



Video

Finance: The stakes are too high for half-measures and quick fixes

According to General Assembly President Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, the international community has the responsibility and the opportunity to identify longer-term measures beyond protecting banks, stabilizing credit markets and reassuring big investors. The stakes are too high for half-measures and quick fixes put together behind closed doors.

Full coverage:

<http://www.un.org/qa/president/63/interactive/qfc.shtml>

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Developing countries take a hit

Financial and trade linkages have led to plummeting equities, debt write-downs, and weak demand in Asia and beyond

The global financial crisis has markedly intensified. Equity prices have fallen sharply worldwide, a number of major financial institutions have collapsed, while liquidity has evaporated in financial markets. These financial strains are exerting tremendous downward pressure on economic activity worldwide. A large number of developed economies are already in recession, and growth in many developing countries is decelerating significantly.

The UN expects world gross product growth to decline to a recessionary pace below 2 percent for 2008, down from the 3.8 percent of 2007, implying zero growth in world per capita income and likely falls in income for a large proportion of the population, particularly the poor. The outlook for 2009 will be even worse, with the growth of world gross product expected to drop to about 1 percent.

The debate about decoupling from the United States economy may be finally laid to rest. The contagious credit freeze has spread through the European economies, as well as other developed economies, to a lesser degree. While economies of the Euro area and Japan are already in recession, the prospects for other developed economies have also deteriorated markedly.

In the United States, the financial catastrophe has begun to manifest its impact on the real economic sector, as both household consumption and business spending retrench. The Emergency Economic Stabilization Act, directed mainly at transferring bad assets from financial institutions, is unlikely to prevent a United States recession beginning in the last part of 2008.

No country is immune

The impact of the global financial crisis on developing economies and economies in transition has also been deepening markedly, through both financial and trade linkages. Amid the synchronized global sell-off, equity markets in a large number of emerging economies have plummeted much more than their counterparts in developed markets. An increasing number of financial institutions in developing countries and economies in transition, particularly in Asian economies, are bearing sizeable losses from holding troubled assets of United States financial institutions. The much larger impact, however, is expected to come from the significant weakening of demand in most developed economies. Growth in developing countries and economies in transition is expected to decelerate on average by about 2 percent in 2008, from the previous year, and by another one percent or so in 2009.

The broad international economic environment for developing countries and economies in transition has deteriorated considerably. At the same time that external financing costs are rising, a reversal of capital inflows is already evident in many countries, even though the degree of financial constriction for these countries is still not as pronounced as in the Asian and Latin American financial crises of the past. The heightened global financial turmoil has also led to considerable volatility in the prices of commodities. For a group of low-income developing countries, which suffered from steep rises in the prices of food and energy in early 2008, the current high level of these prices continues to threaten progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the primary goal of reducing poverty and hunger. For oil-exporting and commodity-exporting developing countries, increased volatility in commodity prices and a significantly dimmed outlook for global demand portends growing vulnerability in the prospects of these economies.

The potential severity of this crisis was underestimated by most policy makers worldwide, which has led to failure to contain the crisis in its early stage. Despite some unusual policy actions and

a few coordinated attempts among the central banks of major developed countries to inject more liquidity into credit markets, most policy measures so far have been piecemeal, and not adequate or appropriate for dealing with a systemic global crisis.

The present crisis marks the end of a prolonged period in which the world economy boomed on the basis of strong consumer demand in the United States, stimulated by easy credit and booming house prices. Growing United States deficits were financed by increasing trade surpluses in China and other developing countries willing to use increasing reserves to buy dollar-denominated assets. Increasing financial deregulation made it easy to move capital around the world and contributed to keeping the cost of borrowing low, further fuelling a widening of the global imbalances led by United States consumer demand.

All parties seemed to benefit from the relaxation of credit standards and the progressive underpricing of risk, despite repeated warnings that mounting household and public indebtedness in the United States and elsewhere would not be sustainable.

The root cause of the global financial crisis is deeply embedded in policy deficiencies in the international financial system and in the unsustainable fundamentals of the world economy. As has been reiterated in UN publications over the last few years, the accumulation of global imbalances before the eruption of this financial crisis was an early warning signal of unsustainable global growth. The creation of the housing bubble in the United States was one consequence of the pattern and dynamics of recent growth. The UN has long advocated an internationally coordinated policy to adjust the global imbalances in an orderly manner, to avoid an abrupt slowdown in the world economy which would have serious consequences on an over-extended international financial system. With the heightened risk of widespread breakdown of the international



financial system and of global recession, an internationally coordinated policy is even more badly needed.

International cooperation to restore growth and regulate finance

The prospect of a systemic world financial breakdown – and, consequently, a long lasting economic slowdown – is real. In recent weeks, individual country policies – both to do nothing and to undertake drastic measures to rescue their domestic financial sectors – have inflicted new vulnerabilities on other economies and have been attended by international political recriminations, reminiscent of the 1930s, when only ad hoc processes for coordinated action existed.

Since the 1980s, ad hoc international coordination has been coming back into vogue and this has coincided with the reduction in the capabilities and the narrowing of the policy agendas of global institutions set in place after the 20th century Great Depression. In the 1930s, a retreat by all countries from global commerce did not reduce competitive actions and counter-actions, but actually intensified them, to the detriment of all.

The disjointed policy initiatives undertaken by developed countries in response to the market failures that originate in their jurisdictions reflect the incapacity of national authorities to commit their public resources to rescue institutions in other industrial economies in the absence of a commonly recognized framework of regulatory oversight. Existing institutions, all dominated by developed countries, including the IMF, OECD and the Financial Stability Forum, have, so far, not provided a platform facilitating effective coordination in response to crises and their prevention.

Beyond the obvious failure of concerted action, ongoing developments indicate that the most significant policy initiatives undertaken so far have not addressed the fundamental basis of the crisis. While these interventions ostensibly aim to avoid damage to the real sector, they have focused on restoring the viability of financial companies instead of addressing the process of reconciling overvalued financial assets with long-term rates of return in the real sector.

The immediate future is highly uncertain. Even if the United States bailout package helps to restore market confidence, it will take time before economic activity will resume. There is now widespread recognition

that the problems are global and systemic, requiring solutions that are global and systemic. The present system of global economic governance has proven to be inadequate to prevent the global financial (capital account) imbalances from ballooning into the current crisis. The reliance on a single national currency – the United States dollar – as the world's reserve currency is one reason for the emergence of these imbalances. To address the global imbalances, the world community continues to rely almost exclusively on national policies. When there is a crisis, this leads to ad hoc fixes, instead of a transparent global system of policy coordination, reserve management and financial supervision and regulation.

The ability of the International Monetary Fund to safeguard the stability of the global economy has been undermined by the vastly greater resources and volatility of globally integrated private actors and uncoordinated national policy responses as well as the emergence of exclusive multilateral institutions such as the G7, OECD and European Union. In effect, the IMF has been effectively sidelined in handling the present crisis. The perceived irrelevance of the Bretton Woods institutions in today's crisis also stems from their skewed voting structures and governance and the disconnect, at times, between their policies and the nature of the global economy.

Developing countries now represent a much larger proportion of world economic activity than they did in 1944. Developing countries – as a group – are now net creditors to the global economic system and have an abiding interest in a rules-based and impartial debt workout system. Given the large and persistent trade and fiscal deficits in the United States, the bulk of the financing for the \$700 billion United States bailout will likely be funded, directly or indirectly, from savings generated by developing countries.

There is clearly an urgent need to reform the international monetary and financial system to ensure that it is more inclusive and equitable, and thus enable credible and effective global economic governance. Already some developed countries, such as the United Kingdom and France, and many developing countries, such as those in the Commonwealth, have called for an international conference to redesign the system of international economic governance into a new post-Bretton Woods system, designed to restore accountability and transparency in international economic policy-making and to overcome existing systemic weaknesses.

Doha review conference: mounting expectations

In 2002, the Monterrey Consensus, reached after the Asian financial crisis and the “9/11” terrorist attacks in the United States, appeared to represent a revival of multilateralism, under the framework of financing for development as a shared responsibility of both developed and developing countries. Developing countries committed to improve their macroeconomic management while developed countries promised to increase aid, alleviate debt distress, and ensure a global economy supportive of investment and growth.

The current crisis throws a spotlight on the international community’s failure to adequately address systemic issues. The General Assembly is convening a follow-up conference on financing for development in Doha from 29 November to 2 December. Member countries of the UN have begun intensely negotiating an outcome document that seeks to address obstacles encountered in meeting their commitments and to respond to new and emerging issues.

The review conference on financing for development in Doha beginning in late November provides an opportunity to send a clear signal of the urgency of considering these matters while ensuring counter-cyclical and other measures to contain the consequences of the ongoing financial turmoil. Addressing the IMF International Financial and Monetary Committee on 11 October, Under-Secretary-General Sha urged the international community “to recall the spirit with which the institutions of global governance were established in 1944 – against the backdrop of a ruinous depression and millions of lives lost in a world war.” He went on to exhort countries “to reform global institutions and mechanisms based on rigorous and appropriate analysis, by taking the necessary decisions in the financing for development conference at Doha.”

In the light of the present crisis and the special difficulties and risks faced by developing countries, the Doha conference will need to address in particular more effective regulatory frameworks, particularly in financial markets; more effective, globally coordinated, counter-cyclical policies and institutions; improved risk monitoring and crisis avoidance as well as management better suited to the realities of contemporary global financial integration; more universal and equitable distribution of voice and representation in global decision-making bodies; and follow through, in an accountable manner, on all international commitments made in the areas of aid, trade, debt reduction, and access to technology and

affordable medicines in support of developing country efforts to achieve the MDGs.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/policy/>

The connected city

An advanced information infrastructure can improve quality of life and enhance business competitiveness

Information and communications technologies have become all pervasive in today’s world. The cost of voice transmission circuits has dropped dramatically over the last three decades. Computing power per dollar invested has risen dramatically during the same period. But the ICT revolution is far from complete, as electronic commerce continues to grow exponentially. City administrations across the world are realizing that they, too, need to ride the crest of the ICT wave to ensure that their cities become better places to live and work.



One of the most significant recent developments in Asia in particular has been the revolution in electronic communications. New cellular phone networks are leap-frogging over under-developed copper-wire networks and Internet services are expanding at an exponential rate. Improved information infrastructure provides opportunities in areas well beyond the ICT sector itself, with a potential productivity impact on businesses, large and small. Many studies, from the micro to the macro, have found that telecommunications infrastructure is closely related to firm productivity and economic growth. This effect can be particularly large in poorer countries.

Information infrastructure for competitiveness

The telecommunications revolution can have a significant impact on a city's competitiveness. With cities as international gateways for goods and services, an advanced telecommunications infrastructure is one of the most important factors in determining where a transnational corporation will set up its regional headquarters.

“Without an advanced information infrastructure,” cautions Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang of DESA, “cities are at a great disadvantage in attracting international investment and competing globally.” When it comes to establishing such an infrastructure, Asia's heavily populated cities are well poised to take advantage of the lower fixed costs of entry, which are implied by a high density of users. These days, becoming a competitive city involves multiple factors: technology infrastructure, knowledge workers, appropriate e-government policies, e-commerce and e-communities. It also requires public policy that shapes an environment that is conducive to competitiveness.

Public policy must be re-engineered to reflect the new demands placed on local governments. Citizens need information from local governments about local service provision, from education, healthcare, water and sanitation to provision of permits, licenses and applications. Moreover, the demand for local digital infrastructure will drive a profound shift towards online provision of services, enabling a remarkable improvement in quality of life with a reduction in cost and effort. Citizens and private businesses also need to be able to conduct business with governments online. In addition, governments need to commit higher education resources to new technologies and to producing a workforce of knowledge workers, including through retraining.

The challenge of back office integration

E-government solutions are often described in terms of the relationship between governmental institutions and citizens – the ‘front office’ interface. However, a large part of investment in e-government relates to the integration of ‘back office’ functions, such as human resources, finance and ICT. Such integration can take place either vertically, between the tiers of public administration, or horizontally, across the agencies engaged in the delivery of services to citizens.

In this year's e-government survey, which DESA publishes biennially, the majority of the leading countries in e-government have implemented this ‘back office’ integration throughout their national

and ministerial websites. European countries make up 70 percent of the top 35 countries, and Asian countries make up 20 percent. The North American and Oceania regions account for 5 percent. The European countries, as a group, have invested heavily in deploying broadband infrastructure, coupled with an increase in the implementation of e-government applications for the benefit of their citizens.

The key variables involved in the delivery of ‘back office’ integration are the people, process and technology required. Yet, the record suggests that success or failure is less a technological issue than a people issue. What is particularly important is the ability to change public service cultures and motivate public sector workers to engage energetically in new ways of working, while providing adequately skilled and competent management and leadership. In their journey to e-government, governments need to address two critical issues: supporting agility within their ‘back office’ processes; and facilitating the development of self-adaptive ‘front office’ processes.

To reduce time to market with regard to new decisions, regulations and law, it is necessary to equip public administration with tools that support an agile response to change. A change in one activity in a process, or in one part of an e-government system, may cause many problems in other parts of the same process or system. E-government, in particular, confronts a big challenge to achieving interoperability and integration, taking into account differences in law, regulations, services, administrative process and different languages, within any one country and across regions and countries.

User perspectives

At the same time, there is a growing need for e-government services to be adaptive to the needs of citizens and businesses. For e-government initiatives to succeed, public services should be organized so as to serve every citizen individually. In order to increase the pay-off of using an e-government system, the delivery of services has to be very efficient, which means, for example, that an experienced individual user can perform a service without being bombarded with irrelevant information.

Experience shows that web users tend to be reluctant to provide feedback about their satisfaction and expectations by completing questionnaires or forms. In order to avoid asking users explicitly, means for understanding their preferences implicitly are

required. Such information will also be very important for converting and customizing off-line services for on-line use.

Knowledge sharing

E-government places high demands on security, trust and privacy, and has to deal with many different stakeholders in the same process, such as citizens and municipalities, county councils and federal government. Governments must also commit resources to removing communication and information access barriers that restrict business and social interactions between citizens with and without disabilities.

DESA has been working hard to address these various challenges that governments face through platforms such as the United Nations Public Administration Network, which provides a 24/7 knowledge-sharing platform.

One of the network's main purposes is to assist in building knowledge on how central and local governments can use ICT tools to improve their governmental operations, customized to their citizens' needs. One of DESA's strongest partners in this network, the Regional Center on City Informatization, based in Shanghai, has received firm support from the Shanghai Municipal Government, which partnered with DESA in organizing the Forum 7th Annual Forum on City Informatization in the Asia-Pacific Region on the Smart Use of ICT for Better Cities in May 2008.

DESA has also built partnerships with the other international agencies, such as UNU, ITU, UNDP, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Public Administration and Security of the Republic of Korea. And we are gathering partnerships within this Forum to discuss the Knowledge Repository for e/m-Government in Asia and the Pacific, which will become part of the Global Knowledge Repository for e/m Government.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/AboutUs/OurWorkAreas/KnowledgeManagement/tabid/517/Default.aspx>

Global dialogue on development

Financing for development takes centre stage

World leaders set to gather in Doha from 29 November to 2 December to discuss global economic governance, and other challenging issues of international development finance

Negotiations for the review of the Monterrey Consensus – the North-South development compact agreed in Mexico in 2002 – are taking place in a year of global financial turmoil and record-level global imbalances. The Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held from 29 November to 2 December in Doha, also culminates a series of high-level meetings in 2008 on trade and development, aid effectiveness, food crisis, Africa’s development needs and the Millennium Development Goals. Expectations have been raised that Doha will build upon these discussions to advance the UN development agenda.

The initial draft outcome document, prepared under the direction of the President of the UN General Assembly by two co-facilitators (Egypt and Norway), with the support of the DESA Financing for Development Office finds notable expansion in trade, finance flows and in reducing debt burdens since the 2002 Monterrey Conference. But unevenness in the reach of private flows, shortcomings in hitting aid targets and ongoing difficulties of the least developed, landlocked, and small island nations are cited among the areas of concern, along with gaps in international financial structures and mechanisms.

Among the proposals under consideration:

- The convening of a conference to review the international financial and monetary architecture and global economic governance structures;
- Enhancing the voice and participation of developing countries in global decision-making in the Bretton Woods institutions and other international bodies;
- Attention to strengthening the tax base of developing countries and combating tax evasion and illicit capital flight, including by upgrading the UN Committee of Experts on International

Cooperation in Tax Matters to the status of an intergovernmental body;

- While opening-up of domestic economies is essential to take advantage of opportunities provided by globalization, sufficient policy space should be allowed in developing countries to enhance resilience to its risks; thus, governments should be able to control pace and sequencing of liberalization;
- Efforts should continue to conclude the Doha trade negotiations – the round of development-oriented multilateral trade talks initiated in Doha in 2001;
- Advocating more effective ways of leveraging the catalytic role of development assistance, achieving a genuine development partnership through reduced conditionality, and continuing to roll out innovative sources of funding, including special financial mechanisms to meet the challenges of climate change and high food and energy prices within existing frameworks;
- Identifying comprehensive solutions to the debt problems of low- and middle-income countries.

Weighing in during a brainstorming session with a group of five eminent economists on 24 October, the Secretary-General shared his determination to continue to work on the development agenda with the heads of other international organizations and world leaders, within the framework of the United Nations system. He underlined the fact that he was pledged to advance the voice of the poor, voiceless and excluded, and could do this by demonstrating the organization’s responsibility for leading an “inclusive multilateralism.”

General Assembly President H.E. Miguel d’Escoto Brockmann, for this part, has pledged to step up efforts to ensure a meaningful outcome for this important conference, and to work with others to ensure that the gathering responds fully to the additional challenges posed by the current conjuncture. According to Mr. d’Escoto, a lack of fair representation of developing countries’ interests in existing global institutions of economic governance is an important systemic deficiency that needs to be addressed. The Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development provides a “crucial opportunity” to move the reform discussion forward.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

Harnessing technology for climate change mitigation

Beijing high-level conference from 7 to 8 November to focus on development and transfer of technology to reduce climate change impact

The Government of China and the DESA Division for Sustainable Development are jointly organizing the Beijing High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Technology Transfer from 7 to 8 November. The Conference will address the current status and development potential of energy and other climate related technologies, technology transfer, policy options and possible new mechanisms to enhance international cooperation and technology transfer to developing countries, and potential collaboration between the public and private sectors.

Technology transfer is addressed in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Bali Action Plan emphasizes the critical importance of technology development and transfer and the provision of financial resources and investment as a way of addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation goals. The aim of the conference is to support the climate change negotiations, particularly the forthcoming meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention taking place in Poznan, Poland, from 1 to 12 December. The Beijing gathering will not be a forum for negotiations. Instead, its aim is to serve as an opportunity for UN Member States and other stakeholders to discuss issues openly, removed from the constraints that come with sitting at the negotiating table.

The Conference will be opened by the Premier of the State Council of China, H.E. Mr. Wen Jiabao. In addition to ministers and high-level representatives of governments, senior business executives are invited. Representatives from civil society organizations such as NGOs and academic institutions will also attend along with senior officials from various international organizations.

For more information:

<http://www.ccchina.gov.cn/bjctc/en/>

Financial turmoil calls for coordinated effort at global level

Reform of international financial system, MDG commitments, climate change, food prices top concerns in General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee

The General Assembly's Economic and Financial Committee held its annual debate on 6 to 8 October with opening statements from Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiros, and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang. Professor Ricardo Hausmann of Harvard University delivered the keynote address.

Against the backdrop of a grim world economy, the Deputy Secretary-General expressed concern about the impact of the financial crisis and the rise in food and energy prices on development. She stressed that the Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development was an opportunity to address systemic deficiencies. Noting the uneven progress in the achievement of MDGs, she called for follow up on the concrete initiatives and commitments made during the high-level event on this topic on 25 September.

Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang noted the shortfall in commitments revealed by the MDG Gap Task Force Report and called on the Committee to build on the momentum created by the recent high-level event, while echoing the Deputy Secretary-General's concern about the state of the world economy and ability of the international financial system to deal with the current turmoil. He also emphasized the importance of the Second UN Decade on Poverty Eradication, addressing public health in the larger context of development, tackling climate change, devoting more attention to countries with special needs, and strengthening the UN's development pillar.

In his keynote address, Professor Hausmann noted that export-oriented countries achieve high growth and that the capacity to move through the sequence of product sophistication of their exports was fundamental. He also emphasized the role of governments in supporting this capacity and that having an institutional setup and open markets were essential. He noted that as growth was not part of MDG targets, it affected the way resources were allocated at the country-level.

During the general debate, seventy speakers expressed their views on the global financial crisis, implementation of the MDGs and other development goals, Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development, the rise in food and energy prices, climate change and sustainable development, development cooperation, and countries in special situations.

Several panel discussions were held to enrich the Committee's debate. On 10 October, a panel discussion on challenges and emerging issues in external debt restructuring assessed the positive contribution of present approaches to debt restructuring, both official and commercial, while at the same time identifying gaps and suggesting possible ways to move forward.

On 20 October, a panel discussion on the Second UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, from 2008 to 2017, served as a forum to address priorities for action within the framework and launch the discussion ahead of consideration by the Assembly of the Secretary-Generals' report on implementation of the second decade. On 24 October, a panel discussion on globalization and health addressed challenges to public health systems and communicable disease interventions in the context of globalization.

Forthcoming special events include a panel discussion on overcoming economic insecurity, on 11 November, and on reconstructing public administration for conflict prevention, recovery and development, on 13 November.

For more information: <http://www.un.org/ga/second/>

Multiple global crises pose serious challenges to social development agenda

Over a billion people live in poverty and hunger, and many more do not have decent job opportunities, let alone social protection, DESA Under-Secretary-General reminds Third Committee

Warning that multiple global crises would likely pose "serious challenges to the social development agenda," Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, encouraged the first meeting of the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) not to lose sight of human rights considerations as it tackled its agenda for the year, which encompassed the advancement of

women, children's issues, indigenous issues, racism, the situation of refugees and crime.

Mr. Sha said in a period of increasing economic uncertainty, special effort must be made to guard against backsliding in social development and human rights. Indeed, the first report of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force showed that Member States were falling short in meeting their "global partnership commitments," specifically in terms of financial aid, in support of those goals.

He noted that over a billion people still lived in poverty and hunger, and many more did not have decent job opportunities, let alone social protection. Many continued to lack access to adequate health, clean water and sanitation and quality education.

The Third Committee, he said, played a "major role" in advancing the cause of commonly excluded social groups, such as persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, older persons and women. He pointed out that, in many cases, their rights were bolstered by normative instruments, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among others. "The momentum is now present, more than ever before, with normative instruments in the hands of policy-makers and officials responsible for operations," he said.

In the case of older persons, where no special declarations of rights existed, he said the Committee must urge the General Assembly to step up implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action, which promoted the empowerment of persons within that group. He also reminded the Committee of its important role in combating violence against women, which remained a significant impediment to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

Also stressing the primacy of human rights, Chairman Frank Majoor of the Netherlands noted that the Committee's meetings coincided with the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which defined the essence of what made all people human. As such, he encouraged Committee members to focus not on what might divide them in their work, but, instead, on what united them in their common efforts to further strengthen the protection and promotion of human rights for all.

Based on DPI news summary GA/SHC/3914. For more information: <http://www.un.org/ga/third/>

Women vital to peace in post-conflict zones, Security Council hears

A comprehensive and sustainable peace is not possible in post-conflict situations unless women's security and participation is a primary objective for peacekeepers, senior United Nations officials told the Security Council today. Gender issues must be addressed in conflict mediation as well as in the deployment of peacekeepers, and women must participate in promoting peace and security, UNIFEM Executive Director Inés Alberdi told the meeting.

"This is particularly important in conflicts in which sexual violence is used as a tactic of war," said Ms. Alberdi, addressing the Security Council debate on women, peace and security. "If abuses of women's rights are tolerated through de facto impunity for perpetrators, efforts to restore the rule of law lose their credibility," she told the 15-member panel. Ms. Alberdi noted that Security Council resolution 1820 – which states that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity – acknowledges the importance of women's security in assuring a durable peace areas experiencing conflict.

She warned the Council that if direct measures are not taken by national authorities to prevent the widespread and systematic targeting of women, the violence will spill over in the post-conflict environment. "We know that in some contexts attacks on women increase after conflict. If countries and the international community do not respond decisively to violence against women, they raise the cost of peacebuilding," warned Ms. Alberdi. "The cost is in delayed stabilization and reconciliation in countries where the rule of law cannot take root," she added.

"However, despite their successes, women continue to be marginalized and ignored," said the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women Rachel Mayanja. "It is our duty and indeed our obligation to millions of women in conflict areas to use the opportunity offered by Security Council resolution 1325 to set in motion perhaps one of the most promising approaches to conflict resolution of this new century," she added. Resolution 1325, which was adopted by the Council eight years ago, stresses the importance of giving women equal participation and full involvement in

peace and security matters and the need to increase their role in decision-making.

Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Alain Le Roy briefed the Council on specific steps his department was taking to incorporate women and gender perspectives into peace and security work. "It is no exaggeration to say that in the last eight years since its adoption, resolution 1325 has changed the way we do business in peacekeeping," Mr. Le Roy said. He noted that the resolution had galvanised women in post-conflict countries to demand greater accountability from peacekeeping operations to respond to gender issues, and cited the examples of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire and Kosovo, where women's groups have established regular channels of communications with mission leadership.

"Peacekeepers understand all too clearly that our efforts to avoid conflict relapses in fragile post-conflict countries can only succeed if we ensure that all members of society have an equal stake in safeguarding the peace dividend," the peacekeeping chief said. Peacekeeping operations have supported the participation of women in elections in a number of countries.

Mr. Le Roy told the Council that it is not enough to have women voting or being elected to office; the real challenge is for women to stay in office and implement gender-sensitive policies. "In Timor-Leste, for example, four women parliamentarians quit office with the first three months of their election to office in 2002. We must first invest in providing technical support to those who are unfamiliar with constitution-making, and with the working of formal political procedures and legislative process," Mr. Le Roy told the Council.

Following speeches from dozens of Member States, Ambassador Zhang Yesui of China, which holds the Council presidency this month, read out a statement urging the international community to increase the participation and decision-making of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities.

Source: UN News Centre. For more information:



<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/wps>. Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Rachel Mayanja, addresses the Security Council on 29. Video: <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondem/and/sc/2008/sc081029am2.rm?start=00:03:35&end=00:12:55> (9 minutes)

Trends and analysis

World e-Parliament Conference

Brussels conference from 25 to 26 November brings together legislators, public administrators and technology experts to discuss parliamentary innovation

Information and communication technologies have become essential in supporting the work of legislative bodies throughout the world. As these technologies have matured and grown in sophistication, they have acquired the necessary flexibility and capabilities to assist legislatures in their most important responsibilities: making the laws, conducting oversight of the executive, and communicating with the citizens, who determine who shall represent them. In today's "wired world" parliaments must capitalize on the benefits of ICT to function effectively, to interact with the public, and to collaborate with other parliaments around the world.

In order to exchange views at a global level on new technologies as tools to strengthen the representative, legislative and oversight functions of regional and national assemblies, DESA, the European Parliament and the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament are organizing the second World e-Parliament Conference in Brussels from 25 to 26 November.

The event is a joint initiative of DESA, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, and a core group of partners established in 2006 to promote the role of parliaments in advancing the goals of the World Summit on the Information Society, as well as the effective use of ICT for the modernization of parliamentary processes. The conference will be opened by the President of the European Parliament, Hans-Gert Pöttering, the Speaker of the People's Assembly of Egypt, Ahmed Fathy Sorour, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Hungary, Katalin Szili, and the Vice-President of the European Parliament, Mechtild Rothe. The President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Theo-Ben Gurirab of Namibia, will deliver the keynote address.

Around 300 participants are expected to take part. The Global Centre for ICT in Parliament and its partners will present tools developed in the past year to help parliaments benchmark their technological level and adopt innovations in parliamentary processes.

For more information:

<http://www.ictparliament.org/worldparliamentconference2008/>

Sustainable forest management comes at a cost

Experts will meet in Vienna from 10 to 14 November to flesh out proposals for funding forest-related initiatives

The Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests, housed in DESA, is organizing an expert group meeting in Vienna from 10 to 14 November to develop proposals for mobilizing greater financial resources for sustainable forest management. The report of the meeting will be considered at the eighth session of the Forum in April 2009.

Sustainable management of all types of forests has long been the goal of the global community, but the current situation is neither satisfactory nor cause for complacency. Total deforestation during 2000-2005 was 13 million hectares per year. At the same time, there have been significant increases in planted forests and natural expansion of forests, which have significantly reduced the net loss of forest area to about 7.3 million hectares per year. Virtually all net deforestation has occurred in tropical forests in developing countries.

Sustainable forest management is usually less profitable in the short-term than unsustainable harvesting due to higher investment and operational costs. To change the equation requires complex analysis of prices and production costs as well as advanced technical knowledge, along with the need to address such fundamental issues as proper valuation of the wide range of forest goods and services.

To address this problem, the Economic and Social Council decided in 2007 to consider three possible ways of channeling resources to the sustainable forest management initiatives. One approach would be to establish a voluntary global financial mechanism consisting of a global forest fund or some other means of channeling financial resources. Many developing country delegations have supported the idea of a global fund at past sessions of the UN Forum on Forests, but no consensus was reached, reflecting a lack of support from potential donors.

A second idea would be to develop a “portfolio approach” through which various aspects of sustainable forest management could be financed from a variety of sources. A portfolio of funding for sustainable forest management already exists in the sense that there are many sources and types of funding that governments, projects, communities and companies are tapping. While new sources of funding have been emerging, the fact that sustainable forest management has not yet been achieved in many countries indicates that the existing “portfolio” of funding mechanisms is inadequate in terms of availability, accessibility, or overall quantity.

The third approach is to create a “forest financing framework” to increase the coherence of financial support for projects and actions at all levels. The idea is not new and received attention in the context of international development assistance. An explicit framework could define the roles of national, bilateral, multilateral, non-profit sources of funding, and set out a suitable governance mechanism.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/adhoc-SFMfinance.html>

Women seek greater access to economic resources

Gender experts will gather in Bangkok from 12 to 14 November to identify key issues in women’s economic empowerment, and propose areas for further research

As part of its preparation of the 2009 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, the DESA Division for the Advancement of Women is organizing an expert consultation on women’s control over economic resources and access to financial resources, including microfinance, in Bangkok from 12 to 14 November. The meeting will be hosted by ESCAP.

Issued every five years, the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development is a flagship publication prepared for the Economic and Financial Committee of the General Assembly. It provides an opportunity to focus attention on the gender equality perspective in economic development.

The 2009 edition will address women’s control over economic resources and access to financial resources, including microfinance, within the broad framework

of the economic empowerment of women. Increased access to and control over resources and opportunities not only improves the economic status of women, their households and communities, but also creates a multiplier effect for economic growth. Lack of economic control, on the other hand, jeopardizes growth and poverty reduction, leads to less favourable education and health outcomes for children and can put women at a greater risk of HIV/AIDS and violence.

The survey team will research a wide range of issues to identify policies and programmes most conducive to women’s economic empowerment. Persistent obstacles to women’s economic empowerment will also be addressed. Finally, the survey will take a look at indicators and measures in this area.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/ws2009/>

Knowledge network expansion in the Arab region

DESA-ESCWA workshop on e-m government will be held in Beirut from 18 to 20 November

To explore the issues and challenges of electronic and mobile government development in the Arab region, DESA’s Division for Public Administration and Development Management will hold a workshop in Beirut from 18 to 20 November, in collaboration with ESCWA. Participants will discuss the potential of a global repository of knowledge on electronic and mobile government to promote regional cooperation among international, regional and national stakeholders, and specifically to construct a framework for assessing electronic and mobile government development in the Arab region. Some thirty individuals are expected to attend, among them government officials and agency representatives, along with experts from DESA and ESCWA.

Governments are increasingly becoming aware of the importance of employing electronic and mobile governance to improve public service delivery. It is thought that the ability to access, gather and analyze information improves citizens’ political, economic, social, cultural and behavioral decision-making and leads to economic and social empowerment.

Equitable diffusion of information technology also provides an opportunity to lessen disparities between

the “e-haves” and the “e-have-nots,” and strengthen social bonds. Further, since telecommunications infrastructure may be closely related to firm productivity, improved information infrastructure also plays a key role in business sector development, which can be a particularly significant factor in the economic growth of poorer countries.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/Events/Conferences/tabid/94/mctl/EventDetails/ModuleID/1532/ItemID/1069/Default.aspx>

France, Senegal champion digital solidarity

A high-level conference on Digital Solidarity will take place in Lyons on 24 November to help bridge the digital divide

On 24 November, the city of Lyons, France, will host an international conference on digital solidarity at the invitation of President Nicolas Sarkozy, on a proposal made by the President of Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade, and under the French presidency of the European Union. Almost 300 personalities are expected, including several heads of State and government, leading members of territorial authorities, international organizations, NGOs, companies and foundations.

The main themes of the conference will be discussed in a set of morning roundtables on what are considered to be some of the most important priorities of the digital solidarity movement, namely universal connectivity, health, education, and reuse and recycling of electronic waste in developing countries. A session on innovative sources of financing digital solidarity initiatives will be held in the afternoon in view of the Doha review conference on financing for development that gets underway a few days later.

The Digital Solidarity Fund, which is co-organizing the event, is recognized as the only financing mechanism established specifically with the goal of bridging the digital divide. Contributions to the fund are based on the “1% digital solidarity principle” wherein one percent of the value of ICT-related public procurement contracts is donated to support projects in the field. The Global Alliance for ICT and Development, a project backed by DESA, is one of the conference partners.

For more information: <http://www.un-gaid.org/en/node/2520>

UN agencies join forces on international migration

The DESA Population Division is organizing a seventh coordination meeting on international migration from 20 to 21 November in New York. Participants will discuss the follow-up to the 2006 high-level dialogue on international migration and development by UN system organizations and others, and review current and planned activities of the agencies, funds and programmes. They are also expected to identify emerging issues in the area of international migration and development.

In 2003, the General Assembly had decided to devote a high-level dialogue to international migration and development during its sixty-first session in 2006. It had also been decided that the purpose of the dialogue would be to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to maximize its development benefits and minimize its negative implications.

At the high-level dialogue in 2006, participants agreed that international migration could be a positive force for development. They underscored that the high-level dialogue had contributed to improve the international community’s understanding of the synergies between international migration and development. International migration was recognized as a persistent phenomenon in human history whose dynamism, intensity and complexity had increased as people gained greater access to information about opportunities abroad, and as improvements in transportation made possible and affordable their movement over long distances. The global character of international migration was stressed.

International migration was further described as a dynamic human link between cultures, economies and societies. It contributed to the free commerce of ideas and experiences and in many instances had been a key engine of material and intellectual progress.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/coord/>

Getting a handle on water resources

Environmental data experts will consider international recommendations on water statistics in New York from 4 to 6 November

Increasing competition for freshwater between agriculture, urban and industrial uses has resulted in unprecedented pressure on available resources not least due to increasing population pressures. Many countries are facing conditions of water scarcity or limits to economic development, in addition to deteriorating water quality, making integrated water resources management – and water statistics – increasingly important.

In response to increasing demand from countries for guidance on water accounting, the DESA Statistics Division is holding an expert group meeting in New York from 4 to 6 November to review its recently released draft of International Recommendations on Water Statistics. The new technical standards are designed to support the production of internationally comparable water accounts while assisting in the generation of common indicators such as those on water and sanitation used to measure progress toward the Millennium Development Goals.

DESA's Statistics Division prepared the recommendations under the auspices of the UN Committee on Environmental Accounting and Environment Statistics, drawing upon a body of experience and work already developed in relation to water statistics and accounts. This includes the work of the London Group, in particular the subgroup on water accounts, the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environment Statistics, in particular the subgroup on water statistics and other bodies such as UN Water and the World Water Assessment Programme.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/envaccounting/irws/>

International merchandise trade statistics

Experts gather online from 5 to 26 November to review global norms

The DESA Statistics Division is organizing a virtual meeting of an expert group on international merchandise trade statistics to discuss revisions to the

international recommendations on trade statistics. This meeting will be conducted electronically through an expert forum from 5 to 26 November.

The online meeting is an important part of the revision process of the existing recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics which were approved by the UN Statistical Commission at its twenty-ninth session and published in International Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions, Revision 2, also known as IMTS, Rev.2. The objectives of the meeting are to discuss the results of the first round of worldwide consultation on the seventeen issues most relevant for setting the scope of the future recommendations, and to agree on how to incorporate them into the future revised recommendations.

To facilitate the discussion, the Statistics Division will provide its initial proposals for IMTS, Rev.3 on all seventeen issues submitted for consultation.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/EG-IMTS/EG-IMTS%20web%20announcement.htm>

Technical cooperation

Latin American censuses may gain from geospatial mapping

Census experts will meet in Santiago from 24 to 27 November for a DESA workshop on cartographic innovations in statistical data collection

Widespread availability of geospatial mapping technology is changing cartographic methods and opening up new geo-information opportunities, applications and services. In order to highlight the potential of contemporary technology to enhance census functions in particular, DESA's Statistics Division, together with ECLAC, will hold a regional workshop on census cartography from 24 to 27 November in Santiago.

This training session for census practitioners will touch on preparation of enumeration projects, enumeration operations, advanced analysis and dissemination of census data, and use of these new technologies. Participants will be introduced to concepts in national census geography, including criteria and process of enumeration area delineation and coding of geographic areas. The different stages of enumeration analysis database and GIS development will be explored with a focus on integration of satellite imagery, aerial imagery, and global positioning data.

The workshop is also seen as an opportunity for Latin American census experts to review the international recommendations on contemporary practices in census cartography, and to discuss DESA's recently revised Handbook on Geospatial Infrastructure in Support of Census Activities. Finally, those attending will have a chance to exchange experiences on census mapping and related institutional, organizational, financial, capacity-building, and implementation issues.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/wsh/ops/Chile_24Nov08/

Population and household surveys in West Africa

DESA event in Bamako from 3 to 7 November aims to build census-taking capacity in the region in time for 2010

Quality demographic data is very important for objective decision-making. Yet, fifteen African countries did not carry out a census in the 2000 round of population and housing counts. Demographic monitoring systems tend not to be very well developed in the region, and are especially lacking in small administrative areas beyond the reach of national household surveys. To enhance African capacity to carry out censuses – and ultimately facilitate decision-making – the DESA Statistics Division is organizing a regional workshop in Bamako from 3 to 7 November on census data processing concepts and techniques.

Workshop participants will review international standards for processing population and housing censuses and learn about significant developments in the use of contemporary technologies for census data capture and editing. The training session will also cover census management and planning including outsourcing issues, optical mark, optical character and intelligent character recognition, commercial suppliers of data capture technology, and data coding techniques.

As part of the 2010 World Programme on censuses, the Statistics Division has conducted a range of regional workshops over the last two years on various aspects of statistical development. The Bamako session is the fourth in the series on the topic of census data processing. Similar sessions were held in Doha in May, Dar es Salaam in June, and Bangkok in September.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/wsh/ops/Mali_3Nov08/

Regional workshops on international economic and social classifications

Training sessions for statisticians, one in Addis Ababa and another in Bangkok, to promote international data collection norms

As part of the worldwide implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification and the Central Product Classification, approved by the UN Statistical Commission in 2007, DESA's Statistics Division is organizing two regional workshops this month on international economic and social classifications. The first, jointly organized by the ECA African Centre for Statistics, will take place in Addis Ababa from 3 to 6 November. The second, held in partnership with the Statistics Division of ESCAP, will unfold in Bangkok from 24 to 27 November.

The workshops will focus on recent revisions to international classification norms with a particular emphasis on the relationship of national economic activity to the ISIC and CPC standards. Statisticians attending the training session will have a chance to review the final versions of the revised activity and product classifications, methodological changes related to the application of the classification, and address implementation issues such as those related to regional and sub-regional cooperation in this area.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/training/>

Publications and websites

Handbook



National Development Strategies Policy Notes

This set of national development strategy notes, developed by DESA in cooperation with UNDP, has just been released as a print publication. The notes offer practical guidance on employment-generating macroeconomic policy, inclusive finance for development; public enterprise reform and alternatives to privatization, pro-poor trade policies, investment and industrial technology policies, and social policies. They focus on policy options not adequately addressed by other sourcebooks and guidelines, and were reviewed by Nobel laureate, Joseph Stiglitz and other distinguished development experts. The notes are also available as individual articles online in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

For more information:

<http://esa.un.org/techcoop/policyNotes.asp>

Statistical compilations



Demographic Yearbook, 2006

As in the past, the 2006 edition of the Demographic Yearbook provides statistics on population size and composition, fertility, mortality, infant and foetal mortality, marriages and divorces, the primary sources of which are national population and housing censuses, population-related statistics from national administrative recording systems and population and household surveys reported by national statistical authorities. This issue also includes data on deaths and death rates by cause of death by sex for the first time, in addition to data on marriages cross-tabulated by age of groom and age of bride – data not published in the Yearbook since 1990.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/>



Demographic Yearbook, 2005

The 2005 edition of the Demographic Yearbook has now been released in print. It provides statistics on population size and composition, fertility, mortality, infant and foetal mortality, marriages and divorces. It also includes technical notes and footnotes explaining availability, timeliness, quality, reliability and coverage of the data presented. The primary data sources are national population and housing censuses, population-related statistics from national administrative recording systems and population and household surveys reported by national statistical authorities.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/>

Urban and Rural Population, 1950-2005, on CD-Rom

Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex, 1950-2005, is a CD-Rom with the Population Division's new estimates of population by age and sex in both urban and rural areas, including information for the major areas, regions, and countries of the world. The new estimates address the need for more detailed and systematic data on urban and rural populations and should be of value for research and policy analysis of the spatial distribution of the population and of patterns of urbanization and their relationships with development. Estimates were produced for all of the 175 countries having more than 300,000 inhabitants in 2005. The estimates are reported every five years for the period 1950-2005, by sex and by five-year age groups.

To order:

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

Discussion papers

Programmes to Protect the Hungry: Lessons from India

Evidence on calorie intake and nutritional outcomes establishes that chronic hunger and food insecurity persist today on a mass scale in India. The liberalization-induced policy of narrow targeting of the Public Distribution System, a programme of food security that provides a minimum quantity of cereals at subsidized prices, has resulted in worsening food insecurity. Recent evidence from the 61st round of the national sample survey in 2004-2005 establishes that targeting has led to high rates of exclusion of needy households from the system and clear deterioration of coverage in states like Kerala where the universal PDS was most effective.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp70_2008.pdf

The TRIPS Agreement and Transfer of Climate Change Related Technologies to Developing Countries

Despite numerous international commitments to promote transfer of climate-change related technologies to developing countries, such transfers are not occurring at a sufficient rate to aid these nations in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The impact of the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights on transfer of these technologies is discussed through a detailed examination of relevant TRIPS provisions. The paper also addresses options for improving technology transfer through exploitation of existing TRIPS flexibilities, modification of the agreement, and other public and private legal and policy avenues.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp71_2008.pdf

Outreach material



Sustainable Development Innovation Briefs

The latest title in the Sustainable Development Innovation Briefs series, on using non-renewable resource revenues for sustainable local development, was released in

October. The briefs provide insights into the most recent policy-relevant research on emerging challenges to sustainable development, with particular attention to their relevance to developing countries. The purpose of the series is to inform policy-makers of the latest trends and advances on topics in the field of sustainable development, with the objective of broadening the knowledge base of policy decision-makers in responding to those challenges.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/innovationbriefs/>

DESA Policy Brief No. 8 – Don't Forget the World Food Crisis: New Policy Directions Needed

With the attention of the international community focused on the mounting global financial crisis, there is the danger that the food crisis that emerged in 2008 is being sidelined. Yet, that crisis continues to pose a global humanitarian and development challenge even as food prices begin to fall back.¹ Between 109 and 126 million people may have fallen below the \$1 per day poverty line since 2006 due to the increase in food prices. The vulnerable populations in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are affected most. Other things being equal, the incidence of extreme poverty in SSA may have risen by almost 8 percentage points, implying that the recent food price increases have more than offset the poverty reduction achieved before the crisis, between 1990 and 2004.

To download:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/policybriefs/policybrief8.pdf>

DESA Policy Brief No. 7 – State Building in Post-Conflict Countries Requires a Different Approach

Since the early 1970s, civil wars have resulted in many more deaths than wars between countries. The number of such conflicts peaked in the early 1990s but continued to be high for the remainder of the decade. An estimated 5.5 million people were killed in 35 civil wars during the 1990s, making it the deadliest decade since the 1940s.

To download:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/policybriefs/policybrief7.pdf>



Urban and Rural Areas 2007 – Wall Chart

This wall chart presents urban and rural population by age and sex for 1950-2005 based on the Population Division's latest estimates, including information for the major areas, regions, and countries of the

world. The estimates address the need for more detailed and systematic data on urban and rural populations and should be of value for research and policy analysis of the spatial distribution of the population and of patterns of urbanization and their relationships with development. Estimates were produced for all of the 175 countries having more than 300,000 inhabitants in 2005.

To order: <http://unp.un.org/details.aspx?pid=17835>

Urban Agglomerations 2007 – Wall Chart

This wall chart presents data on urban agglomerations from 1975-2025 based on data from the 2007 revision of World Urbanization Prospects, including population, rank, average annual rate of change. Worldwide the population living in urban areas is projected to gain 3.1 billion, moving from 3.3 billion urban residents in 2007 to 6.4 billion in 2050 so that by mid-century the world urban population will likely be the same size as the world's total population in 2004. Large cities – whose populations range from 5 million to just under 10 million – numbered 30 in 2007, and are expected to number 48 in 2050. Three quarters of these mega-cities in waiting are located in developing countries.

To order: <http://unp.un.org/details.aspx?pid=17834>

Websites



UNPAN on Facebook

In the spirit web 2.0, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development

Management is establishing a presence on different professional/social networking platforms. UNPAN members are invited to join the UNPAN Facebook network to connect to other e-government and ICT professionals and to follow the activities of UNPAN.

The goals of these network are to help UNPAN members reach other members through matching professional profiles and interests, search for various opportunities through referrals from other members, view rich professional profiles from fellow members and recommend other interested people to join the group, address questions and provide answers to initiate interactive communication on various public administration topics.

To join:

<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=14844416830>



Online Training Courses in Public Administration

The Division for Public Administration and Development

Management has added four new online training courses to UNPAN – on decentralized governance, e-government interoperability, knowledge management in government organization, and results-based monitoring and evaluation for MDG implementation. The courses were prepared by UNPAN partners in collaboration with DESA.

For more information and to register:

<http://www.unpan.org/ELearning/OnlineTrainingCentre/tabid/88/Default.aspx>

Comings and goings

Comings

The following staff members were promoted in October:

Ms. Vladimira Kantorova, Population Affairs Officer, Population Division

Mr. Mattias Kempf, Economic Affairs Officer, Development Policy and Analysis Division

Ms. Maria Stella Simpas, Administrative Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Mr. Deniz Susar, Governance and Public Administration Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Goings

The following staff members retired in October:

Ms. Michele Federoff, Senior Programme Officer, Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination

Mr. Victor Francis, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Mr. Anatoly Zoubanov, Population Affairs Officer, Population Division

Calendar

November

General Assembly
63rd session, New York

- **Second Committee**
6 October-5 December
- **Third Committee**
6 October-25 November

Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
New York, 31 October-3 November

Workshop on International Economic and Social Classifications
Addis Ababa, 3-6 November

African Regional Workshop on Census Data Processing
Bamako, 3-7 November

Expert Group Meeting on International Recommendations for Water Statistics
New York, 4-6 November

Virtual Expert Group Meeting on International Merchandise Trade Statistics
5-26 November

High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Technology Transfer
Beijing, 7-8 November

Ad-hoc Expert Group on a Voluntary Global Forest Financing Framework
Vienna, 10-14 November

Expert Consultation on Women's Control over Economic Resources and Access to Financial Resources
Bangkok, 12-14 November

DESA-ESCWA Workshop on Electronic and Mobile Government in Arab States
18-20 November, Beirut

7th Coordination Meeting on International Migration
New York, 20-21 November

GAID Conference on Digital Solidarity
Lyons, 24 November

DESA-ECLAC Latin American Regional Workshop on Census Cartography
Santiago, 24-27 November

World E-Parliament Conference
Brussels, 25-26 November

Follow-Up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus
Doha, 29 November-2 December

December

European Regional Workshop on Census Mapping and Data Processing
Minsk, 8-12 December

International Workshop on Energy Statistics
Aguascalientes, Mexico, 2-5 December

Workshop on Millennium Development Goal Monitoring
Bangkok, 10-12 December

Expert Group Meeting on E-Government Indicators
New York, 11-12 December

Observances

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
25 November

One in three women in the world is likely to be subjected to violence in her lifetime. Women aged 15-44 are more at risk from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, motor accidents, war and malaria, according to World Bank data. Over the past two decades, increased attention has been paid by governments, the UN system and non-governmental organizations to preventing and combating violence against women. However, much more needs to be done.

The General Assembly has designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and has invited governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to organize on that day activities to raise public awareness of the problem.

For more information: <http://endviolence.un.org/>

Nominations for 2009 UN Public Service Awards

Inquiries should be addressed to esa@un.org.

Public organizations and agencies at national or local levels, as well as public-private partnerships involved in public service delivery can now be nominated for the 2009 UN Public Service Awards. Nominations will be accepted online until 15 January.

Governments and civil society organizations are invited to submit public service initiatives that have: Improved transparency, accountability and responsiveness in public service; improved the delivery of services; fostered participation in policymaking decisions through innovative mechanisms; or advanced knowledge management in government. A special award – the UNPAN Member Excellence Award on Knowledge Sharing – will also be given to agencies that have made a significant contribution to the UNPAN network.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/DPADM/UNPublicServiceDayAwards/UNPublicServiceDayAwards/tabid/566/Default.aspx>

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, and is issued monthly.