



**Video**

### **A time for reconciliation between States and indigenous peoples**

*Speaking for Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, on 8 August, Sergei Zelenev of DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development called for truth, justice, forgiveness and healing to mark the International Day of the World's Indigenous People.*

Full coverage

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/news\\_international\\_day2008.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/news_international_day2008.html)

## Inside this issue

### **MDG implementation: The pressure builds**

Signaling the need for decisive and timely action, world leaders will gather in New York for a high-level event on development on 25 September, p. 1

### **Complex migration pathways add to the global mix**

Africa is itself home to some 17 million migrants, blurring distinctions between origin, transit and destination countries, p. 4

Global dialogue on development, p. 8

Trends and analysis, p. 10

Technical cooperation, p. 13

Publications and websites, p. 15

Comings and goings, p. 18

Calendar, p. 19

## Feature articles

### **MDG implementation: The pressure builds**

*Signaling the need for decisive and timely action, world leaders will gather in New York for a high-level event on development on 25 September*

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals remains a complex and enormous challenge, especially for the poorest countries. Yet, there has been real progress towards some of the MDGs, even in regions where the challenges are greatest. It is true that progress towards achieving the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals has been uneven, and that many developing countries are on track to achieve only some of the MDGs. But these accomplishments do show how developing countries

and their development partners have come together as never before to put the Millennium Declaration into practice.

At the mid-point between the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the deadline of 2015 set for the achievement of the MDGs, countries that are lagging behind feel an increasing sense of urgency to implement national development strategies more effectively, and to obtain additional support from the international community for their efforts. "The year 2008 should mark a turning point in progress towards the MDGs," says Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Accordingly, together with the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General will convene a special high-level event on 25 September which will gather world leaders to discuss and

translate their existing commitments into decisive and timely action to ensure that all countries can achieve the MDGs. It is hoped that the event will send a strong message from the highest political level that governments are ready and willing to more quickly strengthen the global partnership for development in support of the international development goals.

Under-Secretary-General Sha Zukang of DESA is coordinating preparations for the high-level event, which includes three roundtables where heads of state and government will dialogue with one another. Achieving the MDGs represents a global challenge that requires all nations to collaborate in developing and implementing a shared strategy to create enduring social and economic development for all. The turbulent world economic situation makes such action particularly pressing.

“The weakening global economic environment is compounded by the steeply rising prices of food and energy,” Sha points out. “The increase in the cost of living has already caused social and political unrest in a number of developing countries. And it threatens to reverse some of the progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals, particularly the primary goal of reducing poverty and hunger.”

Building on the lessons learned from previous high-level events of the General Assembly, this meeting will ensure a maximum of interaction among member states in the roundtables rather than plenary statements. The three roundtables will cover poverty and hunger, health and education, environmental sustainability, with two cross-cutting themes in all round tables: gender equality and the empowerment of women and the global partnership for development.

#### Poverty and hunger: slow progress in sub-Saharan Africa

The universal goal to eradicate extreme poverty continues to be a major focus of countries, development partners and civil society organizations, whose combined efforts are making an impact on the incidence and depth of poverty. However, while the number of people living in extreme poverty continues to decline globally, this success masks the slow progress in some countries, most notably in sub-Saharan Africa.

Participants in this roundtable will consider such issues as ensuring adequate aid flows for emergency food aid, particularly through the World Food

Programme; further analysis of the demand and the supply side aspects of the food price increases; the strengthening of rural infrastructure including small-scale water management, access to credit, land ownership by the poor, agricultural extension services and co-operatives, and seed banks; reducing subsidies to agriculture in developed countries, alongside more aid for developing countries to enhance food production and agricultural exports; and improving regional food security, including through regional grain security systems.

#### School enrollment up, infant mortality down

In 2006, primary school enrolment in developing countries reached 88 percent on average, up from 83 percent in 2000. Sub-Saharan Africa continues to lag behind in primary school enrolment. In all regions, inequalities in access to education are a major barrier to reaching MDG-2. The quality of education remains poor in many contexts, with impoverished children less likely to finish school and students in most developing countries recording lower levels of achievement in core subjects.

Worldwide, under-five mortality declined from 93 to 72 deaths per 1,000 live births between 1990 and 2006. Nevertheless, in 62 countries, under-five mortality is not declining fast enough to meet the 2015 target. Sub-Saharan Africa has one fifth of the world’s children under five, but accounts for half of all child deaths. In many countries, malnutrition and lack of safe drinking water and sanitation are slowing down reductions in child mortality.

Member states taking part in the roundtable will focus on such issues as: scaling up effective health and education interventions; mechanisms to accelerate multi-year commitments on official development assistance for education and health; multi-country funding for research and development of essential drugs for tuberculosis, malaria and HIV/AIDS; partnerships between Governments and



international donors for pursuing the MDGs in keeping with national priorities; the best mechanisms to strengthen health and education systems and institutions in poor countries; integrating investments to improve the health and education of the poor into national development strategies; overcoming the obstacles women and girls face in our obtaining equitable access to health and education services; and the best strategies for civil society organizations, local authorities or the private sector to work with Governments in improving the accessibility and quality of health and education services.

### Equitable use of resources for environmental sustainability

Environmental degradation can undermine efforts towards sustainable development, including poverty eradication, as the rural poor, in particular, often depend on the natural resource base for their livelihoods. Such degradation erodes the natural adaptability of ecosystems, which in the past has ensured their resilience in the face of disaster and saved lives and livelihoods. The urban poor also suffer from degraded conditions in rapidly growing slum communities.

Crucial to progress towards sustainable development is broad public participation which involves poor and marginalized groups in decision making and implementation. Also essential are the principles of inter-generational and intra-generational equity in the use of the Earth's resources. Since the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and, most recently, with the sobering findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the world has become acutely aware of the need for stronger international cooperation and more equitable resource sharing to address global sustainability challenges.

Member states participating in the roundtable on a environmental sustainability will consider such issues as: constraints to more effective implementation of national sustainable development strategies; scaling up environmental practices proven at the local and community levels; revenue-raising mechanisms for the environment; mechanisms to facilitate the international transfer of low-carbon energy technologies; and measures needed to integrate the poor into the fabric of urban society.

### Gender equality and the empowerment of women

Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women – critical objectives in themselves – are widely recognized as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to promote sustainable development. The achievement of Millennium Development goal 3 depends not only on the extent to which specific targets – such as increasing women's political and economic empowerment, literacy rates and participation in non-agricultural wage employment – are addressed, but also on the extent to which the actions taken to achieve the other Millennium Development Goals are designed to promote the equality of women and men. While focusing on Goal 3, the present section should therefore be read in conjunction with the remainder of the document.

Commitments to Millennium Development Goal 3 have increased efforts, including resource allocations, at the local, national, regional and global levels to ensure progress. More needs to be done to combat the gender inequalities that constrain the potential to achieve high levels of well-being in societies around the world.

Participants in all roundtables will focus on such cross-cutting issues as: scaling up promising practices in education, employment and in achieving full and equal political representation and access to decision-making; innovative financing mechanisms and partnerships for gender-related interventions; improving national statistical capacity to monitor gender equality and empowerment of women; and strengthening the substantive and programmatic work of the United Nations system on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

### Expanding the global partnership for development

In the global partnership for development, developing countries take primary responsibility for their development and for mobilizing domestic resources and ensuring good governance, while developed countries agree to provide assistance and promote an enabling international environment. More can and needs to be done in a number of areas to meet the targets proposed by the global partnership for development under Millennium Development Goal 8.

Participants in all roundtables will focus on such cross-cutting issues as: ways to complete the Doha Round of trade negotiations to reduce existing trade distortions in favour of more equitable mechanisms; extending HIPC and other debt relief mechanisms to

developing countries in severe debt distress; promoting lower-cost access to essential drugs and other lifesaving interventions and promoting technology transfer; and promoting effective national and international public-private partnerships to improve access to digital and other new technology, especially in agriculture and adaptation to climate change.

At the midpoint to the year 2015, achieving the MDGs remains a vast and demanding challenge requiring common resolve and commitment by governments and other stakeholders to focused collaborative action at the national and international levels. What has been achieved up to now confirms how important it is to forge a shared strategy to achieve enduring development for all. Whatever is done from this point onwards must build on this shared strategy for social and economic development, where the actions of development partners complement and support each other, and where all stakeholders have a role and the space to realize that role.

The high-level event provides governments, civil society and the private sector the opportunity to examine and strengthen commitments, as well as to launch new initiatives, partnerships and alliances, to undertake the many demanding tasks in the years ahead to ensure the achievement of the MDGs by 2015. "Together, we must make this year one of unprecedented progress for the poorest of the poor," says the Secretary-General, "so that we can realize a better, more prosperous future for all."

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/>

## Complex migration pathways add to global mix

*Africa is itself home to some 17 million migrants, blurring distinctions between origin, transit and destination countries*

There is more international migration today than ever before in human history and it is growing dramatically. The number of international migrants has almost doubled in the past quarter century, although as a proportion of the world's total population it remains at a mere three percent. International migration affects countries and cultures of diverse levels of economic development and ideological persuasion. Migrants now depart from

and arrive in almost every country in the world, making it up much harder to distinguish between countries of origin, transit and destination. Many states now belong to all three categories.

Over the past three decades, the proportion of foreign-born residents living in developed countries has grown, while in most developing countries it has either remained stable or diminished. Around 60 percent of all recorded migrants now reside in the world's more prosperous countries, and the other 40 percent in developing regions. Despite this trend, large numbers of people continue to engage in South-South migration, moving from one developing country to another. In 2005, the number of international migrants from the "South" living in the "South" (61 million) was almost as high as those from the "South" living in the "North" (62 million).

While steps have been taken to liberalize international trade, the international movement of people is highly regulated. Between 1960 and 2005, the share of merchandise exports and trade in services as part of world income has more than doubled. During the same period the share of international migrants in relation to the world's population has only increased from 2.5 to 3 percent. The limited opportunities for legal migration have contributed to the rise in irregular migration. By 2005, according to the United Nations Population Division, there were an estimated 191 million international migrants worldwide. Almost 50 percent of all international migrants were women and 7.1 percent were refugees.

The more developed regions of the world hosted some 115.4 million migrants, Asia 53.3 million, Africa 17.0 million and Latin America and Caribbean 6.6 million. In many developing countries, the remittances received from migrants, estimated by the World Bank at \$251 billion in 2007, now constitute a more important source of income than Official



Development Assistance, which totaled some \$103.7 billion in 2007.

### Human capital, a liquid asset

Human mobility has become an integral component of the global economy, with countries and companies looking further afield for the personnel they need to improve their competitiveness. It is no coincidence that some of the largest concentrations of migrants are to be found in 'global cities', dynamic, innovative and highly cosmopolitan urban centres that are enabling people, places and cultures in different parts of the world to become increasingly interconnected.

The growing competitiveness within the global economy has also led to a process of economic restructuring in recent decades, involving restrictive macroeconomic policies, structural adjustment, privatization, and deindustrialization that have limited the number of public and private sector jobs available in developing countries. At the same time, the demand has grown in the industrial world for a flexible labour force that is prepared to work for low wages and under difficult conditions.

Many industrialized states are cautious in recognizing that their continued prosperity will depend in part on international migration. Many of the world's most affluent societies have low and declining birth rates, and as a result their populations are becoming progressively smaller and older. Consequently, they may find it difficult to maintain existing levels of economic productivity, to sustain their pensions and social security systems, and to find the caregivers required to meet the needs of an ageing population.

Migrants from developing countries are currently helping to fill that gap at the lower end of the labour market, and are likely to do so for the foreseeable future. In certain countries, whole sectors of the economy and many public services have become highly dependent on migrant labour, and would collapse overnight if those workers were no longer available. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon points out, "every hour of every day they tend to our sick, our elders, our children. They harvest our crops, labour in our industry. They perform many of the most essential tasks that under-gird our well-being."

Throughout much of the world, migrants are not only employed in jobs that nationals are reluctant to do, but are also engaged in high-value activities that local people lack the skills to do. At the upper end of the labour market, migrants are in growing demand to fill positions in high-value and knowledge-based sectors

of the economy that are currently confronted with a global shortage of appropriate skills. "They have founded countless enterprises," adds the Secretary-General, "including household names such as eBay, Mittal, Google, and Intel and they have pioneered research as a basis for innovation."

The predominant form of migration varies considerably from one part of the world to another. In Asia, for example, many migrants move on the basis of temporary labour contracts, while in parts of the Americas and Africa, irregular migration is far more prevalent. Traditional countries of immigration such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States continue to accept migrants for permanent settlement, while the oil producing countries in the Middle East admit large numbers of international migrants for time limited periods and without any expectation of integration. In Europe, a major concern of recent years has been the arrival of asylum seekers, the majority of whom do not qualify for refugee status.

### The African perspective

International migration is controversial because it is linked to national identity, global equity, social justice and the universality of human rights. International migration policy is difficult to formulate and implement because it involves the movement of human beings, purposeful actors who are prepared to make sacrifices and take risks in order to fulfil their aspirations. Its challenges are radically different from those that arise in managing the movement of inanimate objects such as capital, goods and information. The special case of Africa, where development challenges are particularly acute, illustrates these challenges well.

According to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, migration flows within and out of the continent display a wide range of patterns, affected by strategies to cope with factors such as economic and ecological problems, intra-regional disparities in economic well-being, political instability, and restrictive migration policies. African international migration involves a variety of voluntary and forced cross-border movements within the continent, as well as regular and irregular migration to destinations outside the continent. Migration streams within Africa are much larger than those out of Africa, and forced migration plays a significant part. African nations, already struggling to provide for their own populations, were harbouring 2.5 million of the world's 9.7 million refugees at the end of 2007.

International migration hurts development in Africa through a loss of human capital, but also helps it through remittances of migrants and their acquisition of skills abroad. The African human resource pool is continuously depleted as the educated choose to emigrate and apply their skills abroad. In the health sector, where African countries are facing increasing demand as a result of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, several countries experience a net depletion of their health work force. For example, 926 Ghanaian doctors practice in the OECD countries alone, representing a much-needed 29 percent of the doctors practicing in Ghana.

African migrants contribute to the development of their continent through a number of channels. Diaspora remittances and the income multipliers they create are critical resources for the sustenance of receiving households and promote local and national development. In 2004, remittances to Africa amounted to \$14 billion, with Egypt, Morocco and Nigeria being the largest recipients. From 2003 to 2007, remittance flows to sub-Saharan Africa doubled from \$6 to \$12 billion. Households that receive these 'migra-dollars' tend to use the proceeds primarily for basic needs such as food and clothing some monies do make their way into investments in MDG-related areas such as children's education, healthcare, and investments in agricultural technology that can improve household food security.

According to the Economic Commission for Africa, the response of African governments to migration challenges has been limited and fragmentary. Few countries have implemented international conventions and related policies on migration. International migration barely features in national development plans and strategies, and has not been adequately addressed in any of the regional and national development frameworks such as NEPAD, MDG strategies, or poverty reduction strategies. Fortunately, African leaders are now focusing more on international migration. In this regard the African Union has set up a policy framework to stem the emigration of highly skilled workers through the creation of national employment opportunities, and to mobilize African expatriate communities for the development of their countries of origin.

ECA proposes a range of actions and policies for the continent necessary for maximizing the contribution of international migration to development. Among these is promoting all human rights, particularly the rights of international migrants and their families, through ratification and implementation of the relevant international conventions, and through

bilateral and multilateral agreements between sending and receiving countries.

### Cultural enrichment

International migration brings very diverse cultures into direct contact. Therefore, action must be taken in receiving countries to bring about tolerance and coherence to nurture integration and support multiculturalism. Coercive policies in both sending and receiving countries work against human rights and peace and security at all levels, and against the maximization of the benefits of international migration. Therefore, governments need to cooperate further to eliminate coercive policies. International migration contributes to development not only through economic gains but also through cultural enrichment, social welfare, health and education, and political stability. Therefore, these neglected dimensions must be harnessed for development.

Countries also need to harmonize their national policies and the roles of various ministries and agencies involved in international migration. Too often, the policies pursued by ministries in charge of immigration control do not sufficiently take into account the views of other ministries, such as the one in charge of international cooperation, or the private sector. Finally, human and institutional capacity building is important for maximizing the benefits of international migration. Continuous investment in education and health will bring about long-term benefits that would need to be realized through the creation of employment opportunities and commensurate wages.

### Migration is an inevitable 'force of nature'

In an increasingly interconnected world, the way forward for harnessing the benefits of migration for sending and receiving countries, and for migrants and their families, involves respect for human rights, ratification and implementation of international conventions and protocols, awareness raising, especially in receiving countries, and highlighting the positive contributions of migrants to sending and receiving countries.

As the Secretary-General says, "we cannot stop this force of human nature" that is international migration. But we can do a great deal to build a better migration experience. We can ensure that people move in a way that is safe and legal, and which protects their rights. We can work to strengthen the positive impact of migration on the development of home countries. We can encourage destination

countries to promote the success of migrants, both in their original and their adopted homes. We can advance the understanding that the better integrated migrants are, the more they will have to contribute to their countries of origin – as returnees or as engaged members of a global diaspora.

DESA furthers United Nations activities on international migration through the analytical and normative work of its Population Division. Under-Secretary-General Sha participates in the Global Migration Group, a meeting of principals of thirteen United Nations entities plus the International Organization for Migration.

*For more information:*

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

## Global dialogue on development

### Food crisis, UN democratization expected to dominate General Assembly debate

*High-level meeting on Africa's development needs, on 22 September, and on the Millennium Development Goals, on 25 September, will also be in the spotlight*

The General Assembly general debate, which provides Member States the opportunity to express their views on major international issues, gets underway on 23 September in New York through 3 October. This year, the debate is expected to focus on the impact of the global food crisis on poverty and hunger in the world as well as the need to democratize the United Nations, a theme proposed by the President-elect of the 63<sup>rd</sup> session, H.E. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, of Nicaragua.

The practice of selecting a specific issue of global concern for the session dates back to 2003, when the General Assembly decided to introduce this innovation in an effort to enhance the authority and role of the world body. The annual debate traditionally features statements by dozens of heads of State and Government as well as foreign ministers.

Prior to the general debate, on 22 September, there will be a high-level event organized by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Africa's development needs while on 25 September a second high-level event will be held on the subject of the Millennium Development Goals. A plenary meeting devoted to the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action on landlocked developing countries will feature on 2 and 3 October. The 63<sup>rd</sup> session formally opens on 16 September.

The Assembly's Second Committee – dealing with the economic and financial aspects of development – will convene starting 6 October with a focus on globalization and interdependence. Economic forces powering globalization, including trade and cross-border flows of capital and labour, have important economic, social and environmental impacts on countries. The realization of the MDGs is dependent on the concerted management of the globalization process by the international community and the

strengthening of the global partnership for development. Developmental consideration must be placed at the centre in managing globalization at the national, regional and global levels to ensure that the benefits can be shared among all countries and people.

As part of the Second Committee's consideration of the globalization item, DESA's has planned a number of side events, including a panel discussion on globalization and health. The panel will address challenges to public health systems and communicable disease interventions in the context of globalization with a keynote address to be delivered by Prof. Richard Hausman of Harvard University.

The Assembly's Third Committee – dealing with social, humanitarian and cultural matters – will also convene on 6 October to discuss items questions relating to advancement of women, youth, ageing, the disabled, humanitarian assistance and related issues. The Committees seek where possible to harmonize the various approaches of States, and present their recommendations, usually in the form of draft resolutions and decisions, to a plenary meeting of the Assembly for its consideration.

The Assembly is the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the UN, a forum for multilateral negotiation. While it is empowered to make only non-binding recommendations to States on international issues within its competence, it has, nevertheless, initiated actions – political, economic, humanitarian, social and legal – which have affected the lives of millions of people throughout the world. The Millennium Declaration, adopted in 2000, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, for example, reflected the commitment of Member States to reach goals to achieve development, poverty eradication, promote the rule of law, meet the special needs of Africa and protect the environment.

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



*H.E. Srgjan Kerim, President of the 62nd session, presents his views on the global food and energy crisis at a meeting of the General Assembly devoted to the issue on 18 July.*

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/ga/62/2008/ga080718am.rm?start=00:01:10&end=00:10:35> (9 minutes)



## **Draft outcome of Doha review conference**

*Preparatory process moves into final stages with informal consultations on draft outcome document starting 8 September*

A draft of the outcome document on review of implementation of the Monterrey Consensus was issued on 28 July, paving the way for informal consultations on the agreement by General Assembly delegates from 8 to 10 September in New York. Additional consultations and drafting sessions will be held, as necessary, through November when the international review conference gets underway in Doha.

The review conference and the preparatory process leading up to it are meant to assess progress on the 2002 Monterrey Consensus, reaffirm goals and commitments, and share best practices and lessons learned. They are also expected to identify obstacles to implementation of the Consensus, initiatives to overcome them, and other emerging issues. DESA's Financing for Development Office serves as the focal point in the UN Secretariat for overall follow-up at the national, regional and global levels.

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

## Trends and analysis

### Migration experts assess trends in Asia-Pacific

*Leading demographers will meet in Bangkok from 20 to 21 September to debate causes and consequences of international migration in the region*

DESA's Population Division is convening an expert group meeting on international migration and development in Asia and the Pacific in collaboration with ESCAP, to be held in Bangkok from 20 to 21 September. Representatives of governments and international organizations will convene to discuss international migration trends in the region in the global context, regional policies and cooperation mechanisms, labour migration, and the relationship between migration and development. The discussions will serve as input to the Asia-Pacific high-level meeting on international migration and development, to be held in Bangkok on 22 and 23 September immediately following the expert consultations.

According to ESCAP, out of an estimated 190 million international migrants worldwide in 2007, the region accounted for one-third or about 58 million – 53 million in Asia and 5 million in the Pacific. Cross-border movement of people in search of better opportunity or human security is a long standing characteristic of societies in the region. It is estimated that Asian and Pacific countries received about \$85 billion in remittances in 2004 with remittances playing essential roles in sustaining local and national economies.

The September meeting is being organized under the umbrella of the population cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, a secretariat working group established in 1997 to coordinate UN activities in this field.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM\\_Ittmig\\_Asia/EGM\\_Ittmig\\_Asia.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/EGM_Ittmig_Asia/EGM_Ittmig_Asia.htm)

### Social statisticians wary of gaps

*DESA expert group meeting from 9 to 12 September in New York intended to reveal gaps in international social statistics standards*

Informed analysis of social development issues requires good statistical data, and good statistical data depends on valid methodologies. In an effort to provide researchers and decision-makers with comparable, reliable information on a global scale, the DESA Statistics Division has invited world experts to examine the scope and content of social statistics in New York from 9 to 12 September.

Participants in the expert group meeting will be invited to consider concepts and definitions, sources, tabulations, periodicity, classifications, and other methodological challenges in statistical data collection. Discussion of an international action plan, including inter-agency coordination requirements, will also be on the agenda. The proposed plan would be used by DESA as the framework for an assessment of further developmental work on international norms. Finally, the statistical experts will prepare draft terms of reference for a proposed new 'city group' to replace the Siena City Group on Social Statistics, which disbanded in 2005.

*For more information:*

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/egm/social\\_stat\\_2008.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/egm/social_stat_2008.htm)

### Merchandise trade statistics under review

*DESA-ESCAP workshop starting 9 September attempts to engage Asia-Pacific countries in standard-setting.*

The DESA Statistics Division is organizing a workshop for developing countries on the revision of the Recommendations for International Merchandise Trade Statistics, commonly known as IMTS, rev.2, in cooperation with ESCAP. The session will take place from 9 to 12 September in Bangkok.

Earlier this year, the Statistical Commission endorsed the DESA Statistics Division initiative and strategy to revise the existing recommendations for international merchandise trade statistics and requested that the draft revised recommendations be submitted to the

Commission for adoption at its forty-first session in 2010. One key element of DESA's revision strategy is a worldwide consultation process with national trade statistics compilers. This workshop is part of a special effort on the part of DESA and ESCAP to involve developing countries in the region in the design and application of the relevant technical standards.

*For more information:*

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/WS%20Bangkok08/WS%20Bangkok08\\_workshop\\_imts\\_trade.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/WS%20Bangkok08/WS%20Bangkok08_workshop_imts_trade.htm)

## Data sharing, capacity building central to statistical development

*Inter-agency coordination committee meets in Tunis starting 11 September with a spotlight on standards and methods of work*

The 12<sup>th</sup> session of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities will be held in Tunis from 11 to 12 September with an agenda ranging from population estimates to modalities of data sharing, coordination of statistical capacity-building, and revised terms of reference for the Committee itself. This session of the Committee is the first to be held in Africa, hosted by the African Development Bank.

The Committee, an inter-agency working group, was established in 2002 to promote coordination and integration of the statistical activities of international organizations. The members of the Committee are the chief statisticians of UN agencies, and of other international organizations with significant statistical programmes. It meets twice a year and its conclusions are presented to the Statistical Commission of the Economic and Social Council.

*For more information:*

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/workpartner\\_ccsa.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/workpartner_ccsa.htm)

## All views welcome in world internet governance

*Informal consultations in Geneva from 16 to 18 September to help shape the internet management agenda*

The secretariat of the Internet Governance Forum is organizing a series of consultations in Geneva, from 16 to 18 September in preparation for the third meeting of principals in Hyderabad in December this year. The first day, open to all stakeholders, will be devoted to informal consultations on the programme of work of the December session. Representatives of government, the private sector, civil society, academia, and technical communities will participate as equals to set the agenda. They are also expected to discuss the review process called for by the Tunis Agenda on the Information Society.

The second and third days will be taken up by an assembly of the fifty-member IGF Multistakeholder Advisory Group, which will finalize the programme for December taking into account the views expressed at the open consultations. Mr. Nitin Desai, Special Adviser of the Secretary-General for Internet Governance, will preside over all three days. The Forum is supported by a special trust fund administered by DESA.

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

## UN private sector forum on MDGs and food sustainability

The Global Alliance for ICT and Development, UN Global Compact Office, UNDP, and OCHA are co-organizing a forum for private sector executives to discuss the Millennium Development Goals and food sustainability on the afternoon of 24 September in New York. A series of roundtable discussions will cover technological innovations, water management, agricultural inputs and infrastructure, finance and risk management, food safety and nutrition, energy and biofuels, and job creation for low-income people. Overcoming long-term development challenges associated with the global food crisis will be an important point of discussion.

Governments have long recognized that business and civil society are important partners in the achievement of development goals, and closer

collaboration is needed. Aside from being an opportunity for the private sector to mingle with world leaders, NGOs, and UN agencies in the expectation that new partnerships will form, participants will be providing formal input to the Secretary-General's high-level meeting on the MDGs taking place the following day, on 25 September. The UN, for its part, would like to advance the internationally agreed development goals and will invite participants to commit to new action on MDG implementation.

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

## Technical cooperation

### Ageing in the Kyrgyz Republic

*Workshop in Bishkek starting 15 September to focus on operationalizing newly-minted national policy on ageing*

Experts from DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development will head to Bishkek from 15 to 19 September to assist the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection in finalizing a draft national policy and law on ageing for the Kyrgyz Republic. Organized as a workshop, the initiative sees representatives from various government agencies and NGOs providing input on timetables, partnerships, and resources required to operationalize the policy with an implementation plan. The draft policy is the result of a four year effort that began with a needs assessment by DESA in 2004 and included a lengthy consultative process involving national ministries and civil society organizations.

The countries of Central Asia face particular challenges in addressing demographic shifts principally due to the continuing transition to democratic political systems and a market economy. The population of the Kyrgyz Republic is expected to increase in coming decades, and consequently will see an expansion of its national labour force. This in turn should make a comprehensive old-age pension scheme more viable than in some other countries of the region. Nonetheless, the extent of the informal economy in all transition countries, including the Kyrgyz Republic, is such that the ratio of pension beneficiaries to contributors is relatively high, which can put undue stress on the working age population and the pension schemes they support.

*For more information:*

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/building\\_national.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/building_national.html)

### Earthquake safety in Asia-Pacific

*DESA regional development centre holds September awareness-raising workshops for communities in Fiji and Uzbekistan*

The DESA Division for Public Administration and Development Management, through its UN Centre

for Regional Development office in Hyogo, Japan, will hold two workshops in September on school earthquake safety in the Asia-Pacific region. The first will take place in Suva, Fiji on 9-10 September, and the second in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 18-19 September.

Like other infrastructure, school buildings are subject to damage and collapse in the event of an earthquake. An unsafe school in a seismic region can incur the loss of the lives of hundreds of school children in addition to the potential damage to the property. On the other hand, a safer school can save valuable lives of children, provide a safe haven for the local community, serve as a temporary shelter and help to bring normalcy back to society in times of disaster. In addition, the process of making schools safe against earthquakes propagates the seismic safety message to communities. The initiative to make schools safer against earthquakes not only protects school children, but also educates local communities to protect themselves.

*For more information:*

<http://www.hyogo.uncrd.or.jp/school%20project/schooloverview.htm>

### Census experts talk technology with Asian statisticians

*Innovations in statistical data collection will be highlighted at Bangkok workshop from 15 to 19 September*

The DESA Statistics Division will hold a regional workshop on census data processing in cooperation with ESCAP from 15 to 19 September. The training event will be held in Bangkok. Those attending will hear about international standards for conducting population and housing censuses and explore the significant capabilities of contemporary technology for data capture and editing. Optical character recognition, internet data collection, and the use of handheld devices will be featured.

Population and housing censuses are one of the main sources of data for effective development planning and objective decision-making. Recognizing the value of reliable demographic data, the Economic and Social Council is encouraging every country to conduct a census at least once between 2005 and 2014.

The Statistics Division is supporting the Council's initiative, formally known as the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, by developing census methodological guidelines, facilitating exchange of experience, and assisting countries in improving their statistical capacity in census-taking. The Bangkok session is the fourth in a series of workshops held this year. The first took place in Noumea in February, the second in Doha in May, and the third in Dar es Salaam in June.

*For more information:*

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/workshops/Thailand\\_15Sept08/](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/workshops/Thailand_15Sept08/)

## Publications and websites

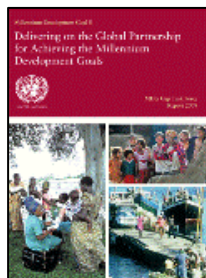
### Technical reports

#### Millennium Development Goals Report 2008

To be released on 11 September

The Millennium Development Goals Report 2008 will be released on 11 September in a press launch by the Secretary-General. This annual title presents the latest available data and analysis on the progress towards the achievement of the MDGs at the global and regional levels. The 2008 report is of particular significance as it describes how the world fared midway towards 2015, the target date for achieving the Goals, and provides a reference point for world leaders meeting on 25 September for a General Assembly high-level event to assess progress. Data can be previewed online.

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



#### Delivering on the Global Partnership for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

Important gaps remain in delivering on the global commitments in the areas of aid, trade, debt relief, and access to new technologies and to

affordable essential medicines. In the countdown to 2015, urgent responses are needed to bridge the existing implementation gaps to make good on the promises made to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The UN MDG gap task force will release an report identifying gaps in detail and providing recommendations on how to address them. The Task Force, which brings together more than twenty UN agencies, OECD and the WTO – led by DESA and UNDP – was created by the Secretary-General in 2007 to monitor progress of implementation of the goals, in the specific areas of official development assistance, market access and trade, debt relief, access to essential medicines, and technology.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/policy/mdggap/>



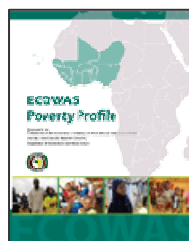
#### Regional Dimensions of the Ageing Situation

This title contributes to the series of events, conferences and publications related to the first review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of

Action on Ageing. It highlights priorities, as well as recent trends and policy developments, in the five UN regions of the world. The publication is intended to assist national governments, the international community and the public at large in assessing the situation of older persons five years after the Second World Assembly on Ageing, inform the debate on priorities, policy innovations and technical cooperation to implement the objectives of the Madrid Plan of Action.

To download:

[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/research\\_papers.html](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/research_papers.html)



#### ECOWAS Poverty Profile

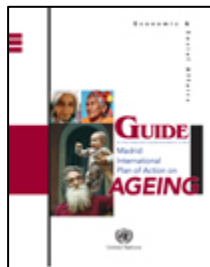
In recent years there has been a growing demand for, and use of, poverty statistics in the ECOWAS region, as well as an increase in national capacity for using such data for country assessments and poverty reduction strategies. However, the scarcity of comparable statistics on poverty in the region has remained a critical area of concern in the ECOWAS Commission's efforts to harmonize statistics in the region.

This report, produced by the Commission of the Economic Community of West African States and DESA's Statistics Division, is an important step towards building harmonized poverty statistics in the region. The various country practices in data collection and poverty measurement provide a comparative frame within which individual countries can assess their own methodologies. Moreover, understanding how each of the countries in the region defines and measures poverty is a first step toward realizing the goal of more harmonised statistics in the region.

To download:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=385>

## Handbook



### Guide to the National Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

This guide offers advice on actualization of the Madrid Interational Plan of Action on Ageing from two perspectives.

First, effective age-specific policies that facilitate the mainstreaming of older persons' concerns into all aspects of development and policy-making are suggested. Second, steps to implement a holistic intergenerational life-course approach that emphasizes equity and inclusiveness for all ages are recommended.

The guide, prepared by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development with the assistance of a group of distinguished academics and practitioners, is primarily intended for use by national focal points responsible for developing and implementing national policies on ageing. It will also be of interest to policy-makers in a wide range of related fields, civil society organizations, regional and international agencies, and service providers, and older persons in general.

*To download:*  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/documents/papers/guide.pdf>

## Directory



### Growing Together: Youth and the Work of the United Nations

This title presents a comprehensive

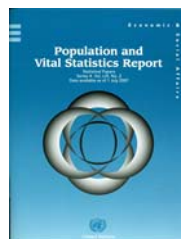
synthesis of the United Nations system's work on youth. Produced by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, the directory includes listings from thirty UN agencies and describes the contribution that each of them is making to the achievement of the 1995 World Programme of Action for Youth.

In recent years there has been remarkable growth in the interest and work of the United Nations in promoting the development of young people. The

almost 1.2 billion people aged 15 to 24, the group included in youth statistics by the United Nations, make up nearly 18 percent of the world's population with 86 percent living in developing countries. Investments in young people are widely recognized for their long-lasting economic and social benefits in addition to the improvements in well-being that result for this large segment of society.

*To download:*  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/growing\\_together.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/growing_together.pdf)

## Statistical compilations



### Population and Vital Statistics Report, January 2008

This issue of the Population and Vital Statistics Report, published semi-annually, presents data for countries or areas on population size from the latest available census, estimated total population

size for 2005 or 2006, and the number and rate of vital events for the latest available year from 1992 to 2006, as reported by national authorities. The January edition also includes data for the world and its major areas and regions on estimated population size for both 2004 and 2005.

*For more information:*  
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/vitstats/>



### National Accounts Statistics 2006: Analysis of Main Aggregates

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 2006. 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.

The main aggregates in the publication include gross domestic product by type of expenditure and value added by kind of economic activity, both at current and at constant market prices. It 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/nationalaccount/nasa.asp>



### Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or annual and quarterly data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

Vol. LXII, no. 7, July 2008

In this issue: Civil aviation traffic; total exports and imports by countries or areas; world exports by provenance and destination. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/427.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs/>

## Working paper

### Obstacles to Implementing Lessons from the 1997-1998 East Asian Crises

The author of this paper argues that various and sometimes contradictory lessons have been drawn from the 1997-1998 East Asian crisis experiences. The ideological implications and political differences involved have complicated the possibility of drawing shared lessons from them. The seeming calm and increased growth in most developing countries in the period since 2001 have also undermined the possibility of far-reaching developmental reforms following the experience. Perhaps most importantly, the vested interests supporting existing international financial governance arrangements continue to impede the possibility of implementing lessons

drawn from the experience. Such interests are generally supported by conventional wisdom and reinforced by the financial media.

To download:

[http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp66\\_2008.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2008/wp66_2008.pdf)

## Websites



### New MDG Blog

In preparation for the General Assembly High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals taking place in New York on 25 September, DESA and UNDP have launched a new blog intended to break down barriers of physical distance and hierarchy, accommodating active participation and drawing various insights from all over the world. Topics covered by the blog include poverty and hunger, health and education, environmental sustainability, gender equality and empowerment of women, and global partnership for development. Everyone is invited to participate.

To browse and contribute: <http://www.mdg-gateway.org/MDG-Blog>



### Accessible social development

The DESA Division for Social Policy and Development has added an RSS feed and multimedia content to its website along with an accessible version designed for persons with disabilities.

To browse: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/>

## Comings and goings

### Comings



**Mr. Michael Philip Guest** was recently appointed Chief of the Demographic Analysis Branch in DESA's Population Division. Mr. Guest is a demographer whose research interests include migration

and fertility, areas in which he has published widely. A national of Australia, he moved to Thailand in 1992 where he was a professor at the Institute for Population and Social Research of Mahidol University in Bangkok. Before joining Mahidol, Mr. Guest served as Country Director of the Population Council in Thailand with responsibility for Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand, and Yunnan Province of China. His activities included operations research on HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, analysis of population data and the role of women.

Guest has conducted research at the Australian National University, the Center for Demography and Social Ecology at the University of Washington, and at Cornell University. He holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Brown University in the United States.

*The following staff member was promoted in August:*

Ms. Lorena Castro, Budget Assistant, Technical Cooperation Management Service

### Goings

*The following staff members retired in August:*

Ms. Maria Elena Erana, Reference Assistant, Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination

Ms. Maria Jakosalem, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Mr. Ahmed Ozbek, Programming Assistant, Development Policy and Analysis Division

## Calendar

### September

Informal consultations on the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development  
New York, 8-10 September

UNCRD Regional Workshop on School Earthquake Safety in the Pacific  
Suva, 9-10 September

Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics  
New York, 9-12 September

Workshop for Developing Countries International Merchandise Trade Statistics  
Bangkok, 9-12 September

### Launch of the Millennium Development Goals Report 2008

New York, 11 September

Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities  
12<sup>th</sup> session, Tunis, 11-12 September

Workshop on Kyrgyz National Policy on Ageing  
Bishkek, 15-19 September

DESA-ESCAP Regional Workshop on Census Data Processing  
Bangkok, 15-19 September

Consultations of the Internet Governance Forum  
Geneva, 16-18 September

### General Assembly

63<sup>rd</sup> session, New York, 16 September-December

- General Debate  
23 September-1 October

- **High-level Event on the Millennium Development Goals**

25 September

UNCRD Regional Workshop on School Earthquake Safety in Central Asia  
Tashkent, 18-19 September

Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and the Pacific  
Bangkok, 20-21 September

UNCRD Training Workshop on Human Security and Regional Development for the Metropolitan Region of Guatemala  
Guatemala City, 23-26 September

### October

#### General Assembly

63<sup>rd</sup> session, New York

- **Second Committee**  
6 October-5 December

- **Third Committee**  
6 October-25 November

DESA-UNDP Expert Group Meeting on the Reconstruction of Governance and Public Administration after Conflict  
Accra, 2-4 October

Workshop on Manufacturing Statistics for African Countries  
Lusaka, 6-9 October

Expert Group Meeting on Equal Sharing of Responsibilities between Men and Women  
Geneva, 6-9 October

Workshop on Statistics of International Trade in Services  
Kiev, 7-9 October

UNCRD Workshop on Construction of Earthquake Resistant Buildings  
Banda Aceh, 13-16 October

### Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters

4<sup>th</sup> session, Geneva, 20-24 October

*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.*

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