and political opportunities for employment, social services, access to justice, and, more particularly, access to land and other productive resources, p. 3

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## Feature articles

### **Agriculture remains fundamental for Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

*Agriculture is essential to sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa, where the sector employs more than 70 per cent of labour and generates about a third of GDP growth.*

The poorest members of society are those who are most dependent on agriculture for jobs and income. Average agricultural value added per worker is low in many countries, reflecting a low degree of mechanization and limited penetration of improved seeds and inputs such as fertilizers.

At the start of the 21st century, only 7 per cent of farm land in African least-developed countries (LDCs) was irrigated – the same as in the 1960s – while in Asian LDCs the ratio has trebled to more than 30 per cent. The 2008 World Development Report notes that governments in sub-Saharan Africa spend far less on agriculture as a share of national

budgets than the 11-14 per cent which helped fuel the Asian green revolution. While developing countries as a group now spend more than developed countries on agricultural research and development, sub-Saharan Africa shows a declining trend in real terms (from US\$1.15 bn in 1981 to US\$0.87 bn in 2000, at 2000 international prices).



Although the economies of South and East Asia used to be more dependent on agriculture than Africa in the 1970s, the importance of agriculture has declined in both regions, whereas the share of agriculture in the sub-Saharan African economy has only slightly decreased.

### **Commission on Sustainable Development**

Agriculture and Africa are two of the themes of the third implementation cycle of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-17 and CSD-16), a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). They are also a priority area for the United Nations' activities as illustrated in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation in 2002, where the special needs of the African continent were systematically identified.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> implementation cycle of the CSD also examines rural development, land, drought and desertification, themes that are of particular relevance to Africa, where most economies continue to be heavily rural-based and agricultural-dependent, and where poverty eradication will depend on boosting the productivity of the agricultural and rural economy.

### **Food production**

Food production in most of sub-Saharan Africa has not kept pace with the population increase over the past four decades. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region where per capita food production is either in decline, or roughly constant at a level that is less than

adequate. In Africa as a whole, food consumption exceeded domestic production by 50 per cent in the drought-prone mid-1980s and more than 30 per cent in the mid-1990s.

At the subregional level, during the last 15 years only Western Africa has succeeded in increasing per capita food production significantly. In Southern Africa, food production has declined and suffers from high variability, reflecting vulnerability to weather conditions of rain-fed agriculture in arid or semi-arid regions.

### **Millennium Development Goals**

Given that the most of poor people in Africa live in rural areas or rely on agriculture for part or all of their livelihoods, the prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of eradicating extreme hunger and poverty and accomplish the health and education goals are essential to and clearly affected by the agriculture sector.

According to the Trends in Sustainable Development Africa report from DESA's Division for Sustainable Development, at the midway point between the adoption of the MDGs and the 2015 target date for achieving them, sub-Saharan Africa is not on track to achieve any of the goals.

### **Financial and economic crisis exacerbating sustainable development**

The world is currently facing the most difficult challenges for sustainable development and environmental management. At the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) for CD-17, held in New York from 23-27 February 2009, many delegations expressed their concerns regarding the impacts of the financial and economic crisis on sustainable development, including on trade financing for food and other essential imports and on farmers' access to credit.

The spike in food and energy prices in 2008 led to a severe food crisis. The subsequent fall of energy prices has eased some of the pressure on energy importing countries, but yet, food prices remain high. The global financial and economic crisis in 2009 has exacerbated Africa's situation, resulting in falling growth rates, rising unemployment, deepening poverty, increasing hunger and malnutrition, and in jeopardizing of the achievement of the MDGs.

### Enhancing agricultural productivity

The majority of future increases in food and agricultural production in developing countries will come from more intensive production systems based on higher yields and multiple cropping. Such production intensification will continue to rely on the use of adapted integrated crop-livestock that can make the most efficient and optimal use of production inputs while protecting the supporting ecosystem services and biodiversity.

Investments in agriculture development and incentives provided to local farmers must be complemented by macroeconomic policies to ensure sustainability. Actions need to be aligned and adapted to national and local conditions, taking into account global climate change and poverty reduction initiatives and including coordinated efforts by key stakeholders, particularly national Governments, civil society and the private sector. In addition, appropriate market regulations, improved information systems and security of tenure and access rights to natural resources motivate farmers' investments in soil and water conservation

### Strengthening the enabling environment for implementation

The international development community has a fundamental role in progressing the agriculture-for-development agenda, including creating fair trade rules, conserving genetic resources, controlling the spread of pandemic diseases and managing climate change.

To achieve agreed outcomes, actions need to be more coordinated and less conflicting at local, national, regional and global levels. Social and agricultural inputs made available to local farmers and other vulnerable populations must be complemented by macroeconomic policies to ensure sustainability. Actions need to be aligned and adapted to national and local conditions, while coordinated efforts by key stakeholders, particularly national Governments, civil society and the private sector, are vital to make progress.

### Innovation for sustainable development

In Africa as in other parts of the world, many farmers are exploring new income generating opportunities by experimenting with new crops as well as environmentally less harmful methods of growing traditional crops. Africa has begun to discover the niche market provided by the developed-country market preference for organic and other eco labeled food products, but there is still considerable untapped

market potential. Farmers are also actively diversifying to earn income from new sources.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/index.shtml>

For more information on the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation:

[http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD\\_POI\\_PD/English/POIToc.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/POIToc.htm)

## Threefold discrimination of indigenous women

*Throughout the world, indigenous women continue to be discriminated against and marginalized. The threefold discrimination they suffer (for being women, indigenous and poor) marginalize them even further, compared with indigenous men, regarding economic and political opportunities for employment, social services, access to justice, and, more particularly, access to land and other productive resources.*



Indigenous women tend to be over-represented in the migratory cycles of agricultural workers, domestic service and other ill-paid and poorly protected private jobs. They are also increasingly present in international migration, the informal economy and among the swelling ranks of urban poor. What is even more alarming is the victimization of many indigenous women and girls in drug trafficking, sex tourism and prostitution in vast regions of the world. To date, there has been little attention to these matters, and where there are social and welfare policies in place, they have not been effective in protecting indigenous women.

Indigenous women have sought to address these issues at the local, national and international levels. At the United Nations, indigenous women have been



advocates and leaders since the very first year of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, in 1982 in Geneva. Indigenous women were active participants and contributors during the two decades of negotiations regarding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was adopted by the General Assembly in 2007.

Special attention to indigenous women's issues is also evident within the United Nations. The special theme of the third session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues was indigenous women. In March 2005, a resolution on Indigenous Women was adopted at the 49th Session of the Commission of the Status of the Women (CSW), which was the first ever resolution on indigenous women by this body.

Today, at the Permanent Forum, indigenous women participate in great numbers, have their own caucus and have a strong voice. The human rights of indigenous women should be protected by all of the provisions of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Article 22 calls for particular attention to be paid to their rights and special needs, and calls upon States to take measures to ensure that indigenous women enjoy the full protection and guarantees against all forms of violence and discrimination.

### **Multiple discrimination**

Many indigenous women are subjected to various forms of violence, exploitation and discrimination. Such violations tend to be very serious, including physical abuse, rape and sexual harassment; extreme economic exploitation; denial of their civil rights; discrimination in the justice system; racism; and exclusion from public social services, especially in the areas of health, housing and education.

The issue of discrimination was raised by indigenous women at the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Women (Beijing 1995). The UN Permanent Forum, at its third session, in 2004, took note of the fact that the United Nations Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) does not make reference to indigenous women and the specific nature of the gender dimension of racial discrimination. Hence, it recommended that "special attention should be paid to the issues related to maintaining the integrity of indigenous women and the gender dimension of racial discrimination against indigenous peoples".

### **Socio-economic gap**

The Human Development index of many countries shows that the socio-economic gap between Indigenous Peoples and non-indigenous peoples is increasing, while human development and empowerment between indigenous women and men follow a similar trend. The gap between indigenous women and dominant group women is even wider.

The poor health status of indigenous peoples in general, have been well documented and is linked to inequities in health determinants, including lower quality housing, poorer physical environment, lower educational levels, lower socioeconomic status, fewer employment opportunities and weaker community infrastructure. In many countries, indigenous women suffer higher rates of diabetes than indigenous men, even higher rates of gestational diabetes compared to non-indigenous women and higher rates of death caused by cervical cancer. They are also at higher risk for alcohol and substance abuse and do not have adequate access to sexual and reproductive health services.

Since the Beijing Conference on Women, some governments have taken the initiative to change discriminatory legal provisions towards women in order to improve their position in society. In some instances, indigenous women have also benefited from the amendments in legislation; however, there are still many legal provisions that continue to discriminate against them. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is still to address this important issue. Further, while some countries have introduced legislation that might be favorable to indigenous peoples, these advances at the national level are eclipsed by continuing human rights violations and problems faced by indigenous peoples in many countries. Indigenous peoples, in particular, indigenous women, are usually among the most marginalized and dispossessed sectors of society, because they suffer discrimination and face prejudices that are often perpetuated within societies. Despite the existence of protective legislation, the rights of indigenous peoples are very often denied in practice.

### **Access to land and natural resources**

Since time immemorial, indigenous peoples have maintained a special relationship with the land, their source of livelihood and sustenance and the basis of their very existence as peoples and communities. However, economic interests have attempted to turn communal possession into individual private ownership, a process which began during the colonial period in many countries and intensified in recent years. The violation of indigenous peoples' prior

rights to ancestral territories, lands, waters and resources, including the requirement to obtain free, prior and informed consent on all programmes and projects affecting their lives, often results in community conflicts. For many indigenous women this is especially difficult as they are often excluded from decision making processes. Further, their customary rights are often violated in relation to their access to, and special relationship with, their lands and natural resources.

The loss of traditional territories and land, eviction, migration and eventual resettlement, depletion of resources necessary for physical and cultural survival, destruction and pollution of the environment and the social and community disorganization, impacts heavily on families. For example, indigenous women's roles as self-reliant food producers, healers, artisans and spiritualists are increasingly eroded. As a result, indigenous women are forced into lowly-paid jobs and often seen by the tourist industry as objects of curiosity for the commercialized tourist market.

### **Violence**

Indigenous peoples are suffering from violence and conflict in many parts of the world. Many indigenous women are particularly vulnerable to such violence within their own communities or within the broader society, in time of peace or in time of war. Some indigenous women suffer female genital mutilation, forced marriages, early marriages, polygamy, beatings, forced labour and lack of property and ownership rights.

In many instances, indigenous women and children suffer the brunt of militarization on their land, perpetrated by state forces, including vigilante groups and private armies of companies. Rape and sexual violence continues to be used as a weapon of war by the military to humiliate and attack indigenous communities. Girls, and even older women and children are not spared. In other instances, courtship and marriage by the military with indigenous women is used to gain acceptance in indigenous communities, however, soldiers often abandon local women and children upon transfer to other destinations.

The effects of military rule and the establishment of military detachments in indigenous communities continue to have a major effect on indigenous women. It curtails their movement and economic activities, disrupt the entry of food supplies and basic social services including the education of indigenous children. Violent conflicts and militarization fundamentally affect the lives of indigenous women

and their families and communities, often causing violations of their human rights and displacement from their ancestral lands. At the same time however, indigenous women do not see themselves as passive victims. In many instances, indigenous women have bravely taken up the roles of mediators and peace builders.

### **Globalization and development**

According to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, globalization presents additional challenges in many parts of the world. As a group, indigenous women have not benefited from economic globalization. If anything, they usually bear the brunt of the destruction of indigenous economies, increased out migration, and in some cases have had to fight against the privatization of local land, water, and biodiversity, the natural resources most critical to their survival.

Issues of resource development and other forms of exploitation in the name of progress are not new for indigenous peoples. Globalization is often considered to be the latest euphemism for continued colonialism due to the fact that the first anti-globalization activists were indigenous peoples who fought transnational corporations (TNCs) in the 1970s. What is new, however, is the increased pressure and exploitation on indigenous territories in the name of profit and the globalized economy. This situation continues to seriously undermine international instruments, constitutional provisions, national laws and policies safeguarding indigenous rights. The most central of these rights, indigenous peoples' right to self-determination, has been questioned and undermined as national governments bind themselves to new global economic treaties. There is also however, an opposite suggestion that weakening the sovereignty of nation-states through economic globalization, may provide new opportunities for indigenous peoples' autonomy.

In some countries globalization often results in new agreement-making between indigenous peoples and governments to facilitate new economic development projects. This situation has a tendency to marginalize indigenous women in a number of ways. It often neglects the socio-economic and cultural implications that may disproportionately affect women in the form of disruption to family and social relations. More importantly however, indigenous women and their concerns are often left out of the negotiations. This is evident because land use and occupancy agreements tend to focus on traditional male activities such as hunting, fishing, and trapping. There is a view that, in general, development has not benefited indigenous

women to any significant degree. Rather, it has contributed to the erosion of viable community economies and social structures, corroded the environment and marginalized indigenous women and children.

In the rural areas of developing countries, governments have drastically reduce subsidies in agricultural production, and as result, small farmers enter into a vicious cycle of debt, poverty and hunger. Trade liberalization has allowed monopolistic transnational corporations (TNCs) to control the trade and marketing of essential staples such as rice and wheat and other agricultural products which has resulted in the food crisis.

Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by the food crisis because they do not have access to productive resources and the market, due to the persistent patriarchal and feudal system governing rural areas. Furthermore, structural adjustment programmes call for cuts in government spending and for privatization of state owned enterprises and services. This results in cuts to various social services which are essential to indigenous women's productive and reproductive roles. The disproportionate impact on indigenous women is further intensified by the imposition of extractive industries like mining, commercial logging and plantations on their lands in the name of greater profits for corporations and national development for governments at the expense of the survival of indigenous women and their communities.

Indigenous women's roles and much of their work are not valued within the current neoliberal economic system which places primary value on paid labour. While indigenous women are the mainstay of small-scale agriculture and fishing, farm labour force and day-to-day family subsistence, they have more difficulty than indigenous men in gaining access to resources such as land and credit and productivity enhancing inputs and services in societies and communities.

Indigenous women in the agricultural sector and fishery have also been adversely affected by the promotion of export-oriented economic policies and trade liberalisation. Indigenous women in developing countries continue to struggle with multiple work responsibilities in food crop production, family agricultural activities, household and non-market work.

### **The way forward**

According to the UNPFII, the dominant gender-neutral conception of equality prevailing in countries where Indigenous Peoples live has not been adequate in addressing the multiple disadvantages of indigenous women. It has become a daunting task in each country to repeal policies and practices that perpetuate sexual objectification of indigenous women, their disempowerment and victimization.

Reluctance of many states to implement conventions and adopt special measures is a major hurdle in overcoming educational, health, vocational, economic, and political disadvantages for indigenous women. Denial of Indigenous Peoples' rights has disenfranchised women severely relative to male members of Indigenous Peoples in most countries.

The UNPFII further highlights in its analysis on indigenous women prepared for the 8<sup>th</sup> session from 18-29 May 2009 that demolishing structural barriers to eliminate complex oppressions experienced by indigenous women and to achieve a multi-cultural democracy is one of the major challenges for Indigenous Peoples gender equality throughout the world.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/>

*For more information on the 8<sup>th</sup> session of the UNPFII:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session\\_eighth.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_eighth.html)

## Global dialogue on development

### Spotlight on Africa, agriculture

*17<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Sustainable Development gets underway in New York from 4-15 May with a focus on land and rural development*

This year, as the policy session of the third implementation cycle, the Commission will continue on thematic issues of Africa, agriculture, drought & desertification, land and rural development and consider policy options and practical measures to expedite their implementation.

This session will also review progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as well as providing policy guidance to follow up the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at all levels.

Prior to CSD-17, an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting took place from 23-27 February, resulting in a Chairman's draft negotiating document for transmittal to CSD-17, containing policy responses to some of the main issues underpinning this crisis, including agricultural productivity, land management, rural development, desertification and drought. The session will aim to adopt the Chairman's negotiating document.

Two parallel plenary sessions will be held during both weeks, with one working group focusing on agriculture, rural development, inter-linkages, cross-cutting issues and means of implementation, and the other one on land, drought, desertification and Africa. The sessions will also include expert panels, regional and thematic discussions.

The high-level segment from 13-15 May will hold an informal tripartite dialogue with the heads of UN agencies and heads of executive boards / governing councils of UN organizations and will also promote ministerial interactive dialogues with Major Groups.

In addition, the popular partnerships fair and learning centre will return for another year. The partnership fair with 9 events and 13 information desks will include interactive discussions as well as presentations and information desks. The learning centre will continue to offer a wide selection of

courses related to the current Commission themes. 14 courses have been scheduled covering such issues as climate ethics, Africa's ecological footprint, the role of biofuels in sustainable rural development and donor cooperation in support of Africa enterprises.

More than 1,000 representatives from over 100 major group organizations have registered for the session, and the high-level segment is expected to be attended by a large number of ministers. There are 72 requests for side events sponsored by governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_csd17.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd17.shtml)

### Resumed organizational session of ECOSOC

The Economic and Social Council will hold its resumed 2009 organizational session from 18-19 May to fill vacancies in the membership of its subsidiary bodies, including the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Population and Development, Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Sustainable Development. The agenda for the elections is available in document E/2009/2/Add.1 and corr.1.

*For more information:* <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/>

### Moving indigenous issues forward

*Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will convene its eighth session from 18-29 May to discuss women's issues, human rights and indigenous peoples of the Arctic*

This year's session will start off with a follow-up to the recommendations of the Forum. The first item on the agenda will be the economic and social development of indigenous people and will include a discussion of the report on extractive industries, indigenous peoples' rights and corporate responsibility. It will also focus on a special rapporteurs' report on indigenous peoples and corporations.

The session will continue with a review of recommendations and their implementation regarding indigenous women, including the situation of

indigenous women living in urban areas. It will continue with a review of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

The forum will also address the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular article 42 of the Declaration which was discussed at an International Expert Group Meeting earlier this year. The report of that EGM will be presented and followed by a dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people.

A half-day discussion on the Arctic will be followed by a comprehensive dialogue with six UN agencies and funds: Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UN Population Fund (UNFPA) and DESA.

The second week continues with the comprehensive dialogue with UN agencies and funds, followed by a discussion on the future work of the Permanent Forum, including items of the Economic and Social Council and emerging issues as well as special rapporteur's reports on climate change and land tenure.

During the two weeks of the eighth session, over 60 side events are organized by governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, directly related to the goals of the Permanent Forum and the special themes of this year's session.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session\\_eight\\_h.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_eight_h.html)

Committee will hold informal consultations from 4-5 May. For more information:

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>

## High demand for consultative status

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), a standing committee of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), will hold its 2009 resumed session in New York from 18-27 May. The 19-member committee, mandated with the responsibility to monitor the evolving relationship between NGOs and the United Nations, will examine 61 new applications from NGOs seeking consultative status with ECOSOC and 109 submissions of quadrennial reports. To prepare for the session, the



## Trends and analysis

### Rights of older persons

*Experts will explore from 5-7 May in Bonn how fundamental human rights of older persons could be assured and deepened*

An Expert Group Meeting, organized by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development will focus on the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and how it could be better implemented concerning the rights of older persons. In this context, analysis, approaches and documents of rights enforced in the past, of institutional settings, and of overall capacity to further implement policies and laws concerning the rights of older persons will be discussed during the meeting.

Specific objectives of the meeting will also be to identify and evaluate good national practices regarding protecting and promoting the rights of older persons, and to select innovative approaches to widening and deepening the rights of older persons nationally and internationally. The meeting will also identify capacity tools that are required and could be recommended to policy makers when addressing the rights of older persons and elaborate recommendations on how to promote the rights of older persons at the level of member states and the United Nations.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms.html>

### Building our humanitarian planet

*World Civic Forum, to be held in Seoul from 5-8 May, will focus on civic values for global justice and engagement in public and global governance*

Our Earth is calling for a humanitarian regeneration. Despite scientific and technological progress, today we are faced with global problems due to the loss of values of humanity in the course of modern civilization. Redeeming humanitarian values fully to our lives, however, is a daunting task. It requires integrative collaboration across sectors, disciplines, and nations. As much as damage to humanity has

generated complicated ills in every corner of our Planet, we need a holistic initiative transcending conventional boundaries and scopes and reflecting planetary consciousness in order to cure the ills.

The World Civic Forum 2009 emerges from the leading collaboration between the UN and institutions of higher learning, and aims to develop into an ongoing global institution with the partnership of like-minded actors such as NGOs, international organizations, governments, private enterprise, and the media. As a venue for global reflection and dialogue to enhance future civilizations, it will address the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) from various perspectives of education, research, and practice.

The United Nations fully supports Kyung Hee University ( Republic of Korea) in its World Civic Forum 2009 initiative with activities geared towards citizen development. Citizen engagement, inclusive and participatory governance and accountable social development are areas where DESA has been active. As the main convener for the third abovementioned theme, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management is organizing two events, namely, one Expert Group Meeting and one Workshop.

The Expert Group Meeting on "*Citizen Engagement in Climate Change Governance: Citizens for a Sustainable Future*" will bring together experts from national and local governments, civil society and the academic community to assess the global situation of climate change governance and describe the role of citizen participation in the overall governance framework. It will serve as a platform for dialogue on stakeholders' capacity needs, the opportunities available for fruitful partnership and the challenges that need to be hurdled. Case studies of innovative practices will also be presented.

A workshop on "*Citizen Action for the Millennium Development Goals*" will assess the global progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and examine the role of citizen action towards this endeavor. The goal is to enhance the capacities of participants in integrating the MDGs into their policy and program designs, and further, build a knowledge-based network among the participants and the United Nations, to strengthen partnerships for the global agenda, including in the achievement of the MDGs.

For more information: <http://www.wcf2009.org/>

## Standardization of geographical names

*Experts from over 100 countries are expected to attend the 25<sup>th</sup> session in Nairobi from 5-12 May*

As fundamental to the need for global standardization of geographical names, the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN) promotes the recording of locally-used names reflecting the languages and traditions of a country. UNGEGN's goal is for every country to decide on its own nationally standardized names through the creation of national names authorities or recognized administrative processes. With the wide dissemination of the nationally standardized forms through gazetteers, atlases, web-based data bases, toponymic guidelines, etc., UNGEGN can promote the use of these names internationally. For each non-Roman alphabet or script this will be through the adoption and use of a single scientifically-based romanization system.

This year's session of UNGEGN is the first one to be held in Africa. In addition to the discussion of the standardization of geographical names, a poster exhibit and training on toponymy will be organized in conjunction with the session. African countries are encouraged to participate in order to show their work on names in connection with mapping or cultural heritage, for example: field collection of names; names and maps; gazetteers and/or databases, etc.

The session is organized by the UNGEGN Bureau and the Statistics Division of DESA (Secretariat of UNGEGN) in collaboration with UN Economic Commission for Africa.

*For more information:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/default.htm>

## Compiling comparable national accounts

*Expert Group Meeting on National Accounts in Cairo from 12-14 May is jointly organized by ESCWA and DESA's Statistics Division*

The meeting will discuss the assessment of the country practices of the ESCWA region for compiling internationally comparable national accounts and focus on national accounts issues in implementing the revised 2008 System of National Accounts. It will also have on the agenda new classifications of economic activities and products and the main challenges faced by ESCWA countries on issues such as rebasing and linking of national accounts, backcasting, benchmarking and volume measures.

Measures for the exhaustive coverage of economic activities in the national accounts including the measurement of the informal sector activities will also be deliberated in the EGM. It is expected that the discussions would contribute to the formulation of a regional plan for implementation of the revised macroeconomic accounting standards of the 2008 SNA for the countries in the region.

*For more information:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/workshop.s.asp>

## Achieving sustainable urbanization

*New York conference on 13 May to discuss sustainable urbanization in the information age and the role of infrastructure in metropolitan development*

The conference seeks to address the global challenges posed by rapid urbanization and the impact of global warming on both the man-made and natural environments - from poverty and inequality to natural and manmade disasters - by calling for better sustainable planning for urban growth.

In 2000, the United Nations adopted the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which commit the Member States to improve the living conditions for the 2.5 billion poor in the world. Millennium Development Goal 7 aims to ensure environmental sustainability by integrating the principles of sustainable development into Member States' policies and programmes. Sustainable urban design and architecture are key considerations in environmental planning and management, however, even in developed countries, such sustainable approaches are new.

The conference aims to provide the venue for dialogue and exchange of experiences on improving capacities of cities and local governments for planning, implementation and management of infrastructure networks, not only in physical planning but for healthcare and education, which are critical for a sustainable future.

This conference is the second in a series of UN-AIA-RPA sponsored conferences on sustainability in the information age. The first conference, held in New York in the spring 2008, brought together professionals, academics, policy makers and politicians from both the executive and legislative branch. This highly successful first conference demonstrated that human ingenuity combined with political will could effectively address complex global problems.

For more information: <http://www.un-gaid.org>

## Next steps for Internet Governance Forum

*Forum will meet on 13-15 May in Geneva to prepare for the annual its annual meeting and bring together the Multistakeholder Advisory Group*

The Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Secretariat is organizing open consultations on 13 May for all stakeholders to prepare the 2009 annual meeting of the IGF, which will take place in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, on 15-18 November. Representatives of government, the private sector, civil society and the academic and technical Internet communities are to discuss a programme paper containing the draft outlines of an agenda and schedule for the meeting. The consultations are also expected to address the review process of the IGF, called for by the Tunis Agenda on the Information Society. The meeting will be chaired by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser for Internet Governance, Mr. Nitin Desai.

The open consultations will be followed by a private meeting of the 55-member Multistakeholder Advisory Group (MAG) on 14-15 May, which is entrusted with assisting in the preparations for the annual meeting of the Internet Governance Forum. The group is expected to finalize the draft agenda of this year's annual meeting.

For more information:

<http://www.intgovforum.org/cms/>

## WSIS outcomes to be implemented

*Fourth Facilitation Meeting on 20 May in Geneva will implement action lines related to public governance*

DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) will organize this meeting on implementing WSIS outcomes related to action lines C1 - The role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development, C7 - ICT applications - E-government and C11 - International and regional cooperation. The meeting will be a substantive component of Forum 2009 on implementation of World Summit on Information Society (WSIS).

For more information:

[http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/agenda\\_fm.html](http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/agenda_fm.html)

## Improving public service delivery

*Experts to meet on 21-22 May in Geneva to focus on e-government and public-private partnerships*

A public-private partnership is a collaborative effort whereby the public sector of a state uses its influence on the private sector in order to form a partnership to achieve some economic and developmental goals. At the United Nations World Summit in 2005, leaders outlined a vision for a people-centered and inclusive information society, putting the potential of information and communication technologies at the service of development and addressing the new challenges of the information society.

For this purpose, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) will organize an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on E-Government and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) for Better Public Service Delivery and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) implementation. The meeting will be a substantive component of Forum 2009 on the implementation of World Summit on Information

Society (WSIS) and will take place in Geneva, Switzerland from 21 to 22 May.

The EGM will be organized in cooperation with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and will aim to identify the major issues and trends in e-government and PPPs towards effective and efficient public service delivery and revamp MDGs implementation by reviewing existing approaches worldwide and analyzing the structural and process changes associated with PPPs and e-government development.

The goal of the meeting is to further the thinking of the United Nations and multistakeholders on how e-government and PPPs could accelerate and underpin public service delivery and contribute to up scaling MDGs implementation. The Meeting will explore and identify issues and challenges facing both governments, citizens and the private sector in their quest towards achieving MDGs.

The meeting is expected to identify the major issues and trends in e-government and PPPs towards effective and efficient public service delivery and revamping MDGs implementation by reviewing existing approaches worldwide and analyzing the structural and process changes associated with PPPs and e-government development. The experts will present papers on the themes outlined above, as well as participate in the discussions at the Meeting.

For more information:

[http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/tw\\_e-government-UNDESA-ITU.html](http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/tw_e-government-UNDESA-ITU.html)

## Alleviating poverty with mobile technology

*Multistakeholder Panels during the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) will be held in Geneva on 26 May*

DESA's Global Alliance for ICT and Development is organizing, together with the CSTD Secretariat, the ITU and WHO, an event on Mobile Technology, Convergence and Social Networking Tools for Development and Poverty Alleviation and on the Innovative Uses of ICT in Delivering Digital Health. The event is designed to bring the added value of multi-stakeholder inputs to intergovernmental discussions in the CSTD on the follow up to WSIS.

The first Panel will focus on “*Mobile Technology, Convergence and Social Networking Tools for Development and Poverty Alleviation*”. This Panel will discuss the policies and strategies that developing countries and their development partners need to devise to respond to the new opportunities created by the technological innovations and rapid advances in mobile access for accelerating their development. The Panel also aims at creating a dialogue on the respective roles of the key stakeholders in mobilizing necessary resources and capacity to form new partnerships involving not only governments and civil society, but also the private sector, to ensure that the benefits of technology are placed at the service of development and yield tangible progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The second Panel will focus on “*Innovative Uses of ICT in Delivering Digital Health*”. This Panel intends to look at the current and future landscape of mHealth and eHealth in the developing world, to identify building blocks required and innovations to make them more widely available through sustainable and scalable implementation, and how to seed a multi-sector partnership dedicated to designing, funding, and advancing e- and mHealth projects in developing world.

For more information: <http://www.un-gaid.org/>

## Estimating economic trends

*Monitoring the global economic and financial crisis will be the focus of a seminar held in Ottawa, Canada from 27-29 May*

The present economic and financial crisis is characterized by its magnitude and speed, apart from its interconnected nature across all domestic sectors of the economy and its global cross border spill-over, impacting developed, emerging and developing economies alike. Analyst and policy makers urgently need high frequency statistics which are timely, reliable and comparable over time and between countries and regions to monitor the development of the crisis. These high frequency statistics are instrumental in the analysis of the turning points of the crisis in support of swift and synchronized policy actions at the global and national level.



For this purpose a seminar on “Timeliness, Methodology and Comparability of Rapid Estimates of Economic Trends” is jointly organized by DESA’s Statistics Division, the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and Statistics Canada. The seminar will be hosted by Statistics Canada and held from 27-29 May in Ottawa.

It will bring together around 50 countries and 15 international and regional agencies. In a collaborative effort between national and international statistical and central bank authorities, an assessment will be made about the availability, timeliness and quality of high frequency estimates and the innovative techniques applied in accelerating the release of rapid estimates. The assessment will cover broad sets of high frequency estimates like for national accounts, prices, production, external sector, government, sector, household sector and financial sector.

It is expected that this assessment will render a repository of country practices offering descriptions of national practices in the release of rapid estimates including the modeling, econometric and collection techniques used for the different types of rapid estimates. The joint assessment of this inventory during the seminar should determine the work priorities for the various sets of national and global rapid estimates. When desired and supported by the countries, an agreed statistical framework for the global monitoring of the global economic and financial crisis and the impacts of the crisis on countries and vulnerable population groups within the countries could be considered based on timely and comparable sets of near term indicators.

*For more information:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/workshops/2009/ottawa/lod.asp>

## Establishing InfoPoverty networks

*9<sup>th</sup> InfoPoverty World Conference, held from 18-20 March in New York, identified solutions to achieve the MDGs by 2015*

The conference was a multi-conference event connected with Milan ( Politecnico and the European Parliament Office), and Brussels and was organized by OCCAM and the InfoPoverty Institute of the University of Oklahoma and supported by DESA’s Global Alliance for ICT and Development Secretariat. It brought together key stakeholders from the UN system and ICTD practitioners for an exchange of experiences and perspectives to spur the use of ICT for development.

The conference underlined the need to identify solutions to the “abuse and refuse” of ICTs in development strategies, in order to achieve the MDGs by 2015.

The meeting achieved as outcome the establishment of an InfoPoverty network of villages and communities in order to create a campus of scientific experiments, to test the innovations, to evaluate them in terms of cost and efficiency, and interact with local population as well as to define those innovations as valuable tools and practices to be shared and applied to UN aid programs.

It will also support initiatives and projects presented at the Conference including: the Electronic and Mobil Knowledge Repository (e/m-GKR) of DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management, the Global Initiative for Inclusive Technologies (G3ict), the 500/12 Initiative and the U-movement.

*For more information:* <http://www.infopoverty.net/>

## Technical cooperation

### Manufacturing statistics for African countries

*Workshop in Lusaka, Zambia from 4-7 May to increase statistical capacity building in the region*

The main purpose of this workshop is to initiate a programme for the development of comprehensive and comparable manufacturing statistics for African countries. As a first step in this programme, the workshop will review the state of manufacturing statistics in participating African countries including scope, definitions, measurement and methodology used in the compilation of manufacturing statistics.

The workshop relates to the framework of the project "Strengthening statistical capacity building in support of progress towards the Internationally Agreed Development Goals in the Southern African Development Community region", while reaching out to other countries in the region as well.

The meeting is organized by DESA's Statistics Division in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office (CSO) of Zambia, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

*For more information:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/industry/meetings/eca2009>

## Publications and websites

### Technical reports



#### **Achieving Sustainable Development in an Age of Climate Change**

Adapting to climate change is critical for sustainable development. Steps must be taken to strengthen

the adaptive capacity of all stakeholders and to mainstream adaptation into sectoral and national planning processes. Achieving the aims reflected in the international sustainable development agenda also requires mitigation efforts in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Whereas among industrialized countries the approach to mitigation has focused on a cap-and-trade system, for developing countries such a strategy may not be ideal. For those countries, an investment-based approach, encouraging the use of renewable energy alternatives appears to be the most promising mitigation strategy. In support of such approach, large-scale global funds for technology transfer required for mitigation and for helping countries cover adaptation costs should be considered. United Nations Publication Sales No. E.08.II.A.16.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=18802>

To download:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/devplan/cdppublication/s/2009cdppolicynote.pdf>

### Statistical compilations

#### **National Accounts Statistics: Analysis of Main Aggregates, 2007**

The publication contains a complete and consistent set of time series of the main national accounts aggregates for 221 countries and areas of the world for the years 1970 to 2007. The national data for each country and area are presented in separate chapters using uniform table headings and classifications recommended in the United Nations System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA 1993).

The main aggregates include gross domestic product (GDP) by type of expenditure and value added by kind of economic activity, both at current and at constant market prices. The publication also contains analytical indicators and ratios that reflect the economic structure and trends of countries and areas such as annual per capita GDP, annual growth rates of GDP, annual shares in total GDP of its main expenditure and value added components, and price trends as defined by the implicit price deflators of GDP.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=402>

To order: <https://unp.un.org/Details.aspx?pid=18721>

### Meeting records

#### **Report of the 47th session of the Commission for Social Development**

At its forty-seventh session, held on 22 February 2008 and from 4-13 February 2009, the Commission for Social Development considered “Social integration”, the priority theme for the 2009-2010 review cycle, and the review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups.

On the priority theme, the Commission held a panel discussion elaborating on social integration, taking into account the relationship with poverty eradication and full employment and decent work for all. The Commission adopted a resolution entitled “Promoting full employment and decent work for all” and decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft resolution entitled “Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development”. During the panel discussion, under the agenda item entitled “Emerging issues”, the Commission discussed the current global crises and their impact on social development.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/csd/2009.html>

#### **Report of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting: Commission on Sustainable Development**

The meeting in preparation for the seventeenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development was held in New York from 23 to 27 February 2009. Interactive discussions on the themes of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa were held and the barriers

and constraints facing small island developing States were addressed. Interlinkages and crosscutting issues, including means of implementation, relevant to the same themes were also the focus of the preparatory meeting.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res\\_pdfs/csd-17-ipm/advance\\_unedited\\_IPM\\_report.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/resources/res_pdfs/csd-17-ipm/advance_unedited_IPM_report.pdf)

### **Report of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus**

The Conference held in Doha, Qatar, from 29 November - 2 December 2008, adopts the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development which is annexed to the this report. The Declaration highlights a new sense of solidarity and goodwill among Member States and is an important milestone in the struggle for development. In the midst of the ongoing financial and economic crisis of far-reaching but yet unknown consequences, Member States have not only strengthened commitments to innovative cooperation for financing for development, they have also taken the first steps to agree on major changes in the international financial governance.

A global conference at the highest level will assess the crisis that has devastated the world economy, from 1-3 June 2009 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The conference was mandated by world leaders at the Financing for Development Conference in December 2009 in Doha and will address the impact of the crisis on development as well as on the ongoing international discussion on reforming and strengthening the international financial and economic system and architecture.

*For more information:*

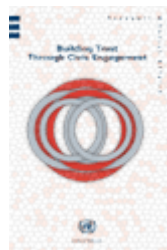
<http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/C/NF.212/7>

### **Sustainable Urbanization in the Information Age**

This book summarizes the presentations and discussions held during the “Forum on Sustainable Urbanization in the Information Age” which took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, in May 2008. The Forum condensed the views of various sectors, disciplines and municipalities from both developed and developing countries on how we might best engage the challenges and opportunities of sustainable urbanization, including economic, social, ethical and technical goals.

The book talks about sustainable urbanization as the key consideration in environment planning and management to improve living conditions for the 2.5 billion poor in the world. Millennium Development Goal number 7 aims to ensure environmental sustainability by integrating the principles of sustainable development into member states policies and programmes.

*For more information:* <http://www.un-gaid.org/>



### **Building Trust Through Civic Engagement**

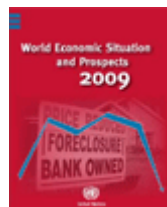
This publication is the result of the Workshop on Building Trust through Civic Engagement, held as part of the 7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government: Building Trust in Government, which took place at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna from 26 to 29 June 2007.

DESA and its partners chose this topic in recognition of the need to explore the options and means to articulate and advocate the role that citizen engagement in public policy, services delivery and public accountability can have in bringing citizens closer to the government and government closer to the citizens. It is envisioned that addressing the issues of building trust through civic engagement will greatly help in instilling in public governance a sense of shared vision in development and help to produce a mutually re-enforcing mechanism of transparency and accountability.

*To download:*

<http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan028357.pdf>

## **Outreach material**



### **World Economic Situation and Prospects, 2005-2009: On the Global Financial and Economic Crisis**

In recent years, from 2005, but also in earlier editions, WESP has warned against the dangers of the unsustainable pattern of global growth that emerged about a decade



ago and which was characterized by strong consumer demand in the United States, funded by easy credit and booming house prices. Far-reaching financial deregulation facilitated a massive and unfettered expansion of new financial instruments, such as securitized sub-prime mortgage lending, sold on financial markets worldwide.

This pattern of growth enabled strong export growth and, eventually, high commodity prices benefiting many developing countries, but also led to mounting global financial imbalances and overleveraged financial institutions, businesses and households. In the context of a highly integrated global economy without adequate regulation and global governance structures, the breakdown in one part of the system thus easily leads to failure elsewhere, as we are witnessing today.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wesp2009files/wesp2005\\_2009.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wesp2009files/wesp2005_2009.pdf)



### **Social Development Link Newsletter**

DESA's Division for Social Policy & Development has launched this quarterly newsletter, aiming to provide

a sharp and synthetic summary of major activities carried out by the Division. The newsletter also intends to highlight some aspects of the work of the Division that do not fall under a specific cluster. As its title shows, this publication will serve as a link between DSPD and its major partners, from civil society actors to social development practitioners and scholars.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sdlnewsletter.html>

## **Discussion papers**

### **Population Division Policy Brief No. 2009/1, March 2009**

The brief focuses on current fertility levels in the world's least developed countries - a group of 49 countries designated as such by the United Nations General Assembly. In 31 of them, fertility rates remain above 5 children per woman.

The Policy Brief discusses fertility trends and contraceptive use in the least developed countries based on the most recent data compiled by the Population Division. It asserts that expansion of access to family planning requires government commitment and that strengthening and expanding family planning services require adequate funding and access to supplies. It also emphasizes that investments in family planning are cost effective because of the strong synergistic effects of longer birth intervals and lower fertility with other development goals.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm>

## **Websites**



### **Enhanced United Nations Public Administration Network website**

The United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) improved its RSS (Really Simple Syndication)

feeds to better serve its users and partner organizations. UNPAN readers can now subscribe to news, documents, events and resources via RSS to stay informed about the latest updates on public administration and related matters. On the other hand, UNPAN partner organizations will be able to integrate the RSS feeds into their websites in order to display various content from the UNPAN portal including the ones submitted by them.

*To browse:* <http://www.unpan.org/rss>

### **Updated Committee for Development Policy website**



The CDP Secretariat has updated its website to include the data used for the 2009 triennial review of the list of least developed countries (LDCs). The database gives users easy access to the indicators that were applied by the Committee in the identification of LDCs and to the documentation used under the established graduation procedure.

*To browse:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/devplan/profile/index.html>

## Comings and goings

### Comings



**Ms. Leslie Wade** has been appointed Chief of the ECOSOC Interorganizational Cooperation Branch (EICB), Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, on 1 May. She brings with her experience in the development and security side of the UN's work, both at Headquarters and in the field. She has worked in many offices, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Office of the Special Advisor for Africa and the LDCs, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination. Ms. Wade has also participated in Peacekeeping Missions (Namibia, Cambodia) and electoral missions (El Salvador and Mozambique).

Among her many achievements, she was the leading force behind the creation of the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on African Countries Emerging from Conflict. Ms. Wade joined the United Nations in June 1985 as a National Competitive Exam candidate in Economic Affairs. Prior to her new appointment, Ms. Wade was Deputy-Chief of EICB from February 2007 to April 2009.



**Mr. Roberto Villareal** joined the Division for Public Administration & Development Management as the new Chief of the Socio-Economic Development Branch (which will now be known as Development Management Branch) on 22 April. His most recent assignment was with the Division of the Regional Competitiveness and Governance of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), where he served as its head.

Mr. Villareal has served the Federal Government of Mexico for over 20 years, assuming the responsibilities of high level posts in different ministries and in diverse fields of socio-economic development. He previously served as the Undersecretary for Regional and Urban Development and Head Unit Social and Regional Policy, for the Federal Government of Mexico. He holds a Ph.D. in

economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



**Mr. Andrei Abramov** has been appointed Chief of the NGO Section, Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination, as of 1 May. He is currently acting as Principal Social Affairs Officer in the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. Mr. Abramov brings with him a diversified professional and progressive experience in supporting intergovernmental policy making, negotiations on various policy documents and resolutions. He also represented the Office in various international fora, interagency task forces and executive committees. Mr. Abramov has also extensive experience in working with NGOs.

Prior to joining DESA, he worked in peacekeeping in various capacities, carrying political analysis, participating in negotiations and other peacemaking and peacekeeping activities. Mr. Abramov has more than 10 year experience in the UN Office of Human Resources Management dealing with many aspects of human resources management including job classification, recruitment, compensation, policy development, staff-management relations.

*The following staff members were promoted in April:*

Ms. Maria Vittoria Beria, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy & Development

Ms. Sara Hertog, Population Affairs Officer, Population Division

Ms. Anuradha Chimata, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

### Goings

*The following staff members retired in April:*

Ms. Juliet Capili, Secretary, Financing for Development Office

Ms. Fabiola Knight, Technical Cooperation Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

## Calendar

### May

#### United Nations Forum on Forests

8<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 20 April-1 May

<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>

#### Joint Meeting on Environmental Indicators

Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, 4-6 May

<http://unece.org/stats/documents/2009.05.envIRON.htm>

#### Workshop on Manufacturing Statistics for African Countries

Lusaka, Zambia, 4-7 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/industry/meetings/default.asp>

#### Commission on Sustainable Development

17<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 4-15 May

[http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_csd17.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd17.shtml)

#### Expert Group Meeting on the Rights of Older Persons

Bonn, Germany, 5-7 May

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms.html>

#### World Civic Forum 2009

Seoul, 5-8 May

<http://www.wcf2009.org/>

#### United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEN)

25<sup>th</sup> session, Nairobi, 5-12 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geoinfo/default.htm>

#### Expert Group Meeting on National Accounts

Cairo, Egypt, 12-14 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/workshops.asp>

#### Conference on Sustainable Urbanization in the Information Age

New York, 13 May

<http://www.un-gaid.org>

#### Internet Governance Forum

Open Consultations, Multistakeholder Advisory Group, Geneva, 13-15 May

<http://www.intgovforum.org>

#### Economic and Social Council

Resumed organizational session for 2009, New York, 18-19 May

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/>

#### Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Resumed regular session for 2009, New York, 18-27 May

<http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/>

#### United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

8<sup>th</sup> session, New York, 18-29 May

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session\\_eighth.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/session_eighth.html)

#### Fourth Facilitation Meeting on Implementing WSIS Outcomes

Geneva, 20 May

[http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/agenda\\_fm.html](http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/agenda_fm.html)

#### Expert Group Meeting on Government and Public Private Partnerships

Geneva, 21-22 May

[http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/tw\\_e-government-UNDESA-ITU.html](http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2009/forum/geneva/tw_e-government-UNDESA-ITU.html)

#### Mobile Technology, Convergence and Social Networking Tools for Development and Poverty Alleviation

Multistakeholder Panels during the 12<sup>th</sup> session of CSTD, Geneva, 26 May

<http://www.un-gaid.org>

#### Seminar on Timeliness, Methodology and Comparability of Rapid Estimates of Economic Trends

Ottawa, Canada, 27-29 May

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/workshops/2009/ottawa/lod.asp>

### June

#### World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development

United Nations Conference, New York, 1-4 June

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

## Observances

### International Day of Families

15 May

The International Day of Families provides an opportunity to promote awareness of issues relating to the family as the basic unit of society as well as to promote appropriate action to recognize and promote the importance of families. The day can become a mobilizing factor on behalf of families in all countries to avail themselves of this opportunity and to demonstrate support of family issues appropriate to each society. The 2009 observance of the International Day of Families also offers a valuable opportunity for families to demonstrate their solidarity in the quest for better standards of life. The theme for this year is mothers and families: challenges in a changing world.

The day will be observed at United Nations Headquarters on Thursday, 14 May in the form of a panel discussion in Conference Room 3 at 1:15 pm. The meeting is organized by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, in cooperation with the New York NGO Committee on the Family.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/family/IDF.html>

*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. Prior to January 2007, DESA News was issued every other month. It is now issued monthly.*

*Inquiries should be addressed to [esa@un.org](mailto:esa@un.org).*