



The 2007 Report on the World Social Situation was launched on 28 November. According to Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, employment and decent work need to be seen as central objectives of development strategies, and not as by-products of economic policy. Workers with low education and low skills have been hit particularly hard.

Webcast

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/pressconference/2007/pc071128.rm> (28 minutes)

Audio <http://radio.un.org/story.asp?NewsID=8235> (1 minute)

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Migration in motion

Sound policies can accelerate opportunities for rich and poor countries alike

A new era of mobility has given rise to nearly 200 million migrants around the world. While the ebb and flow of migrants is as old as human history, globalization and advances in communications and transportation have greatly increased the number of people moving across borders. Many still perceive migrants as a threat but the fact is they are crucial for the success of economies and the welfare of people in developed countries. Migrants' remittances, meanwhile, provide much needed family income that can cover education and health costs back home. Yet only recently have we begun to grasp how important

is to magnify the impact of international migration in development, and how smart public policies can boost this effect.

The close and complex relationship between migration and development policies was brought to the fore last year at the General Assembly high-level dialogue on international migration and development. The dialogue reaffirmed that carefully crafted policies can ensure international migration is a positive force for development and, conversely, that development strategies which address the root causes of migration – poverty, lack of jobs, violation of human rights – can also impact on international migration.

Taking up the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish a mechanism for continuing consultation among governments, the Government of Belgium

offered to take the lead in organizing an informal, non-binding, voluntary and State-led Global Forum on Migration and Development.

The development connection

Belgium hosted the first meeting of the forum in Brussels in July this year. Over 800 delegates representing 156 States and more than 20 international organizations took part. Setting a constructive tone for the discussion, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted in his opening remarks that, “At this early stage of international cooperation on migration and development, we are trying to build trust among States. So we should focus on those policy actions that stand to benefit all the actors in the migration system.”

In Brussels, countries looked at ways in which the employment of migrants in rich countries, and their remittances, could contribute to the development of countries of origin. The first of three roundtables revolved around maximization of opportunities and minimization of risks for human capital development and labor mobility. A second roundtable covered ways of increasing the volume and development impact of remittances, while the third addressed opportunities for greater coherence of migration and development policies, coupled with promotion of partnerships.

The Government of the Philippines has taken up the baton and is organizing the second forum in October 2008 in Manila. As this country is the origin of millions of migrants, the Manila event is expected to offer a “different, or rather, a complementary” perspective to that of Brussels, in the words of Esteban Conejos, Under-Secretary for Migrant Worker Affairs of the Philippines and focal point for the second forum. The Manila forum will follow the same format as Brussels with a spotlight on the rights of migrants. The discussion will look at ways of increasing safe and legal opportunities for the migration of workers and strategies to combat migrant smuggling and human trafficking, while continuing to stress the importance of policy coherence between migration and development.

Although the Global Forum on Migration and Development is a State-led initiative, the UN system was directly involved in the preparatory process in Brussels. DESA contributed to the forum by organizing a “marketplace” where governments could present their requests for migration-related services and find partners to implement them. Both Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and the Under-Secretary



General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang made statements in the plenary session of the forum, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Migration, Peter Sutherland, led a roundtable on the future of the forum. Mr. Sutherland is, indeed, the most direct link between the UN and the forum.

DESA and, broadly, the UN system have been requested to provide follow-up support for the outcome of the first forum meeting. To that end, the forum’s Executive Director and Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Switzerland, Régine De Clercq, attended the sixth UN Coordination Meeting on Migration held in New York on 26 and 27 November, convened by DESA’s Population Division. Mr. Conejos, as a focal point for the Second Forum in 2008, also took part. The UN Coordination Meeting brings together all entities in the UN system working on international migration in addition to other organizations engaged in migration-related work such as the International Organization for Migration and OECD.

From drain to gain: Recovering skilled workers

The Brussels forum produced at least fifty concrete recommendations for putting migrant employment and remittances at the service of development. Those recommendations, said Ms. De Clercq, are “voluntary steps” that governments can take to ease seasonal movements of migrant workers, strengthen institutions for migrant affairs, and cut transfer costs on remittances. Other concrete outcomes range from preparing a compendium of best practices on temporary labor migration, guidelines on ethical recruitment practices for hiring skilled personnel, and recommendations for dealing with the loss of skilled workers from low-income countries, the so-called “brain drain”.

Migration of highly-skilled workers has been growing, according to a study presented by OECD at the Coordination Meeting. A large proportion of skilled migrants originate in developed countries or in large countries where they do not represent a major drain on the members left behind. But for many poor countries with low numbers of highly-skilled workers, their emigration poses a troubling dilemma, says Hania Zlotnik, Director of the Population Division in DESA. "Rich countries are opening doors for skilled workers but poor countries cannot afford to lose high proportions of their relatively small number of skilled workers." This is especially true in sectors as health and education that are crucial to economic and social well-being. The WHO World Health Report 2006 has referred to a "current crisis in the global health workforce," revealing an estimated shortage of almost 4.3 million doctors, midwives, nurses and support workers worldwide, a shortage that is most severe in sub-Saharan Africa where health workers are most needed.

Between 50 and 80 percent of all college graduates from several small countries in Africa and the Caribbean live abroad, the Secretary-General reminds us in his 2006 exhaustive report on international migration and development. These countries need assistance to train skilled workers and most importantly to retain them since crushing workloads, lack of proper supplies, limited career prospects, professional isolation, and inadequate pay all feed the brain drain in a mutually reinforcing cycle of lost opportunity. The lure of a well-paid job in a wealthy country is a powerful driver of international migration, which has intensified as income inequality among countries continues to grow.

Gender inequality also plays a part. "Representation of highly-skilled women from poor countries in migration flows to developed countries is high," notes Ms. Zlotnik, "higher than the number of highly-skilled male migrants." A likely explanation, she adds, is that women tend to enjoy a much better status in developed countries than in developing ones, which spurs them to move.

The general consensus of the Brussels forum was that joint actions between countries of origin and destination are needed to prevent "brain drain" and promote "brain gain," especially to recover skilled health workers in developing countries or train more. It was likewise agreed that a statement of principles for ethical recruitment in the health sector should be developed. The Global Health Workforce Alliance is already working on such a code of conduct and will report on its findings in Manila in 2008.

Is temporary mobility the best approach?

A compendium of good policies for safe and orderly temporary labour migration is also needed, forum participants suggested. Families and communities in poor countries benefit in particular from temporary migration, which has the potential to match labour surpluses with shortages across countries in a flexible and mutually beneficial way.

Temporary migration programmes are becoming more numerous. Indeed, circular schemes are often preferred by rich countries to more permanent arrangements. After years of tight borders and restrictive immigration policies, a new thinking has emerged. "European countries now say: We realize that migration can have benefits. We need migrants – caregivers, cleaners, etc. – but we have to make sure that migration is organized, legal and, preferably, circular," says Bela Hovy, Chief of the Migration Section in DESA's Population Division.

The use of bilateral agreements stands out among the recommendations of the first Global Forum, especially if based on standard contracts and assured social security benefits for migrants. Similarly, joint agreements between origin and destination countries, with an emphasis on lower-skilled migrants, can help enforce the laws to protect temporary migrants.

Temporary migration programmes do not, however, offer a solution to all migration challenges. States that focus on admitting temporary migrants face a dilemma, says the Secretary-General in his report. In particular, their temporary status makes the integration of migrants more difficult, and may lead to their marginalization. At the same time, given the structural needs for migrants in industrialized countries with ageing populations and highly educated people who are not willing to take low-paid and physically demanding jobs, "filling those needs exclusively with temporary migrants may turn out to be problematic," according to the report.

There are even more dilemmas. "The most beneficial migration for poor countries is the temporary one," Ms. Zlotnik points out, because temporary admission regimes promote the return of migrants and the sending of remittances that can contribute to the development of their communities of origin. "But in order to maintain the temporary status of migrants, governments need to restrict their rights, and generally do not allow family reunification in the host country."

Tapping remittances

In terms of development, remittances are the most immediate and tangible way to reap the benefits of international migration. While statistics on migration have some deficiencies, migrants from poor countries sent home in 2006 about \$207 billion, according to the World Bank. That is more than double the global total of foreign aid.

Encouragingly, remittances have the potential to raise the incomes of households without migrants as well. According to the Secretary-General's report, "Every dollar from remittances may create two or three additional dollars of income in the communities of origin," mostly because remittances are spent on goods and services supplied by others in the local economy. But even if goods are produced outside the community of origin, multiplier effects will increase incomes because of diffusion through the national economy.

Remittances could have a major impact if competition among money transfer institutions can be boosted and procedures facilitated to minimize transaction costs. Such initiatives could be combined with improved "financial literacy not only of migrants, but of everybody in countries of origin," proposes Ms. Zlotnik, so that savings from families receiving remittances could be deposited in banks, yielding returns for those families and providing capital for entrepreneurs in the country of origin. Education is key. A migrant, through remittances, can provide the household with capital and income security that pave the way for more productive activities such as agricultural production or microenterprises. In Mexico for example, about a fifth of the capital invested in microenterprises comes from remittances.

Despite their obvious advantage, a country should not put all its hopes on remittances. "Remittances do not diminish the need for official development assistance," agreed forum delegates, "and they should never become an alternative to individual or national development."

The need for coherent policies

Migration should be taken into account by those in government responsible for national development policies, and not relegated to the realm of migration policy alone. Indeed, fostering communication among the different government entities involved in managing migration is pivotal if policies and

decisions are to be consistent. This is the main conclusion of the roundtable on policy coherence that took place in Brussels. Consideration of this important issue will resume in Manila in 2008. It is encouraging, says Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs and current chair of the Global Migration Group, that preparations for the forums have generated greater coordination at the national level in many countries.

The Global Migration Group is the main available instrument for such coherence and coordination within the UN system. The group, which exchanges information and works to develop synergies among international agencies working on international migration, has produced a survey of best practices in the areas explored by the Belgium forum, as well as a compendium of capacity-building activities by members of the group. Mr. Sha is Chair of the Global Migration Group through 31 December. In addition, the Population Division of DESA estimates the number of migrants in the world and at national level and is currently engaged in the estimation of the number of international migrants by age, estimates that are very relevant for the work of other units of the system, including UNICEF that is increasing focusing on the plight of migrant children.

Since 2000, the international community has designated 18 December as International Migrants Day, to celebrate the achievements and highlight the struggles of migrants around the world. The UN invites governments to observe this day through the dissemination of information on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants, and through the design of actions to ensure their protection. Aware of the imperative to ensure those rights and combat trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, the Global Forum will discuss next year actions that need to be taken to safeguard the rights of migrants.

For more information:

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



Esteban B. Conejos Jr., Under-Secretary for Migrant Worker Affairs of the Philippines, Ambassador Régine de Clercq of Belgium, and Hania Zlotnik, Director of the DESA

Population Division, brief the press on achievements of the first meeting of the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Belgium, and expectations for its next meeting in the Philippines

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/ondemand/pressconfer ence/2007/pc071127am.rm> (44 minutes)

25 years of commitment to women's equality

CEDAW starts 2008 with a move to the human rights office in Geneva

For 25 years, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, established under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, has been serviced by the Division for the Advancement of Women in DESA. As of the first of January 2008, responsibility for servicing the Committee will be transferred to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva. Looking back, both the Committee and DAW find good reason to celebrate their years of commitment to achieving equality between women and men.

The Convention, which entered into force in 1981, is a landmark in setting out the global normative standards of gender equality. It provides for the practical realization of the principle of equality of women and men, and for women's full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms in civil, political, economic, social and cultural fields. It also requires States parties to eliminate discrimination against women in both the public and private spheres. To date, 185 States – over 95 per cent of the Member States of the United Nations – are party to the Convention.

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, a 23-person expert body, started its work in 1982, monitoring implementation of the Convention at the national level, through a process of reviewing reports that all States parties are obliged to present regularly to the Committee. The result of the constructive dialogue between the Committee and the representatives of the State party are recommendations for action – the Committee's 'concluding comments' – which the State party is expected to implement and to disseminate widely within the country to different stakeholders.

The Committee also elaborates general recommendations on specific articles or issues covered by the Convention. These general recommendations further clarify the content of the obligations assumed by States parties to the Convention. Under the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which entered into force in 2000, the Committee considers individual complaints, provided that certain admissibility criteria have been met. It

also has the power to initiate inquiries into grave or systematic violations of rights enshrined in the Convention.

Over the past 25 years, the Committee has held 39 sessions. It has examined 401 reports, submitted by 154 States parties, and has elaborated 25 general recommendations. Under the Optional Protocol, the Committee has registered 16 communications, of which it has decided five on the merits and declared five inadmissible. The Committee has carried out one inquiry.

Building blocks to fight discrimination

At a commemorative event this year in celebration of the Committee's 25th anniversary, Louise Arbour, High Commissioner for Human Rights, emphasized the important role of the Committee's general recommendations. Ms. Arbour pointed out that "the Committee's general recommendation on female circumcision was the first by a UN treaty body on that practice" and that the Committee was also the first to adopt a general recommendation on HIV/AIDS. She stressed that the Committee's general recommendation on violence against women was "a crucial building block in the recognition of gender-based violence as a violation of human rights," and provided the impetus for adoption, by the General Assembly, of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, in 1993, the establishment, by the Commission on Human Rights, of a Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, in 1994, and various regional human rights instruments. Likewise, the Committee's general recommendations on equality in marriage and family relations, women in political and public life, and health, have been, in her view, widely influential.



The Convention's impact on the legal and socio-political development in States parties is without doubt. Such an impact is visible in the strengthening of constitutional provisions guaranteeing equality between women and men and providing a constitutional basis for the protection of women's rights; reforms to bring legislation into conformity with Convention principles and obligations; improvements in the capacity and authority of national institutions to guarantee equality between women and men; and increasing use of the Convention by national courts.

Evidence of the Convention's influence can be found, for example, in the South African and Ugandan Constitutions which contain significant provisions guaranteeing women's equality. Nepal's Supreme Court relied on the Convention in directing the Government to address discriminatory laws. Canada's Supreme Court drew on the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation no. 19 on violence against women in considering a case of alleged sexual assault. The Constitutional Court of Guatemala also referred to the Convention in upholding a challenge to provisions in the penal code, which treated men and women differently.

The Division for the Advancement of Women in DESA has supported the Committee in all aspects of its work. It has also assisted States parties in the implementation of the Convention and the Committee's concluding comments, and has thus contributed to enhancing the impact of the Convention and the Committee's work at the country level. The Division has regularly undertaken technical assistance activities at regional, sub-regional and national levels to strengthen the capacity of countries to fulfill their obligations under the Convention, and to support comprehensive follow-up to the Committee's concluding comments.

An area of particular focus in recent years has been the DESA's support to countries emerging from conflict, such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Haiti, in their efforts to promote gender equality and women's enjoyment of their human rights. Activities have included high-level consultations, and training and capacity-building workshops on the Convention, including the reporting procedure. According to Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, "By supporting such countries in the preparation of their initial reports, the Division for the Advancement of Women assists in creating the basis for the Committee's constructive dialogue with the State party and the establishment of a baseline for

the Committee's future monitoring of progress in implementation."

New chapter, new challenges

After the achievements of these twenty-five years, what are the challenges ahead for the Committee? The current Committee Chairperson, Dubravka Šimonović, stressed, at the celebration of the Committee's 25th anniversary that, "In too many countries discrimination against women even in the law persists. In too few countries, the Convention is directly applicable in courts, and too few judges know about the Convention and use it for the benefit of women." Sadly, "De facto discrimination against women remains universal." The Committee also remains concerned about the significant number of reservations to the Convention, the lack of compliance with the reporting obligation by a number of States parties and the significant delays in submitting those reports by many States parties.

From next year, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will support the Committee in meeting these challenges. But as a 25-year chapter closes in the Division for the Advancement of Women, it should be recalled, in the words of Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, President of the General Assembly's 61st session, that "the Committee's effective monitoring work and guidance have significantly enhanced the accountability of States for women's enjoyment of their human rights and shaped the progress of women worldwide."

For more information:

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

Global dialogue on development

Bali conference to launch negotiations on a post-Kyoto deal

Parties expected to agree on a roadmap for a post-2012 period climate change agreement

Getting negotiations going on a new international climate change agreement is expected to be the main purpose of the UN Climate Change Conference, which will bring together representatives of over 180 countries in Bali, Indonesia from 3 to 14 December. The Bali conference will not deliver a fully negotiated and agreed climate deal but is intended to set the wheels in motion for completing the text of a new international climate change agreement by 2009. Action is needed in the next two years in order to allow time for ratification by countries before the current Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

The two-week gathering in Bali includes the sessions of the 13th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its subsidiary bodies, as well as the Meeting of the Parties of the Kyoto Protocol. The first week will be devoted to negotiations among the UNFCCC parties on a wide range of issues, at the level of high-ranking government officials. A ministerial segment will dominate the second week, with statements by the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang.

Parties need to agree on the key areas to be covered by a new climate agreement, such as mitigation, adaptation, technology and financing. Delegates also need to agree on a timetable for the talks. Other issues up for discussion include a climate change adaptation fund, reduction of emissions from deforestation, the growing carbon market, and review of the Kyoto Protocol.

Shaping a global agenda on forests

Forests are expected to feature prominently during discussions of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties. To provide a forum for discussion and debate on forest issues central to the climate change issue, a special forest day is being organized in parallel to the

Bali conference by leading international forest-related organizations including UN Forum on Forests Secretariat.

An estimated 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost due to deforestation every year, and tropical deforestation accounts for up to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas emissions. Globally, forests and forest soils store more than one trillion tons of carbon – twice the amount found in the atmosphere.

Under the overall theme of shaping the global agenda for forests and climate change, the forest day programme will feature discussions on the role of forests in climate change mitigation and adaptation, including reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries, monitoring and data-related challenges, and transaction and opportunity costs in carbon markets.

In addition to serving as co-host of the forest day, the DESA's Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests will contribute to two conference side events. The first, organized in conjunction with UN Food and Agriculture Organization, is a dialogue on the role of sustainable forest management in climate change mitigation. An overview of experiences in sustainable forest management that can be applied to the challenges of climate change mitigation will be discussed with particular emphasis on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries. Technical tools and mechanisms, governance and legal frameworks, livelihood concerns, finance, and capacity-building in forest law enforcement, forest fire management, reforestation and forest landscape restoration will be considered.

The second side event, organized in cooperation with the International Union of Forest Research Organizations is on linking decision-making on climate change adaptation to knowledge about sustainable forest management. The event is a contribution of an initiative on science and technology that is part of the UN Collaborative Partnership on Forests. The UNFF Secretariat will also be hosting a booth to showcase recent developments in sustainable forest management at the international level.

For more information:

<http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/Events/COP-ForestDay/Introduction.htm>

Dialogue on development features top economists Stiglitz, Bhagwati and Jomo

General Assembly meeting to assess progress in implementation of development goals

As part of the now annual debate on follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and 2005 World Summit Outcome, the General Assembly will dedicate 6 December to an assessment of progress on the UN development agenda over the last year. In the morning, DESA's Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Jomo Kwame Sundaram, will lead an informal discussion on emerging trends and recent phenomena that may affect the stability of the world economy and the efforts of countries to implement internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Keynote addresses will be made by top economists Joseph Stiglitz and Jadhav Bhagwati, both of Columbia University, who are expected to note important trends that need serious attention by the General Assembly in its effort to promote development. Global imbalances, credit squeeze, macroeconomic stability in developed and developing countries, policy responses from national governments and multilateral institutions, and the risk of global downturn will likely be considered. Possible consequences of such phenomena if left unattended will be explored, as well as action that the United Nations could take to accelerate implementation of global development objectives.

The event will be chaired by the President of the General Assembly, H.E. Dr. Srgjan Kerim. The UN development agenda is a comprehensive set of development goals agreed at the major UN conferences and summits of past two decades. The agenda serves as the internationally shared framework for action at the global, regional and country levels.

For more information:

<http://www0.un.org/ga/62/plenary/millennium/bkg.shtml>

Gender inequality is "bad economics"

Panel calls for injecting a gender perspective into Monterrey follow-up process

Most of the world's extremely poor people are women earning on average just slightly more than half of what men earn. What is more, violence against women and girls and maternal mortality are major causes of death and disability for women aged 16 to 44 years. In response to such inequities, the Monterrey Consensus of the 2002 International Conference on Financing for Development made several references to women's empowerment, and called for gender sensitivity in the application of policies and programmes at the country level.

The General Assembly Second Committee held a panel discussion on 12 November on financing for gender equality within the context of follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus. The dialogue brought in experts to examine progress in mobilizing domestic and international resources for the promotion of gender equality. DESA's Division for the Advancement of Women organized the event in collaboration with the Financing for Development Office. Manuel Montes, Chief of Policy Analysis and Development in that office, stressed the need for countries to pay attention to the impact of women's employment and earnings opportunities. "Women should stop being treated as 'starter' workers, being brought into export production to break into a world market and replaced by men when industries move into higher productivity activities," he said.

Isabella Bakker, Professor and former Chair of Political Science at York University in Toronto, highlighted the crucial importance of integrating a gender perspective into the Monterrey follow-up process, which has so far paid only limited attention to gender equality and women's participation. Ms. Bakker said that, according to the 2007 Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, gender inequality cost the region \$80 billion annually. "The region loses up to \$47 billion annually because of restrictions of women's access to employment, and up to \$30 billion because of gender gaps in education," she noted adding: "It's clear from statistics that there remains a crucial need for resources to eliminate gender gaps in quality of life and life chances. Gender inequality is bad economics."

Mohammed Chafiki, Director of Studies and Financial Forecasts at the Ministry of Finance and Privatization of Morocco, pointed out that for the first time in its history Morocco has published a set of gender statistics and set up indicators to determine women's access to health care, education and energy, among other areas, making it possible to address gender inequality and create guidelines for the public and private sectors while furthering dialogue on issues relating gender inequality and the differing needs of the population.

He said his country is developing a gender report to evaluate public policies and a poverty map to address poverty eradication and gender, and thus budget accordingly. School attendance has risen from 79 percent in 1999 and 2000 to 93 percent in 2005 and 2006, largely thanks to progress made among rural girls.

The 2008 Doha Conference on Financing for Development is set to address international financing for the rights of the individual, particularly women, and the effectiveness of aid. Public investment in infrastructure and the use of targeted credit to create employment will also be of paramount importance. At the same time, the priority theme of next year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women will also be financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women. The International Women's Day in 2008 will likewise revolve around that issue.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/52sess.htm>

Aid dependency, a challenge for development

Panelists discuss how to reform the aid machinery to make aid more effective

New insights into the problems of aid dependency from the financing and development perspectives arose throughout the panel discussion on moving out of aid dependency, which the DESA Financing for Development Office organized as part of the work programme of the Second Committee of the General Assembly on 16 November. A panel of experts representing donors and recipients of aid, in addition to academia, discussed the development paradigm needed for countries to move out of aid dependency. Among other issues, the panelists exchanged views on how aid machinery can be reformed to so that aid

delivery is better aligned with an overall development strategy.

Benu Schneider, Chief of the International Finance, Debt and Systemic Issues Unit in the Financing for Development Office said the aid system, with a wide variety aid instruments, is complex, uncoordinated and fragmented. In addition, Ms. Schneider indicated that there are gaps between commitments and actual disbursements when it comes to aid. This hinders prospects for stable, predictable and durable aid over the long-term. What is needed, in her view, is a streamlined aid delivery mechanism.

Dr. Poul Engberg-Pedersen, Director General of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, pointed out that aid is used as a tool of foreign policy by donors to achieve certain policy goals and that donors were as aid dependent as the recipients. He added that donors should not concentrate on the aid process but rather on end results.

Panelists stressed the fact that the present aid system is too focused on temporary safety nets and macroeconomic stability, and needs to be embedded in an overall nationally owned development strategy. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers process was in the view of many of the panelists a consultative rather than a national owned process. Development strategies, it was said, should have flexibility to shift with underlying realities and encompass a wide array of investments beyond aid and that flexibility in the use of aid is also needed. WTO rules are preventing sources of financing such as tariffs and non-conditional aid which were available to countries that managed development successfully, such as the Republic of Korea.

Many panelists pointed out that aid selectivity was leading to a dichotomy of so-called darlings and orphans. They also noted that the aid system, with a wide variety aid instruments, is complex, uncoordinated and fragmented. It was also indicated that donors have a tendency to move aid in and out of countries in tandem, which can make aid more volatile than domestic fiscal revenues. In addition, the gaps between commitments and actual disbursements cause interest and exchange rate volatility and volatility in public expenditure. This hinders prospects for take off of credit and stable growth.

Dr. Debpriya Bhattacharya, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations

Office at Geneva, stressed that Bangladesh could move out of extreme aid dependency because of remittances and that liberalization of migration policies was an essential so that remittances could finance development. He also pointed out to other emerging sources of development finance.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/events/2007aiddependency>

UN and Egypt sign agreement on high-level development symposium

The Cairo meeting will lay the groundwork for the first Development Cooperation Forum next July



Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, and Maged Abdelaziz, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations

signed an official host country agreement on 28 November paving the way to a high-level symposium on development cooperation in Cairo on 19 and 20 January 2008. Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiros is expected to participate.

As part of the preparations for the 2008 Development Cooperation Forum, DESA is supporting the organization of several country-led high-level meetings to promote informal discussion of priority issues. The first symposium took place in Vienna in April. The second will be held in Cairo in January in cooperation with the Government of Egypt on the subject of trends in development cooperation, South-South and triangular cooperation, and aid effectiveness.

The first biennial Development Cooperation Forum, one of the new functions of the Economic and Social Council, will unfold during the Council's high-level segment in 2008 in New York. The Forum is set to become a main mechanism for global dialogue and policy review on pivotal development cooperation issues. The aim of the Forum will be to improve the coherence and effectiveness of international development cooperation through policy guidance and practical recommendations.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/newfunct/develop.shtml>

Trends and analysis

Employment and decent work, cornerstone of government policies

New DESA report cautions on the growth of job insecurity and most forms of inequality

“Employment and decent work need to be not a by-product but a central objective of development strategies,” said Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, at a press briefing on 28 November in New York to launch of the Report on the World Social Situation 2007 subtitled The Employment Imperative. The report calls for making the promotion of employment and decent work the cornerstone of government policy, and for setting up basic universal social protection to address recent developments in the world of work.

On the employment front, “we see a number of worrisome trends,” advised Mr. Sha. Globally, despite robust rates of economic growth, “employment creation is lagging behind growth of the working-age population.” According to the report, global unemployment increased from 6.0 to 6.3 percent between 1996 and 2006 despite expansion of global output of 3.8 percent per year in the same period. “Economic growth and job growth are not trending together, to the detriment of our societies and citizens,” Under-Secretary-General Sha cautioned.

Meanwhile, employment conditions are deteriorating. “There is greater economic insecurity for most workers and greater levels of most forms of inequality in society,” he said. “Workers with low education and low skills have been hit particularly hard,” and “macroeconomic and social policies have not been successful in lowering unemployment rates to desirable levels.”

Johan Schölvinc, Director of DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development elaborated that the report finds employment increasingly dominated by the service sector, with a global trend towards informal and casual forms of employment.

“Economic liberalization has not necessarily stimulated economic growth, as policy-makers had hoped,” he stressed. Rather, “Volatility in macroeconomic performance and employment has

increased as a result of economic reforms, especially those relating to international trade and financial liberalization.” At the same time, emphasis on fiscal prudence has led to general reductions in public expenditures aimed at promoting growth and employment, further exacerbating job insecurity.

Income distribution has shifted towards capital at the expense of labour, Mr. Schölvinc noted, creating wage differentials that contributed to raising inequality. In these circumstances, “Redistributive policies should be implemented to expand access to productive assets and employment opportunities.”

With public health care on the retreat and pensions and social benefits under pressure, Mr. Schölvinc pointed out, “A consensus is emerging that the state should take the responsibility to establish a universal minimal level of social protection.”

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/rwss/media07/>

Open online discussion on women in leadership roles

The Division for the Advancement of Women, with support from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, will moderate a discussion on women in leadership roles from 19 November to 15 December. The objective of the discussion, which is open to the public, is to improve understanding of the factors affecting access and retention of women in decision-making positions, to share available data, to identify barriers to participation in decision-making bodies, and to learn about good practices that can enhance the role of women in these areas.

The full participation of women in decision-making processes has been recognized as a human right in international human rights conventions and global policy frameworks and as critical for the achievement of gender equality. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women has repeatedly called for the promotion of women to management positions in the public and private sectors, while the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 recognized that inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels is not only a precondition for justice or democracy but is also a necessary condition for ensuring that women’s interests and rights are taken into account.

During the last decade, women's participation in decision-making has been growing, albeit slowly. Women are increasingly assuming senior-level positions in different areas, including the economy, the public and private sectors, the judiciary, international affairs, academia, trade unions, the media, non-governmental organizations and others. The evidence suggests that women's participation in and contributions to decision-making processes has improved the quality of policy outcomes. In many countries, for example, women inside the government and within civil society organizations have played a critical role in passing laws and developing policies that address women's and children's rights in areas directly related to poverty reduction and violence against women.

While data are increasingly available on women's participation in decision-making in political bodies such as parliaments and governments since 1995, there is a persistent lack of information, including quantitative data and qualitative analysis, on the extent to which women are equally represented in high-level positions in public administration, including the judiciary, private sector, academia, media, civil society, trade unions and professional associations. Little is known about women's leadership roles in civil society outside organizations dealing with women's and children's rights and needs.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/forums/leadership/>

Harnessing information technology to mitigate climate change

Conference explores role of ICT in both assuring and undermining environmental sustainability

Information and communication technologies are making a positive contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts, and are a key instrument for tackling the problem. That was the view of several leaders from business, government, academia and diplomacy who gathered at a conference on the positive impact of ICT on the environment and climate change on 27 and 28 November in New York. The meeting was organized by the DESA Global Alliance for ICT and Development, together with AIT Global Inc., to address the broad effects of these technologies on the

environment and their role in promoting environmental sustainability.

“The Secretary-General sees overcoming the threat of climate change as the defining challenge of our times,” said Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, adding that information technology is “crucial to understanding the environment and the impact of climate change” by providing tools to help cut greenhouse gas emissions, and are instrumental in providing information on climate change.

The President of the General Assembly, Srgjan Kerim, went on to say that “ICT will be instrumental in helping to develop new, climate-friendly technologies that can help economies grow sustainably and reduce emissions in the years ahead.” Technology, he added, has already offered climate-friendly solutions to curb greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon sequestration.

Calling for “very proactive problem-solving through the deployment of technology,” Alexander Karsner, United States Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, said that “while waiting for the big solution we should take every bit of existing solutions along the way.” On the positive side, he said, technology is proliferating solutions “faster than our global political leadership can enforce them” and energy efficiency has become paramount for all sectors, starting from the oil industry. The right approach involves science and technology, capital markets and policy, he said, since “markets alone do not make global strategies.”

The private sector, for its part, was equally upbeat about the potential of ICT. IBM Vice-President for Corporate Environmental Affairs, Wayne Balta, said ICT could improve the energy efficiency of all economic sectors, measure the carbon emissions of a product or process, and help in the redesign of production methods. Vice-President for Environment at Xerox Corporation, Patricia Calkins, pointed out that the pulp and paper industry is the fourth largest consumer of fossil fuels in the world. Sadly, nearly half of all office paper used becomes waste paper within a single day. The paperless office has not materialized, Ms. Calkins noted. Perhaps industry could begin to make “smarter, more efficient choices” by plugging in energy-efficient appliances that shut down automatically when not in use.

“For environmental impact, it all starts with design,” said Tod Arbogast, Dell Computer Director of Sustainable Business, since design will have an

impact throughout the life of a product. Efficiency is dictated by economics since servers, personal computers and monitors account for more than 60 percent of global ICT-related carbon emissions and world average electricity prices have grown by 56 percent since 2002. Companies, he concluded, have started to reduce packaging and dematerialize products while offering customers convenient recycling services. For Dell, recycling is a smart way to reduce carbon emissions that would otherwise result from raw material extraction, product manufacture, landfill and combustion.

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

World forum on gender statistics

Gender statistics are vital for developing policies at the national and international levels with sufficient specificity to take the needs of men and women into account. Discussed at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, a global programme of gender statistics may be relaunched at an upcoming forum hosted by the Government of Italy in Rome from 10 to 12 December.

The World Forum on Gender Statistics as it is officially known is being organized by the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat) together with DESA's Statistics Division, Division for the Advancement of Women, ECE, UNFPA, and World Bank. The main purpose of the forum is to foster action on the part of international organizations and national institutes for statistics, emphasizing best practices and promoting the debate between users and producers of statistical information.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/wsh_ops/Gender_Statistics_10Dec07_Rome/

Windsor knowledge management roundtable

An untraditional gathering of dignitaries, leading policy-makers, international strategists, educators, science and technology experts and the private sector are gathering in the most traditional setting of Windsor Castle in the United Kingdom from 30 November to 1 December for a brainstorming session

on public sector capacity-building in developing and transitional countries. Led by DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management, the circle of innovators will explore ways of expanding existing training programmes on electronic and mobile service delivery to promote social inclusion and participatory government.

Formally an initiative of the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance, or UNPAN, it is expected that the roundtable discussion will lead to "partnerships in practice" that can strengthen existing institutions and spearhead implementation of recommendations of the World Summit on the Information Society on training and skills development. While the benefits of enhanced knowledge and expertise are clear to government, some private sector firms also see potential gains from improved government services and access to more highly skilled personnel. The result is an improved quality of life for all.

Technical cooperation

Fostering youth participation in African development

DESA helps governments and youth organizations harness young people's potential

Ensuring that young people have a say in development and that youth issues are integrated into national policies are the overarching goals of a series of workshops and advisory missions being undertaken by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development in sub-Saharan Africa.

From 5 to 8 December, a workshop in Kampala is intended to improve young people's ability to contribute to the formulation of national poverty alleviation policies. The training is part of an ongoing project entitled "tacking poverty together" to enhance the role of youth in poverty eradication efforts. Representatives from teams based in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Sweden, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia will take part. This particular workshop is a joint undertaking of DESA, the National Association of Youth Organizations of Uganda, and the National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations.

For government officials, the Division for Social Policy and Development is holding a separate workshop in Addis Ababa from 12 to 14 December intended to bolster the capacity of governments to assess the efficacy of national youth policies. The governments of six countries – Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Uganda – have committed to sharing, strengthening and evaluating their youth policies, and to discussing successful cases and hurdles encountered in the process. Workshop leaders from DESA and the ECA African Centre for Gender and Social Development will also work with representatives of the African Union to align national actions with regional commitments spelled out in the African Youth Charter and adopted by heads of States at the Assembly of the Union in 2006.

In a related move, DSPD undertook an advisory mission to Nigeria from 22 to 28 November to assist the federal Ministry of Youth Development conduct an assessment of that country's national youth policy. Practical strategies were identified for promoting youth development at national and sub-national

levels, in particular through collaboration with youth organizations. Members of the National Small Arms Commission were also consulted on the relationship between youth and armed violence as part of the DESA's assistance to the small arms control programme of the Economic Community of West African States.

For more information:

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

Merchandise trade statistics to get a facelift

Since standards for the compilation of international merchandise trade statistics were last updated by the UN Statistical Commission in 1997, there have significant changes in the organization of trade and the legal environment in which it is conducted. Not surprisingly given the complexity of international commerce, there is an ever increasing demand for detailed, consistent and timely data for trade policy-making, economic analysis and market research.

To align concepts and definitions of trade statistics with today's needs, the Statistics Division of DESA is asking national statistical experts to contribute their knowledge and expertise to a review of the current standard, known as International Merchandise Trade Statistics: Concepts and Definitions or IMTS, rev.2. Experts from nineteen countries representing all regions will come together in New York from 3 to 6 December with UN, OECD, IMF and WTO officials to begin formulating recommendations for an IMTS, rev.3.

A series of global consultations will follow – based on issues identified by the expert group participants – with the goal of presenting an updated manual to the Statistical Commission for adoption in 2010. Discussions will be informed by parallel efforts to update the system of national accounts, methods for determining balance of payments, and compilation of statistics on international trade in services. The needs of trade negotiators, customs administrators, policy makers and market analysts will also be explored.

For more information:

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

Workshop on vital statistics in Western Asia

The civil registration system is considered the best way of generating accurate, reliable and timely data on births, adoptions, deaths and marital status, which underpin a wide range of important demographic and economic statistics. Yet not all countries have fully functional civil registration systems, so analysts must rely on alternative sources such as consensus and sample surveys to deduce basic information on human populations.

A workshop to be held in Cairo from 3 to 6 December will assist countries of Western Asia identify needed improvements to civil registration systems, among other things to provide a basis for designing further technical assistance projects in the region. Workshop leaders will guide participants through standards and methods for producing vital statistics, while reviewing national experiences in compiling figures based from alternative sources while ensuring data quality. The workshop has been organized by DESA's Statistics Division in partnership with ESCWA and the Government of Egypt.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/wshops/Civil_Registration_Dec07_Cairo/

Macroeconomic modeling to suit the Millennium Development Goals

Workshop in Zambia aims to strengthen pro-poor policies in sub-Saharan Africa

Up to 150 participants from nearly 30 African countries gathered in Lusaka between 29 October and 2 November to explore ways of making macroeconomic modeling consistent with achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition to exploring ideas about how to configure macroeconomic modeling and forecasting tools that are "MDG-ready", the gathering looked at progress made on attainment of MDGs in the region, and ways of developing pro-poor macroeconomic policies in each of the participating countries.

Government officials, civil society and academia representatives involved in macroeconomic policy,

macroeconomic modeling and long term budgeting issues took part in the meeting. The workshop was organized by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management.

A number of African countries have started implementing pro-poor growth policies. Finding ways to combine growth with equity poses some of the greatest challenges to African policy makers and development practitioners mainly due to the large disparities in wealth that exist in most of these countries and the difficulty of providing equitable and adequate access to education, skills development, technology, land, and productive assets.

With technical assistance from UNDP, DESA and other organizations, MDG-based planning has been introduced in 43 out of 45 sub-Saharan African countries. At least 23 of these have already drafted or completed MDG-based plans, with 20 countries at various stages of an MDG needs assessment. In Zambia for example, the UN system has assisted the government to ensure that the national development plan, its fifth, is firmly anchored in the MDGs and that it is pro-poor.

Though we are halfway to the MDG 2015 target date, progress in Africa is lagging. According to the 2007 Millennium Development Goals Report, not a single sub-Saharan African country will achieve all of the goals by 2015 if current trends persist. In order to achieve the MDGs, the results of the national MDG needs assessments need to be fully incorporated into national budgets and development plans. Pro-poor growth, energy, environment, and productive and decent employment issues must also be integrated into MDG-based planning processes.

For more information:

http://www.unpan.org/directory/conference/guest/broseoneconference.asp?conference_id=2179

Community involvement in public service delivery

DESA seeks to engage all actors in policy formulation in Aruba

Civil society organizations are increasingly recognized as legitimate providers of public services especially in developing countries. For example, in Aruba parish churches and other community organizations play a significant role in the delivery of social services to those most at risk.

At the request of the Government of Aruba, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management participated in a series of meetings from 20 October to 6 November to discuss an information systems project that will draw on data collected by community organizations to supplement official statistical databases and other government information resources. The objective is to pave the way for service delivery to Arubans in need who may not be benefiting currently from government programmes.

DESA's role in the initiative was to propose an institutional framework that would ensure and sustain the participation of the relevant government departments, as well as civil society organizations, churches, and other community-based groups. Among its several conclusions, DESA recommended that members of Parliament be actively engaged from the inception of the project, and that the media be included in the process both to promote the initiative and address transparency and accountability concerns.

Publications and websites

Technical reports



World Youth Report 2007

Progress and challenges in young people's transition to adulthood is the theme of the 2007 World Youth Report to be launched on 19 December. The report stresses the need to enhance youth

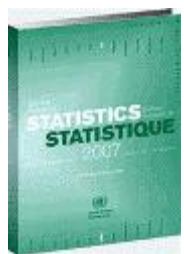
participation in all areas of social and economic development for the sake of young people and the communities in which they live. While youth face different challenges in different regions, a common thread is the lack of opportunity to become involved in development.

The report presents a regional approach to challenges and opportunities in the areas of employment, education, poverty, health and HIV/AIDS, and these issues interact with broader socioeconomic phenomena. While some of the obstacles and opportunities that young people face are the same around the world, required policy interventions differ. This report explains how and why.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/wyr07.htm>

Statistical compilations



Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online

MBS provides monthly statistics on more than 50 indicators from over 200 countries and areas, together with special tables illustrating important economic developments. Quarterly data for

significant world and regional aggregates are included regularly.

Vol. LXI, no. 9, September 2007

In this issue: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; fuel imports of developed economies; indicators on fuel imports of developed economies; registration of new motor vehicles; external trade conversion factors; manufactured goods exports; exports by commodity classes and by regions of developed economies; selected series of world statistics. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/417.

For more information: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mbs>

Working papers

Decent Workplaces, Self-Regulation and CSR: From Puff to Stuff?

The growth of voluntary initiatives to promote socially responsible business practices has been accompanied by a chorus of criticisms, including claim that much of the activity has been public relations and attempt to deter governments from implementing effective regulations. This paper reviews various types of self-regulating initiative and campaigns that have grown up alongside to assess their effect on labour practices and employment. It concludes by proposing how there could be greater emphasis on market incentives coupled with more effective public measures to induce medium- and small-scale firms to improve their labour practices, including radical overhaul in labour inspectorates functions.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2007/wp62_2007.pdf

Debt Sustainability in Emerging Markets: A Critical Appraisal

This paper critically assesses the standard IMF analytical framework for debt sustainability in emerging markets. It focuses on complementarities and trade-offs between fiscal and external sustainability, and interactions and feedbacks among policy and endogenous variables affecting debt ratios. It examines current fragilities in emerging markets and notes that domestic debt is of concern. Despite favourable conditions, many governments are unable to generate a large enough primary surplus to stabilize public debt ratios. Worsening global financial conditions may create difficulties for budgetary transfers, posing greater challenges to government debt management since restructuring

often is more difficult for domestic than external debt.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2007/wp61_2007.pdf

What Does Excess Bank Liquidity Say about the Loan Market in Less Developed Countries?

Evidence about developing countries' commercial banks' liquidity preference suggests the following about their loan markets: the loan interest rate is a minimum mark-up rate; the loan market is characterized by oligopoly power; and indirect monetary policy, a cornerstone of financial liberalization, can only be effective at very high interest rates that are likely to be deflationary. The minimum rate is a mark-up over a foreign interest rate, marginal transaction costs and a risk premium. A calibration exercise demonstrates that the hypothesis of a minimum mark-up loan rate is consistent with the observed stylized facts.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2007/wp60_2007.pdf

The Instability and Inequities of the Global Reserve System

This paper argues that the current global reserve system is inherently unstable due to the use of a national currency as the major international reserve currency, and the high demand for "self-insurance" by developing countries. The latter is due to the mix of highly pro-cyclical capital flows and the limited room to maneuver that developing countries have to manage counter-cyclical macroeconomic policies. Both features imply that the system is also inequitable. An important insight of the paper is that such inequities feed into the instability of current arrangements. Any meaningful reform of the system must therefore address these two interlinked features.

To download:

http://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2007/wp59_2007.pdf

Websites



Financing for Development

In preparation for the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to be held

in Doha in 2008, the DESA Financing for Development Office has revamped and expanded its website. The new site is more accessible, easier to navigate, and includes a printer-friendly option on all pages. All documents and information related to the 2008 Doha conference will be made available here. Visitors are invited to submit feedback and suggestions.

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



Non-Governmental Organizations

The NGO Section in DESA's Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination has launched a revamped

web site improved search tools and improved features for NGOs in, or applying for, consultative status. Information on how to participate in the new functions of the Council is included, along with a blog on the Annual Ministerial Review Innovation Fair. Authorized visitors can also connect to the Department's paperless NGO committee.

For more information:

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



Directory of Economic and Social Councils

The DESA Division for Public Administration and Development Management has compiled a directory of

national economic and social councils and similar institutions as part of its work on participatory governance. The site consists of a global directory of

institutions and other bodies or arrangements within government structures.

For more information:

http://www.unpan.org/countryprofiles_Economic&SocialCouncils.asp



Main Environmental Indicators

The DESA Statistics Division has launched a new website of official statistics on water and waste supplied by national

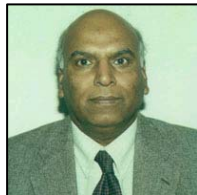
statistical offices and/or ministries of environment, or equivalent institutions, in countries in response to the biennial DESA/UNEP questionnaire, complemented by data from the Food and Agriculture Organization on water resources. Data on European Union and OECD member and partner countries are from OECD and Eurostat. The site includes illustrated maps showing trends.

For more information:

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

Comings and goings

Comings



Mr. M. Aslam Chaudhry was appointed Chief of the Water, Natural Resources and Small Island Developing States Branch in the Division for Sustainable Development as of 5 November. He has seventeen years'

experience as a senior UN adviser on water resources management specializing in formulation and implementation of water management projects, and analysis of global water issues. An economist by training, Mr. Chaudhry has addressed both conceptual and practical challenges in sustainable development, and is a promoter of multi-stakeholder participation in policy development. He holds a Ph.D. in agricultural and natural resource economics from Colorado State University in the United States, and is the author or co-author of many technical reports, research papers, and books.

The following staff members were also promoted in November:

Ms. Andrea Grozdanic, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Nadine Manket, Programme Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Ms. Lalaharinoro Rasandiharisoa, Staff Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Phyllis Roberts, Secretary, Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues

Goings



Mr. Olympios Katsiaouni retired from the United Nations after eighteen years in its service as a development economist. His areas of specialization included macroeconomic policy formulation, development

planning, economic management, programme resource mobilization, and human resource aspects of environmental management. Mr. Katsiaouni began his career in development as an economic adviser to

the Government of Saudi Arabia from 1979 to 1985, after which he moved to Uganda to be part of a World Bank project and later to Gambia as a senior economist with the United Nations. In 1991, he joined DESA in New York, serving as a Senior Adviser on Macroeconomic Management and Sustainable Development within the department's public administration programme. Mr. Katsiaouni holds a Ph.D. in economics from Cambridge University in the United Kingdom.



Mr. Jean Le Nay retired following fifteen years with the United Nations in the role of Adviser on Development Planning. Before joining the UN, Mr. Le Nay served as Dean of Social Sciences and Applied

Mathematics at the University of Haute-Bretagne in France from 1982-1983 and, later from 1988 to 1991, was Director of the University's Social Sciences and Economic Research Laboratory. He joined the United Nations in 1992. Mr. Le Nay also worked for the French Ministry of Cooperation as a consultant on macroeconomics, development planning, and the industrial public sector in Latin America and Africa. He is the author of several articles on industrial strategy, external development, and the economic impact of drought mainly in countries of the African Sahel, and holds a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Rennes in France.

Calendar

December

Expert Group Meeting on International Merchandise Trade Statistics
New York, 3-6 December

Workshop on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in the ESCWA Region
Cairo, 3-6 December

General Assembly

62nd session, New York, 18 September-December

- Dialogue on Development, New York, 6 December

DESA/UNHCR Online Discussion on Women in Leadership Roles
19 November-15 December

DESA/National Association of Youth Organizations of Uganda/National Council of Swedish Youth Organizations - Workshop on the Role of Young People in Poverty Reduction Strategies
Kampala, 5-8 December

DESA/ESA Workshop to Strengthen the Capacity of Governments to Assess the Implementation of National Youth Policies
Addis Ababa, 12-14 December

Launch of the World Youth Report 2007: Young People's Transition to Adulthood – Progress and Challenges
New York, 19 December

United Nations Climate Change Conference
Bali, 3-14 December

CIFOR/FAO/ITTO/IUCN/IUFRO/GEF/CBD/SUNF/ICRAF/World Bank – Forest Day: Shaping the Global Agenda for Forest and Climate Change
Bali, 8 December

January

Economic and Social Council

Election of the Bureau for 2008, New York, 14 January

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

2008 regular session, New York, 21-30 January

Launch of the World Economic Situation and Prospects 2008

Date to be determined

Observances

International Day of Disabled Persons

3 December

The annual observance of the International Day of Disabled Persons, 3 December, aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities. It also seeks to increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life. The theme of the day is based on the goal of full and equal enjoyment of human rights and participation in society by persons with disabilities, established by the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, adopted by General Assembly in 1982.

The theme for this year's observance is decent work for persons with disabilities. In societies everywhere, persons with disabilities are more likely to be unemployed than others. While there may be many reasons for this, one of the most pernicious is the misperception that persons with disabilities do not make good employees. Various speakers will attend events at United Nations Headquarters, while the Permanent Mission of Japan is sponsoring an evening concert in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium of a renowned touring group from Japan's Institute of Piano Teachers and the Disabled Research Association.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=22&pid=109>

International Migrants Day

18 December

Throughout human history, migration has been a courageous expression of the individual's will to overcome adversity and to live a better life. Today, globalization, together with advances in communication and transport, has greatly increased the number of people who have both the desire and the capacity to move. This new era has created challenges and opportunities for societies throughout the world. It also has served to underscore the clear link between migration and development.

In recognition of the large and increasing number of migrants in the world, 18 December is celebrated each year as International Migrants Day. Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are invited to observe International Migrants Day through the dissemination of information on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants, and through the sharing of experiences and the design of actions to ensure their protection.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/events/migrants/>

International Human Solidarity Day

20 December

In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders identified solidarity as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century. Global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice. Those who suffer or who benefit least deserve help from those who benefit most. In the context of globalization and the challenge of growing inequality, the strengthening of international solidarity and cooperation is indispensable for the realization of the Millennium Development Goals.

International Human Solidarity Day is a day to promote a culture of solidarity and spirit of sharing, celebrate unity in diversity, remind governments to respect their commitments to international agreements, and encourage new initiatives to combat poverty.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/social/intldays/IntSolidarity>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. Prior to January 2007, DESA News was issued every other month. It is now issued monthly.

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