



Video

Double jeopardy: High food, fuel prices undermine global development

Speaking at a General Assembly meeting on the global food and energy crisis in New York on 18 July, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed that the current insecurity is not a short-term issue. In 2030, world food demand will have risen by 50 percent, and by 2050 the world's population will increase by a third.

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/qa/62/2008/qa080718am.rm?start=00:10:43&end=00:22:19> (11minutes)

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In war and peace, the violence must end

Sexual and gender-based violence in conflict zones appears to have increased despite political commitment to protection of women and girls

One of today's greatest development challenges is turning policies into practice. In the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women we are witnessing a paradox: universal commitments to gender equality and very slow progress in the implementation of those commitments. While commitments are important first steps, alone they have no impact on the every day life of women. This remains true despite the fact that gender equality and the empowerment of women are important factors in

achieving the goals of sustainable development, security and peace.

There is a growing body of evidence that bringing women to the peace table improves the quality of agreements reached and increases the chances of successful implementation of peace accords.

Involving women in post-conflict governance also reduces the likelihood of a return war. Reconstruction works best when it involves women as planners, implementers and beneficiaries. The single most productive investment in revitalizing agriculture, restoring health systems and improving other social indicators after conflicts is in women's and girls' education.

At the 2005 World Summit, heads of state and government specifically acknowledged the inextricable link between development, peace and security on the one hand, and the essential role of

gender equality in development, peace and security on the other. However, almost every day one hears and sees stories about how women and girls all over the world face an appalling level of insecurity and violence in both armed conflict and peace, how their bodies are increasingly used as a battle ground, how their rights are ignored or trampled on. Moreover, women who are traumatized and victimized continue to face a massive deficit of justice. Violators often commit their crimes with impunity, which encourages them to continue committing their heinous acts.

Justice for women in wartime

Resolution 1325, unanimously adopted by the Security Council in October 2000 is one of the most influential documents in establishing the legitimacy of addressing issues of women and gender as an integral part of peace and security. The resolution represents an important tool to promote peace and development, bring justice to women and heal torn communities. The resolution provides a political framework that makes women – and a gender perspective – relevant to negotiating peace agreements, planning refugee camps, peacekeeping operations and reconstructing war-ravaged societies. It makes the pursuit of gender equality relevant to every action, ranging from mine clearance to elections to security sector reform. An important aspect of the text, which demands urgent attention by the international community, is the call for all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and its emphasis on the need to end impunity for war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls.

Sexual and gender-based violence is one of the most devastating issues that arise in armed conflict and continues in post conflict situations. Such violence is considered a key threat to human security, affecting



an estimated one-third of women in their lifetime. Although present in everyday life, the intensity of sexual and gender-based violence increases during conflict. Examples of this scourge abound. From the Balkans to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, from Rwanda to Colombia, the rape of female civilians is widespread as women are systematically violated as symbolic bearers of caste, ethnic or national identity.

Two decades of increasing sexual violence

Though available data is usually not sufficient and often inadequate, the trend analysis suggests that war-related sexual violence over the past two decades has increased. In Sierra Leone during the conflict in 1991-2002 and Liberia in 1980-2003 at least 50 per cent of women suffered some form of sexual violence. In South Kivu, government, civil society and UN representatives have recorded 4,500 new cases of rape in the first six months of 2007. According to the figures obtained by the MONUC peace-keeping mission, an estimated 27,000 new rapes were recorded in 2005-2006.

Even as conflict subsides and international assistance arrives, women and girls continue to experience heightened vulnerability. A report by Elisabeth Rehn, former Defence Minister of Finland, and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, now President of Liberia, found that 17 percent of displaced households surveyed in Sierra Leone had experienced sexual assaults, including rape, torture and sexual slavery. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support have found strong evidence of continued high prevalence of sexual violence in Liberia, and of continued rampant sexual violence in Darfur despite the increased international presence there. In Haiti, an estimated 90 percent of victims of post-conflict violence are women.

The impact of this pandemic is widespread and long-lasting, impacting everything from women's health – including exposure to HIV/AIDS – to reintegration of both victims and perpetrators into their communities. Furthermore, lack of physical security can keep entire generations of girls out of school, and can preclude women's participation in peace-building activities. Thus, the prevalence of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations not only shocks the conscience of all concerned with human rights, but it also fundamentally undermines the goals of resolution 1325 – and security more generally – by injuring the inclusive processes that lead to lasting peace.

Rape – a tool, and crime, of war

Rape is clearly defined as a war crime in international humanitarian law. The statute of the International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, which the Security Council adopted by its resolution 827 (1993), gives the Tribunal the power to prosecute persons responsible for rape when committed in armed conflict, whether international or internal in character, and directed against any civilian population.

In the fifteen years since the establishment of the criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the problem of widespread, organized and systematic rape has continued and, if anything, has become more severe. In the eight years since the Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, sexual violence as a weapon of war has been perpetrated with almost universal impunity.

Even though rape and sexual violence in situations of armed conflict are underreported by women victims, who often are ashamed to come forward and suffer public humiliation or rejection and may well doubt they will find adequate recourse to justice, United Nations sources on the ground have reported thousands of women who have sought medical help for the grievous wounds that have been inflicted upon them in the course of being raped by gangs of soldiers and other armed men. These injuries are so severe that in some cases victims are hospitalized for over a year. Thousands of women and girls, and their children, have been abandoned by their families and ostracized by their villages after surviving rape.

Political commitment to protect women and girls

Almost eight years after the Council adopted resolution 1325, Member States reiterated their deep concern about violence against women and children in armed conflict, which in spite of greater awareness of the problem, has in some situations become systematic and widespread, reaching appalling levels of brutality. On 19 June 2008, the Security Council held an open debate on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict and adopted, unanimously, resolution 1820 which recognizes that sexual violence as a tactic of warfare is a matter of international peace and security.

“Violence against women has reached unspeakable and pandemic proportions in some societies attempting to recover from conflict,” the Secretary-General said at the beginning of the debate. “Sexual

violence poses a grave threat to women’s security in fragile post-conflict countries and undermines efforts to cement peace.” He added that by creating a culture that punishes violence and elevates women to their rightful role, we could lay the foundation for lasting stability, where women are not victims of violence, but agents of peace.

Resolution 1820 states that widespread and systematic sexual violence can exacerbate armed conflict, can pose a threat to the restoration of international peace and security and has an impact on durable peace, reconciliation and development. Sexual violence has not only grave physical, psychological and health consequences for its victims but also direct social consequences for communities and entire societies.

The resolution reaffirms the political commitment of the Security Council to protect women and girls from sexual violence in conflict by demanding the “immediate and complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence against civilians” and that “all parties to armed conflict immediately take appropriate measures to protect civilians, including women and girls, from all forms of sexual violence.” The resolution notes “rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide.”

The resolution requests the development and implementation of appropriate training programs for all peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel deployed by the United Nations to help them prevent, recognize and respond to sexual violence and other forms of violence against civilians. The Secretary-General and Member States reconfirmed the commitment to a zero-tolerance policy against sexual exploitation by UN personnel during the debate. Resolution 1820 also affirms its intention to consider targeted sanctions against perpetrators.

Resolution 1820 reinforces and complements the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, and further highlights the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts because sexual violence in conflict is not solely a gender issue, but also a security concern.

Men and boys: key to ending violence against women

Men’s collective activism is essential to humankind’s struggle to achieve gender equality and end violence against women in war and peacetime. “Engaging men

and boys captures the spirit of the Beijing Conference,” observed Rachel Mayanja, UN Special Adviser for Gender issues and Advancement of Women, “and is vital for success of many other international efforts such as peace and security, development, poverty eradication and elimination of violence.” We have to work together – men and women. While acknowledging the historical contribution of women’s groups, scholars and activists in promoting gender equality agenda, we must also admit that men’s partnership is essential. Through partnerships, men and women demonstrate concretely their shared interest in achieving equality. An increasing number of UN programmes to benefit and protect women are involving men and boys in their activities.

Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 are landmarks in bringing the issue of ending violence against women to the peace table. Effectively stopping such violence on the ground will require a transformation of values and behaviour, particularly among men and boys, supported by strict international and national legislation and jurisprudence. These resolutions, far binding than any international legislation on gender violence so far, serve as a powerful deterrent by making it abundantly clear that humankind no longer tolerates sexual violence in conflict or post-conflict and will prosecute its perpetrators harshly as war criminals.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/wps/>



United States Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, chairs the Security Council debate on women, peace and security on 19 June.

Acting in a national capacity, Ms. Rice also presented her country’s

position on the issue.

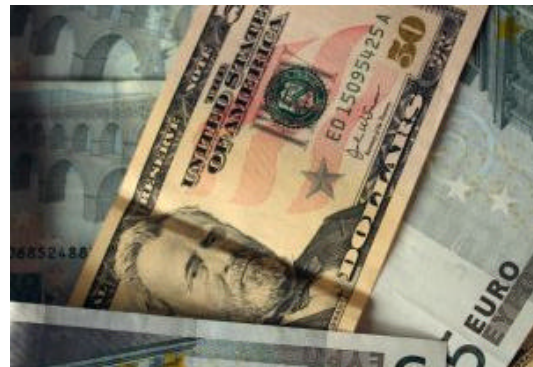
<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/sc/2008/sc080619am.rm>

Spotlight on international monetary, financial systems

With the ascendance of emerging economies, a transformed global monetary and financial architecture may be needed to respond to development challenges

Preparations for the Doha review conference on financing for development are taking place in a radically changed and more complex and turbulent

global monetary, financial and trading scenario than that of the 2002 Monterrey Conference. Today, developing countries generate over fifty percent of world output in purchasing power parity terms. Emerging economies are less dependent on growth in the developed world and have accumulated massive current account surpluses and international reserves. In response to these changing dynamics, Member States have put forward many proposals for reform of the international monetary, financial and trading systems.



The financial crises of the 1980s and 1990s originated in emerging economies. In contrast, the epicentre of the current global financial shake-up is in the developed world and stems from the collapse of the housing bubble. The solution to this crisis lies largely in the hands of developed country central banks. Regional monetary and financial arrangements such as the Chiang Mai initiative are increasingly providing an alternative to the traditional lending arrangements of the Bretton Woods institutions and other international financial institutions.

At the same time, sovereign wealth funds have joined a host of other actors such as hedge funds, which have significant influence on financial flows and national economies but remain relatively unregulated. The world’s main reserve asset, the United States dollar, has lost over fifty percent of its value against other hard currencies over the past two years, and the most traded good – oil – has more than tripled in price.

Systemic reform: Is there political consensus?

In the light of this intricate and volatile scenario, substantial structural reforms are more than ever needed in the global monetary, financial and trading systems to make them more consistent, coherent and conducive to economic and social development. In particular, developing countries and economies in

transition demand a stronger voice in international economic decision-making and norm-setting, in keeping with their increased economic weight.

Achieving systemic reforms are far more than a technical matter and require considerable political consensus building. The United Nations, through the Doha Review Conference, provides the necessary neutral forum for arriving at such a consensus. The preparatory process for Doha has already provided several proposals for further reform of the United Nations and BWI to address these systemic issues, around which political consensus is being sought.

Strengthening global economic governance is a logical and critical response to development challenges in the context of globalization. There is a need for a balanced, effective, democratic and participatory global governance system to coordinate the interests of different countries and enhance common interests.

The UN system has an important role to play in systemic issues as these issues are essentially of a political nature. The Monterrey Consensus calls for the strengthening of the UN leadership and coordinating role in promoting development and for achieving an integrated view of monetary, financial and trade systems.

Another major challenge is ensuring integrity and transparency of financial markets. While financial flows are increasingly global, their regulation remains largely under national jurisdiction. There is, thus, an urgent need to improve cooperation among national regulators, to encourage them to adopt common standards in various areas, including bank liquidity, valuation of complex debt structures and activities of credit rating agencies. An international regulatory mechanism should also be considered.

Taxation, solidarity levies, anti-corruption measures

Many countries have expressed concern about capital flight, illicit financial activities and transfers, tax evasion and corruption, and called on sustained international cooperation to fight those ills. They have emphasized that international oversight institutions should continue strengthening existing mechanisms such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption. They have stated that the ratification by all countries and full observance of the Convention should be further promoted. The United Nations has been encouraged to continue to help build capacity for promoting productive investment in developing countries and for supporting the

signature, ratification and implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption, which addresses issues of capital flight.

It has also been suggested that the United Nations explore additional innovative sources of financing. In this regard, the Leading Group on Solidarity Levies to Fund Development is examining many initiatives including levies on capital movements and currency transactions.

Many Member States have called for upgrading the present United Nations Committee of Experts on International Cooperation on Tax Matters to become an intergovernmental commission with appropriate representation to reflect all interests. They have stressed in this regard the special importance of addressing the concerns of small, vulnerable developing countries.

The United Nations can ensure further coherence in assistance provided at the country level. The Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council is increasingly regarded as a “harmonizer” of development assistance. Examples of coordinated and coherent assistance include the trade promotion cooperation of the International Trade Centre, the EMPRETEC entrepreneurship training of UNCTAD, UNDP private sector promotional activities, the UNCTAD debt management programme, and BWI-UN Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group.

An enhanced role for the IMF

Many countries have proposed that the International Monetary Fund focus more on overall systemic issues, including addressing the need for new forms of regulation to cover such influential actors as hedge funds and sovereign wealth funds. The IMF would need to strengthen multilateral surveillance and monitor the consistency of the macroeconomic policies of developed countries. It would promote the reform of the international monetary system including better management of external shocks, macroeconomic policy coordination, efficient multilateral liquidity provision, and consideration of a debt workout mechanism.

Indeed, the IMF has begun consultations with Member States on macroeconomic imbalances with a view to narrowing them while maintaining growth. The IMF is seeking to improve its facilities to provide liquidity during crises and, together with the Bank for International Settlements, the Financial Stability Forum and national supervisors, is working

to determine how a new model of securitization is impacting financial flows and what it means for risk. In addition to regulatory issues, the recent financial turmoil has highlighted the macroeconomic dimensions of the problem.

The Fund has also been asked to help sovereign wealth funds identify and begin to implement a set of good practices. More information on these funds seems needed to counter protectionist pressures. It has also been suggested that the IMF take a closer look at hedge funds and their effects on systemic risks. Enhanced financial information and transparency about these funds can greatly improve assessment of systemic risks.

IMF programmes in low-income countries are also evolving. Maintaining debt sustainability after debt relief is now a key concern. As a number of low-income countries are increasingly drawing upon market sources of finance, the Fund is helping them learn from the market access experience of middle income countries. Besides, it is helping commodity exporting low-income countries ensure that current high revenues are managed and used effectively.

There has been progress in strengthening voice and representation of developing countries in the IMF. The second round of quota increases based on new quota formula should be decided at the 2008 annual meeting. The share of basic votes will also be increased. Yet, countries have very different views on what indicators to use for a new quota formula and on how to measure them. This is a difficult issue, both technically and politically. In addition to the above, it has been proposed that there should be no veto power for any individual member state and that the number of developing country constituencies should be increased vis-à-vis the EU member state constituencies.

World Bank moves on inclusive globalization

The World Bank is changing its way of doing business: from a more “supply driven” approach to supporting the borrowing country’s agenda. It has been suggested that the major function of the Bank should be to mobilize development resources, including the development and introduction of innovative financial products as well as the facilitation of North-South, South-South, triangular and regional cooperation. In today’s world the design of mechanisms to recycle global surpluses to productive investment is essential. In this regard, the Bank is introducing schemes to help channel liquidity from middle - income countries to investment in low-

income countries. The Bank is also being encouraged by Member States to consider providing more loans without a sovereign guarantee.

The Bank’s President, Robert Zoellick, has proposed a new strategic theme, inclusive and sustainable globalization. The theme focuses on: poverty in Africa; post-conflict countries; development strategies for middle-income countries; a more active role in the provision of regional and global public goods touching on climate change, diseases, labour mobility, and technology transfer; support for development opportunities in the Arab world; and fostering a development knowledge and learning agenda across the World Bank Group.

Economic governance: A shared responsibility

Finally, all countries share responsibility for promoting the prosperity and sustainability of the world economy through substantial reforms of the international monetary, financial and trading systems. This is especially true in light of new realities, such as the increasing flows of private capital, the growing power of emerging economies and the fact that global imbalances were fundamentally a multilateral challenge. “As the world economy slows down”, says Under-Secretary -General Sha Zukang, “Governments must strive to avoid global recession and safeguard growth against financial turmoil. The current international financial instability highlights growing international economic inter-dependence and the pressing need for a robust global partnership for development.”

The work of the international financial institutions to address global imbalances needs to be underpinned by domestic efforts: by well-regulated banking and broader financial services; by appropriate exchange rate policy, savings and investment; by adequate trade policies and tax system; and by other complementary domestic economic policies. The governance reform needs include other international financial, regulatory and standard setting bodies. These are some of the major issues at stake before Member States at Doha. A draft outcome document with the details of reform proposals will be available this fall and is expected to be finalized and agreed at the Conference itself in December.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/doha/chapter6/>

Global dialogue on development

ECOSOC urges renewed commitment to sustainable development

The Economic and Social Council concluded its annual substantive session on 25 July with action on sustainable development, energy, the global food crisis and a range of other issues

The 2008 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council concluded its work on 25 July in New York. Among other matters, the Council addressed the soaring costs of food and fuel, global financial turmoil, climate change, and enhancing the effectiveness and impact of development aid.

Of special note this year was the convening of the inaugural Development Cooperation Forum, strengthening the Council's role in guiding international development cooperation. Giving voice to a wide range of stakeholders, the Forum also gave promise of becoming the global platform for representative, participatory and multi-stakeholder dialogue on development cooperation issues. The 2008 deliberations particularly served to provide input to the Doha Review Conference on Financing for Development and the Accra High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness which will bring further attention to aid delivery and management and making development assistance work better for improving the lives of the poor.

Sustainable development: A top priority

This year, the theme for the Annual Ministerial Review was sustainable development with a focus on the related issue of integrated rural development. The delegations underscored that it will not be possible to achieve the Millennium Development Goals without a more sustainable path to development. The Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Council acknowledges that the current confluence of crises – global financial instability, rising food and fuel prices, environmental degradation and climate change – threatens to undermine progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and requires early concerted action. Yet, such assistance must be undertaken in parallel with longer-term solutions with increased investment in rural development and

promotion of agricultural productivity as part of the approach.

There was strong support for clean, affordable, renewable energy sources to be developed and shared in order to reduce the world's carbon footprint and shield economies from the increase of oil prices. At the same time, the Declaration underscores that the need to address the challenges and opportunities posed by biofuels, in view of the world's food security, energy and sustainable development needs. While the global food crisis represents a serious threat to the fight against poverty and hunger as well as to the efforts by developing countries to attain food security, its multiple and complex causes require a comprehensive and coordinated response by national Governments and the international community.

The National Voluntary Presentations, now in their second year, continued to generate rich discussions and added national dimension to the Annual Ministerial Review. Eight countries, four developing and four developed countries, participated and Ministers from Belgium, Chile, Finland, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Luxemburg, United Kingdom and United Republic of Tanzania delivered presentations on national experiences in implementing development policies and strategies.

Addressing the global food crisis

During the thematic discussion of the Council, it was noted that the global food crisis threatens the modest progress achieved in recent years to lift millions of people out of poverty, particularly the urban poor, rural landless peasants, women and children. At the same time, it provides an opportunity for a "renaissance" in agriculture, and the importance of smallholder farmers in that process must not be underestimated.

In their addresses to the Council, leading experts on the issue of food crisis and government representatives spoke about the increased problem of urbanization and the need to create incentive systems to encourage people to stay on their farms. It was also stressed that the world community must invest in agro-ecological research and integrate traditional and academic knowledge. In that context, it was urged that all such measures in the small-scale farmer sector, and increasing public investment in extension systems should be targeted. Providing credit lines for purchasing or leasing land should be considered. It was mentioned that trade barriers for agriculture products be reduced, taxes be earmarked for a fund to

support domestic prices when they collapsed, and international commodity exchanges be more closely monitored. The issue of empowering women was also addressed by involving them more actively in public-decision making.

As a successful country in the areas of agriculture and food security with 36 to 40 percent of GDP coming from agriculture, the experience of the Republic of Malawi was highlighted. The Government is focusing on improving the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers by ensuring easy access to inputs. Having attained food self-sufficiency for three consecutive years, the Government's priorities are to ensure food security and enhance returns on investment by preventing commodity smuggling, among other things.

Participants in the discussions highlighted a series of key messages. They recognized the complex relationship between rising food prices and biofuel production. They also stressed that even though biofuel has risks, it can contribute to a country's development by reducing poverty, providing opportunities to strengthen gender equality and diversifying a country's energy mix. They urged Governments to play a role in developing policy frameworks to ensure that poor people could benefit from biofuels both for their energy needs as well as to increase their incomes. Biofuels are only part of the solution to rural development and should be integrated into an overall poverty reduction strategy.

Strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger

This year's coordination segment focused on the role of the United Nations system in implementing the 2007 Ministerial Declaration on strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development. It also considered the Council's role in the integrated follow up to global conferences.

A resolution on the theme of the segment recognized the complex and multidimensional nature of the challenge of eradicating poverty and hunger and requested the UN system to strengthen its efforts to promote a comprehensive response. In particular, it encouraged the system to promote policy coherence and cooperation on science and technology and on urban and rural development. It stressed the role of the Chief Executives Board in promoting system-wide policy coherence in all areas vital to the eradication of poverty and hunger. It also encouraged the UN system to continue to accord highest priority to MDG1 in the formulation of the common country

assessments, UN development assistance frameworks and other relevant strategic documents for country-level operation and to promote the global partnership for development.

A resolution on the integrated conference follow up further reiterated the need to implement the internationally agreed development goals. It reasserted the central role of the Council in system-wide coordination and balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of UN policies and programmes. It reaffirmed the need to strengthen this role through the Council's subsidiary bodies and new functions and requested its subsidiary bodies to contribute to the Annual Ministerial Declaration and the Development Cooperation Forum. It also stressed that the preparation of the AMR should be fully supported by the UN system, welcomed the improved cooperation with the Bretton Woods Institutions, WTO and UNCTAD and the enhanced role of civil society. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to report on the follow up to the Ministerial Declaration the following year during the coordination segment.

The general debate stressed the need for a UN system coordinated and comprehensive response to the eradication of poverty and hunger, particularly at the country level. It emphasized the role of CEB as critical to promote comprehensive approaches to MDG1 and called for greater interaction between the CEB and the Council through the coordination segment. Emphasis was also given to the need for a coordinated response to needs arising from new and emerging challenges. In particular, some delegations stressed the need for greater progress in coordinating early, collective responses, at both the normative and operational levels.

During the four panel discussions, consensus emerged on: The need for a comprehensive UN system approach to food security that addresses both urgent needs and long-term challenges to sustainable food security; the need for the UN system to promote a balanced approach to agricultural and social development, as essential condition for their sustainability; the important role of the Council in streamlining the work of its functional commission on violence against women and the need to strengthen this role, and; the benefit of enhancing dialogue between the normative and operational bodies of the Council to enhance coherence between the normative and operational work of the UN on rural employment and other critical dimensions of poverty and hunger.

Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review

The Economic and Social Council concluded the operational activities segment having articulated further guidance on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations development system. The segment held two panel discussions, focusing on the role of the UN system in a changing aid environment, and strengthening the UN development system's responsiveness to the different needs of programme countries.

In opening the segment, the Deputy Secretary-General expressed full support for the Council's coordination role in motivating actions on the TCPR resolution. During the ensuing discussions, delegations reaffirmed their commitment to the full and timely implementation of the resolution, while encouraging the UN development system to take concrete measures to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of its operational activities. In this connection, Member States supported dialogue with executive heads of UN funds and programmes during the segment, and invited the Council to explore new channels to strengthen its monitoring and coordination function. While welcoming the recent progress on coherence, several delegations urged the UN system to explore alternative models to the "Delivering as One" initiative. There were repeated calls on the donor community to work with the UN development system to reverse the imbalance between core and non-core resources with a view to aligning the UN's development work with its comparative advantages.

As the outcome of the segment, the Council adopted a resolution which invited the UN system to identify more targets, benchmarks and timeframes in the management plan for the implementation of the TCPR. It was also suggested that the Secretary-General's report on the resident coordinator system place a special emphasis on participation in and support to the RCS by the UN system at large, and that methodologies be developed to assess the costs and benefits of coordination. In addition, the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a report on human resource challenges at country level in consultation with the IASC. The draft resolution largely reiterates existing mandates, while reflecting the above observations.

Humanitarian assistance and disaster risk reduction

This year's humanitarian affairs segment focused on building capabilities and capacities at all levels for timely humanitarian assistance, including disaster risk reduction. Member States and partners agreed on the need for concerted, coordinated and rapid action to address today's two main humanitarian challenges: humanitarian impact of climate change and the global food security crisis. National capacity building for local institutions – governmental and non-governmental – remains a priority.

As part of the segment, two panel discussions were held, one on disaster risk reduction and preparedness, and a second on the humanitarian challenges of global food aid. The panel on climate change highlighted the importance of streamlining disaster preparedness and response, climate change management and humanitarian response, to be able to effectively address the adverse effects of natural hazards associated with climate change.

Prior to the formal opening of the humanitarian affairs segment, a joint informal event of the operational activities and humanitarian affairs segments was held on coordination in the transition phase between emergency relief and sustainable recovery. The informal event featured Liberia and Sudan as country case studies.

Peacebuilding and post-conflict development

The Council also advanced its work in the area of peacebuilding and post-conflict development, most notably by extending the mandate of its Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti in recognition of the role that the Council can play in supporting the country's long-term development.

Panelists participating in a discussion on peacebuilding in Guinea-Bissau were of the view that the Council to continue its oversight function on countries emerging from conflict and that modalities should be found to ensure the Council formally engages in dialogue with the Peacebuilding Commission. Nikhil Seth, Director of the DESA Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination and one of the discussants, suggested that a special window in the AMR process could be created for national voluntary reviews of countries emerging from conflict, using an MDG-based approach. Within the DCF, a special window could also address the special needs and concerns for "good donorship" for such countries.

A separate panel on climate change featured Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Planning in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, and Thomas Stelzer, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Interagency Affairs. Mr. Orr reiterated the recent message of the Secretary General that the food/fuel, climate and development crises are linked and should be addressed simultaneously. Noting that the UNFCCC process was proceeding at a “business as usual pace”, he highlighted the implementation challenges, including building the capacity of Member States, and insisted that implementation should not wait for a negotiated outcome. In his capacity as Secretary of the CEB, Mr. Stelzer focused on the cooperation within the UN system and identified the areas of support among the UN system in support of the UNFCCC process.

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

Financing for development regional consultations

To ensure regional input to preparations for the Doha review conference on financing for development, the UN regional commissions organized a series of multilateral consultations between March and June of this year, in coordination with DESA’s Financing for Development Office.

African countries, meeting in Addis Ababa from 31 March to 2 April, adopted a ministerial statement and passed ECA resolution 854 (XLI) in which donors are called upon to adopt more flexible eligibility criteria in financing for development in the case of least developed countries. Ministers also invited donors to consider more flexibility in providing debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiatives. The resolution includes an appeal to ECA Member States and their UN representatives to participate actively in the preparatory process leading to the Doha Conference.

In the European region, where consultations were held on Geneva on 13 May, ECE Member States reiterated their belief in the principles enshrined in the Monterrey Consensus and reaffirmed their commitment to it. In response to the developmental challenges facing their economies, countries of the region have relied on extensive domestic reform as well as external assistance, two of the basic themes of the Monterrey Consensus. According to an executive summary of the meeting, while privatization can

enhance economic efficiency, equity concerns need to be taken into account in privatization initiatives. In addition, while low taxes can lead to increased economic activity, capital could be attracted away from higher tax localities. Regional preferential trade areas were further seen as a way of stimulating investment and growth.

Asian and Pacific countries took up the financing for development issue during ESCAP’s ministerial segment from 28 to 30 April in Bangkok and again during a regional policy dialogue on 18 and 19 June. The uneven rise in average savings, the higher but also uneven foreign direct investment flows, and the fall in official development assistance to the region were among the many concerns raised.

The countries of Western Asia concluded a draft declaration on financing for development in Doha 30 April that was further discussed, updated and adopted as ESCWA resolution 290 (XXV) in Sana’a on 29 May. The declaration encourages banks to increase their participation in economic development, calls for the creation of an attractive investment climate, and says that it is vital for developing countries that the Doha Round be brought to a successful conclusion. Resolution 290 (XXV) affirmed the need for all developing countries to be more involved in the management of the global, monetary and trade systems.

ECLAC held its regional consultation during the thirty-second session of the Commission in Santo Domingo from 9 to 13 June. The final report of this consultation is forthcoming.

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

Trends and analysis

Online forums tap global forest knowledge

DESA's Forest Forum Secretariat has been calling on experts worldwide to share insights on the role of forests in a changing environment

Forests cover one third of the world's land area, constituting the largest terrestrial ecosystems. They provide a wide range of economic, social, cultural and environmental services. More than one billion people live in or around forests and use forest resources for fuel, timber, food, medicine and income. Of these, 70 million are indigenous people in remote areas who depend completely on forest resources for their livelihoods. As one of the most biologically rich terrestrial ecosystems, forests provide habitat to diverse sets of plants, animals and micro-organisms. The world's forests and forest soils store more than one trillion tons of carbon – just over half the total in all terrestrial vegetation and soils. Forests also play a critical role in other natural resources including watershed management, and preventing desertification and soil erosion.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost to deforestation every year. The loss of forest cover has occurred largely as a result of human activities, and the drivers of deforestation are both within and outside the forest sector. Conversion of forests to agricultural land, unsustainable harvesting of timber, unsound land management practices, and the creation of human settlements are amongst the most common reasons for deforestation. Although progress has been made in reversing deforestation through forest planting and restoration in some countries, and in further applying sustainable forest management, deforestation remains a critical challenge for the international community.

To address these and other pressing issues, the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, in DESA, recently invited forest experts from around the world to participate in a series of online discussions. The consultations, which started on 1 May and concluded on 31 July, were meant to promote discussion and elicit ideas that could be fed into a set of reports being prepared for the Forum's eighth session, in April next year.

In 2009, a key theme of Forum will be forests in a changing environment, covering forests and climate change, reversing the loss of forest cover, preventing forest degradation and combating desertification, and forests and biodiversity conservation. Participants in the online conferences were asked to share their views and experiences, and to identify successes and lessons learned in these areas. A complete record of the discussion is available online.

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

Technical cooperation

Standardization of geographical names in Africa

To promote standardization of geographical names, DESA's Statistics Division will hold a workshop for geographers and other experts in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 4 to 8 August. In addition to addressing the technical problems in the standardization of geographical names, participants will have a chance to reflect on the problems of toponymic administration in Africa, the establishment of national names authorities, aspects of international standardization and the involvement of the United Nations. The workshop is being organized jointly with the African Organization of Cartography and Remote Sensing, the Institut Géographique du Burkina Faso and the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names.

Worldwide geographical names standards designed to promote the consistent and accurate use of names are important in meeting the everyday needs of international, national and regional communication, whether it be in the service of commerce, transport and administration or international relations and the provision of humanitarian aid. In sub-Saharan Africa and other developing regions, standardization of place names is seen as crucial to advancing economic development and in the fight against poverty.

For more information:

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

Latin American workshop on manufacturing statistics

The DESA Statistics Division, in collaboration with ECLAC and the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, is organizing a workshop on manufacturing statistics, to take place in Lima, Peru from 19 to 22 August. Participants will discuss issues of classification and classifications revision in the manufacturing sector, as well as the set up and maintenance of business registers related to manufacturing statistics. The workshop will also focus on data sources for data items listed in the

International Recommendations for Industrial Statistics 2008.

This workshop continues the programme for the development of comprehensive and comparable manufacturing statistics in the Latin American region, initiated by an exploratory workshop in September 2007. It is part of a DESA initiative to strengthen the methodological and operational foundation of industrial statistics at the national level, and to promote an integrated approach to economic data by national statistical systems.

For more information:

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

Promotion of water accounts in GCC countries

Officials from the national statistical offices and ministries of water from Gulf Cooperation Council countries – Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates – will join experts from environmental research centres in Beirut from 25 to 28 August to share experiences in the development of water statistics. The primary aim of the workshop is to enhance understanding of the System of Environmental Accounts for Water, and to promote its implementation among Gulf States. The event is being organized by DESA's Statistics Division in collaboration with ESCWA.

The system of water accounts, known by its acronym, SEEA-W, was adopted by the UN Statistical Commission as an international standard in 2007 with a view to supporting integrated water resources management and the elaboration of environmental indicators for decision-making. National water accounts help describe the relationship between water resources and the economy, and facilitate the design of economic and water policies as well as the analysis of their impact.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment/escwaassess.htm>

Publications and websites

Technical reports



Towards Full and Decent Employment

While the international community has made a commitment to achieving full employment, this goal seems ever more distant in view of recent trends such as growing unemployment, underemployment and the phenomenon of “jobless growth”. This book also breaks new ground in seeking fresh solutions. Employment creation is the key link in ensuring that economic growth contributes to poverty reduction, with management of technological change playing a crucial role. While the recent trend towards greater labour flexibility seems irresistible, recent experience suggests some options for also ensuring decent work and economic security. Alternative macroeconomic policy priorities can also make a difference. New approaches to social security, the informal economy, the welfare state and rural employment in Africa are explored.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?pid=16034>



Growth Divergences: Explaining Differences in Economic Performance

In recent years, most developing countries have grown faster than the developed economies. This volume of analytical studies seeks to explain major differences in economic performance in recent decades by considering the dynamics of international economic growth, diverging growth rate, economic structures, and sources of demand, successes and collapses in the developing world, recent episodes of real income stagnation of countries. Several chapters critically review latest misleading claims and the conventional wisdom regarding the relationship of trade liberalization, financial development, development, aid, infrastructure spending, violent conflict, good governance, and industrial policy to economic growth.

To order: <https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?pid=16035>

Statistical compilations



Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles 2005

The 2005 edition of Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles presents internationally comparable energy balances for 111 developing countries and electricity profiles for 182 developing and developed countries. The energy balances show energy production, trade, conversion and consumption for each group of fuels used in the countries. The electricity profiles provide detailed information on the production, trade, and consumption of electricity, net installed capacity and thermal power plant input. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.W/14; sales number E/F.08.XVII.6.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/environment_main.htm

Energy Statistics Yearbook 2005

The 2005 edition of Energy Statistics Yearbook is the forty-ninth issue in a series of annual compilations of energy statistics summarizing world energy trends. Annual data for 215 countries and areas are presented for the period from 2002 to 2005 on the production, trade and consumption of solid, liquid and gaseous fuels and electricity. Per capita consumption series are provided for all energy products. The selection of graphs presented shows historic trends and/or changes in the composition of the production and/or consumption of major energy products. The Yearbook contains thirty-eight tables, including international trade of coal, crude petroleum and natural gas by partner countries, renewables and wastes, refinery distillation capacity and throughput, energy reserves and resources, and more. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.J/49; sales number E/F.08.XVII.4.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=387>



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. 5, May 2008

In this issue: Indices of world industrial production by branches of industry and by region, producer price indices, earnings in manufacturing, by sex, construction of new buildings, total exports and imports by region. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/425.

Vol. LXII, no. 6, June 2008

In this issue: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials, fuel imports of developed economies, registration of new motor vehicles, external trade conversion factors, manufactured goods exports, selected series of world statistics. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/426.

For more information:

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

Websites



Online Training in Public Administration

A number of new online training courses are now available on UNPAN, the UN online network on public administration

coordinated by DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management. For the first time, the UNPAN online training centre is offering a course on public property management, in Russian. The network's popular courses on the tactical and strategic aspects of e-Government are now also available in Russian, along with a course on

professional ethics in public service in Africa, offered in French.

Additional courses on decentralized governance, e-Government interoperability, knowledge management in government organization, and results-based monitoring and evaluation for MDG implementation are expected soon.

For more information:

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



Promotion of Sustainable Consumption and Production

The DESA Division for Sustainable Development recently launched a new website dedicated to the Marrakech Process, a global initiative to support the elaboration of a ten-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production. The process aims to assist countries in their efforts to green their economies, help corporations develop greener business models, and encourage consumers to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

For more information:

<http://esa.un.org/marrakechprocess/>

Comings and goings

Comings



Mr. Paul Cheung, Director of the DESA Statistics Division, was awarded an honorary doctorate on 30 June from the National University of Mongolia in recognition of his work in

advancing the global statistical system and facilitating the improvement of national statistical systems in developing countries. Established in 1942 in Ulaanbaatar, the institution is the country's oldest and only comprehensive university, and is a leading centre of science, education and culture.

The following staff members were promoted in July:

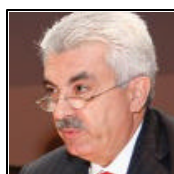
Ms. Ilaria Di Matteo, Chief of Energy Statistics Section, Statistics Division

Ms. Melissa Lazarovich, Finance Assistant, Executive Office

Ms. Awet Segid, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Mrs. Almaz Atnafu Woldekidane, Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Goings



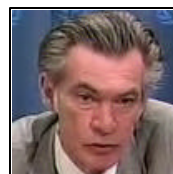
Mr. Guido Bertucci, Director of DESA's Division of Public Administration and Development Management, retired on 31 July following a distinguished career of thirty-four years in the United

Nations. As head of DPADM from 1994 to 2008, Mr. Bertucci oversaw the expansion of the organization's programme on public administration, and was a keen advocate of holding high-level intergovernmental discussions on public administration issues given the centrality of good governance to the internationally agreed development goals.

Mr. Bertucci helped establish the UN Online Network in Public Administration, the UN Public Service Day and Awards, the World Public Sector Report, and the Global Forum on Reinventing Government. He has taught, lectured, delivered training, and provided policy advice and technical

assistance on a range of subjects related to sound administration.

Before joining DPADM, Mr. Bertucci held a series of professional administrative posts in the organization, rising to the level of Executive Officer in the former Department of Technical Cooperation for Development and, before that, in the Department of Administration and Management. Mr. Bertucci, a national of Italy, holds a Laurea in political science from the Catholic University of Milan, as well as a post-graduate diploma in administrative sciences and a number of honorary doctorates.



Mr. Johan Schölvinck retired as Director of DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development on 31 July concluding a notable United Nations career spanning some twenty-eight years. At the

helm of DSPD since 2002, Mr. Schölvinck has guided the department's normative, analytical and technical cooperation work in the many complex areas of social development, including poverty eradication, employment, indigenous issues, ageing, disabled persons, youth, and the family.

Among his many achievements, Mr. Schölvinck helped shepherd negotiations on the landmark 2006 Disabilities Convention to a successful conclusion, and oversaw the ten-year review of the World Summit for Social Development commitments, which culminated in a declaration that all peoples, in all countries and from all walks of life, might join in realizing the shared vision of a more just and equitable world.

Mr. Schölvinck has held a variety of positions over the course of his career, including Chief of the Population and Development Section, Chief of the ECOSOC Policy Coordination Branch, Special Assistant to the Assistant Secretary-General for Development Research and Policy Analysis, and Information Officer in the African Office for Emergency Operations. His first posting with the organization was to UNCTAD in Geneva in 1980.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Schölvinck was Assistant Professor of Environmental Economics at Rutgers University in the United States. He holds a Ph.D. in agricultural economics from Cornell University, also in the United States, and is a national of the Netherlands.

The following staff members also retired in July:

Ms. Maria Antonia de Renzi, Technical Cooperation Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

Ms. Anne Marie Sherning, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Mismake Yimane, Secretary, Division for the Advancement of Women

Calendar

August

Workshop on the Standardization of Geographical Names

Ouagadougou, 4-8 August

UNCRD Workshop for the Establishment of the Regional Integration Committee of the City of

Ibague, Colombia
Ibague, 14-15 August

Workshop on Manufacturing Statistics

Lima, 19-22 August

Workshop on Water Accounts for GCC Countries

Beirut, 25-28 August

September

Expert Group Meeting on the Scope and Content of Social Statistics

New York, 8-12 September

UNCRD Regional Workshop on School Earthquake Safety in the Pacific

Suva, 9-10 September

Workshop for Developing Countries on the Revision of the International Recommendations for

International Merchandise Trade Statistics
Bangkok, 9-12 September

DESA-ESCAP Regional Workshop on Census Data Processing

Bangkok, 15-19 September

General Assembly

63rd 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

UNCRD Training Workshop on Human Security and Regional Development for Metropolitan Guatemala

Guatemala City, 23-26 September

Observances

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

9 August

The International Day is officially commemorated on 9 August each year in recognition of the first meeting of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held in Geneva in 1982. This year, attention will be on efforts made by indigenous peoples and States to foster reconciliation. In New York, the day will be celebrated on Friday, 8 August with messages from the Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, DESA Under-Secretary General Sha Zukang, and the Chairperson of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz. A panel discussion will be held on the subject of reconciliation between indigenous peoples and governments, along with performances by indigenous artists.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/news_internationalday2008.html

International Youth Day

12 August

The Youth Day theme for 2008 is youth and climate change, in recognition of the relationship between climate, poverty and hunger and the additional challenges that youth face as their communities come under threat. With young people increasingly adding their voices to the call for action on climate change, it is important they be actively engaged in preparedness, risk reduction, adaptation and mitigation efforts. The Day also gives the world an opportunity to recognize the potential of youth, to celebrate their achievements, and plan for ways to engage young people in the development of their societies. It presents an important opportunity for all stakeholders to rally together to ensure that young people are included in decision-making at all levels.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/iyd2008.htm>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development. 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.