



H.E. Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Energy and Industry of Qatar and Chairman of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development's 15th session, and Joanne DiSano, Director of the DESA Division for Sustainable Development, brief journalists on the issues at the opening of the session on 30 April.

A recording of the press conferences is available online at <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/pressconference/pc070430.rm> (14 minutes).

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The road to Doha 2008

Success or failure of trade talks by December will have important ramifications for review of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha next year

World leaders rallied around the issue of financing development in Monterrey five years ago. While standing up for an equitable trading system, they also committed to debt relief, development aid and reform of institutions. The message was that aid and trade must go hand in hand if the benefits of globalization are to reach the world's poorest citizens. Yet five years on, despite a significant breakthrough in debt cancellation, uncertainty over the fate of the Doha trade negotiations remains. With the review of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha

on the horizon in 2008, the world has yet to come to terms with the immense disparities that characterize the global economy.

It was at a delicate moment in the world trade talks that the spring high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the UN Conference on Trade and Development unfolded in New York on 16 April. As in previous years, the Council emphasized the need for coherence, coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus as agreed at the International Conference on Financing for Development held in 2002 in Monterrey, Mexico. At the heart of the discussion was the resumption in January this year of the long-stalled Doha trade talks with numerous calls for a speedy and successful conclusion of the current round of negotiations.

The realization of the “Doha Development Agenda” of multilateral trade negotiations, coupled with effective use of trade and investment policies, was the theme of one of four simultaneous roundtables held during the one-day conference of leaders in finance and trade. Other roundtable themes were aid effectiveness and innovative financing for development; the participation of developing countries in decision making, and good governance. In their plenary addresses, the Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, along with the President of the Council, Dalius Čekuolis, and President of the General Assembly, Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, all described these issues as crucial to achieving the objectives of the Monterrey Consensus and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Trade, a more level playing field

“Trade is a crucial component of the development partnership forged in Monterrey because the benefits accrue to all partners and are much greater and more permanent than either official assistance or debt relief,” said the Secretary-General in his last report on follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development. In particular, the 2002 Monterrey Consensus stressed that a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, along with trade liberalization, investment and technology, can spur development worldwide and fight poverty, “benefiting countries at all stages of development.”

Similarly, when WTO members launched the Doha round during their fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar, in November 2001, they designated it a development round. The round would seek “to ensure that developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, secure a share in the growth



of world trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development.” A note of the Secretary-General prepared for the meeting suggests that the designation of this set of talks as the “development round” is akin to “recognition that there remain rules and disciplines, imbalances that penalize developing countries, and that these must be corrected.”

On industrial tariffs, for example, the current round has set up a reduction formula intended to put an end to high import tariffs on products in which developing countries have a comparative advantage. Members have also agreed in principle that this round should bring about “effective cuts” in trade-distorting agricultural subsidies in developed countries. They have also committed to eliminate the most damaging type of subsidies: export subsidies by 2013, with a large part of them gone by 2010.

Putting the derailed Doha round back on track

Agriculture is at the core of the current round. Yet last year in July, talks broke down on issues connected primarily with agriculture. Divergent positions revolved around issues of market access, domestic support, sensitive products, special products and special safeguard mechanisms. Moreover, the United States was opposed to major concessions on farm subsidies, while India, Brazil and other developing nations were reluctant to lower tariffs on industrial goods. The European Union for its part was reluctant to consider improve market access by lowering tariff barriers.

In a resolution dated on 20 December 2006, the General Assembly would consider the indefinite suspension of the WTO trade talks “a serious setback” for the Doha round and called on countries to return to the negotiations table sticking to their development commitments.

A group of about thirty ministers responded to concerns, injecting new life to the negotiations in January this year which was seen as a sign for cautious optimism to many participants in the Council’s spring meeting. In an attempt to overcome the deadlock, four key players – the United States, the European Union, Brazil and India – met in April in New Delhi. The so-called G-4 group also met Japan and Australia, with which they form the G-6, as they probed and prodded for a solution. Eventually they set themselves a deadline at the end of 2007 for the negotiations to be concluded while encouraging the drafting of a new text for the negotiations.

Several participants in the spring meeting welcomed those decisions. But while progress in the Doha round is needed and welcome, the Secretary-General stresses in his note that all parties should also “keep a high level of ambition and not conclude the Round for the sake of concluding the Round.” As he stated in his plenary address to the Council, “We must ensure that [the Round’s] development promise is not compromised.”

Towards development-friendly trade

The 2005 World Summit Outcome called on Member States to speed up work to implement the development dimension of the Doha work programme. Four key deliverables are needed to bring the talks to a successful and development-friendly conclusion, according to participants in the roundtable on trade. First, predictable new access for the exports of developing countries is required. Second, the terms of trade must level the playing field by putting in place strong rules able to prevent stronger States from arbitrary action against their poorer trading partners. Third, flexibility is needed in the national policy space so that countries can benefit from trade liberalization while mitigating the cost of adjustment. Countries should not be forced to undertake commitments that they cannot implement. Lastly, technical and financial assistance should be provided to developing countries to enable a smooth transition to liberalized global trade.

When it comes to market access, least developed countries are set to be granted, under the current round, duty-free and quota-free access on 97 percent of all products, with the possibility of an eventual increase to 100 percent of goods and services. It may not sound like much but that 3 percent makes a big difference. Because developing countries export a narrow range of manufactures, says the Secretary-General in his note on coherence and coordination, the 3 percent exception could effectively prevent them from exporting manufactured goods that are vital to domestic industrial development.

“If development is to be the objective of the global trade system, market access is not enough,” stresses the Secretary-General’s note. Ambassador Ould Mohamed Lemine, President of UNCTAD’s Trade and Development Board, concurred that “trade liberalization is not a magic bullet.” Countries will need to improve their capacity to supply goods in the international market as well as the quality of those goods. Building productive capacity on a competitive basis, therefore, is pivotal to creating new trading opportunities, he said. Such structural change will

also require an enabling environment for innovation, production and trade, he stressed, as well as “policy flexibility and policy space for experimentation, calibration and sequencing of economic reforms.”

Several participants in the roundtable on trade reminded delegates of the special situation of landlocked countries that must to depend on neighbouring States for quick and cost-effective transport of goods to the world market in order to take advantage of trade opportunities. Assistance in infrastructure development will be needed to cut transportation and insurance costs.

Market access is not enough

Trade liberalization can only be politically and economically sustainable if it is underpinned by policies that address deficits in capacity – human, bureaucratic and structural – as well as the equitable distribution of the benefits of freer trade, according to the note by the Secretary-General. Many of the roundtable discussants pointed out that the Aid for Trade initiative, considered at the sixth ministerial meeting on trade in Hong Kong in 2005, responds to this particular challenge. WTO Members endorsed the initiative and invited the organization’s Director General to create a task force to figure out ways to put Aid for Trade into operation, and to consult with governments, international organizations and development banks on mechanisms to secure additional financial resources for it.

Aid for Trade could cover anything from the training of officials to support for the articulation of national policy, compliance with trade obligations, infrastructure, and the building of productive capacity. Participants in the high-level meeting mentioned that Aid for Trade will reinforce the development facet of the Doha round if in practice it is predictable, does not create additional debt and supplements other forms of development assistance, while helping developing countries benefit from new market access, implement the new agreements, and reduce the cost of adjustment. The European Union announced, as part of a joint EU strategy on Aid for Trade expected to be adopted at the end of this year, that it was taking the initial step of implementing a 2 billion euro Aid for Trade commitment.

The Group of 77 for its part regards Aid for Trade as a good idea, but one of limited size and scope. Even if properly enlarged, its effects would not be felt for several years.

Valentine Rugwabiza, Deputy Director-General of the WTO stated that unless tangible progress is achieved in the next few weeks in Geneva in the areas of agricultural subsidies, agricultural tariffs and industrial tariffs, governments will be in the position of “seriously contemplating the reality of failure of the round.”

Cristian Ossa, an adviser to the Financing for Development Office in DESA, says an obstacle to success is the political gain that developed countries enjoy in the short-term from keeping subsidies in place. However, in the long-term, “removing domestic forms of support such as subsidies would benefit taxpayers, and consumers, who would have access to agricultural goods with enhanced quality and lower cost.”

The success of the negotiations is within reach as long as all WTO members are engaged. “This is not mission impossible”, Ms. Rugwabiza concluded in her plenary address adding, “the real challenge is less technical than political.”

Additional information on financing for development, including the note by the Secretary-General on coherence, coordination and cooperation, and follow-up reports on the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>.



Ms. Valentine Sendanyoye-Rugwabiza, Deputy Director-General of the World Trade Organization, addresses the Economic and Social Council along with representatives of the

Bretton Woods Institutions and UNCTAD on 16 April. A webcast of the special high-level meeting is available online at <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/specialevents/se070416am.rm>.



Charting a course of action on sustainable development

Close to 80 government ministers gather in New York to explore policy measures on energy, climate change, air pollution/atmosphere and industrial development

Nearly five years have elapsed since the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg and fifteen since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. This year, at its fifteenth session from 30 April to 11 May, the Commission on Sustainable Development will take up policy options for a cluster of four closely-interrelated issues that have emerged from these two summits: energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere, and climate change and which were reviewed in depth by the Commission at its fourteenth session last year.

At the heart of this year’s proceedings is the Chairman’s draft negotiating text which came out of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee in March of this year and will serve as a starting point from which Member States can, through their negotiations, come together on an outcome document with specific policy options. The crucial issues at stake in these four themes affect the various groups of countries differently and the central task of the negotiation process will be arriving at a consensus outcome. According to JoAnne DiSano, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, “A key challenge will be for governments to adopt policy decisions that will have an impact on implementation on the ground.”

At stake in the negotiations in the area of energy for sustainable development are the details of broad policy recommendations proposed in the Chairman’s text on such matters as access to energy, diversifying energy sources, energy services for the poor and removing environmentally harmful market-distorting subsidies. Kui-nang Mak, Chief of the Division’s Energy Branch, points out that “Developing countries now have the extra burden of adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change while at the same time trying hard to lift their population from abject

poverty through easier access to modern energy services."

Policy options for consideration under industrial development include the right to national industrial development strategies, enabling industrial development and diversification, enhancing the industrial skill base, and enhancing corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability.

The policy options for air pollution and atmosphere cover the reduction of indoor air pollution, switching from traditional biomass to cleaner fuels, air quality standards for emissions from industry and transport, supporting the Marrakesh consultation process on sustainable production and consumption, expanding the use of cleaner fuels, vehicles and technologies, monitoring air pollution and human health, and assessing atmospheric pollution, and regulation to mitigate air pollution.

On climate change, policy measures include enhancing technology cooperation and information-sharing on climate change, enhancing carbon sinks through land-use management, afforestation and reforestation, integrating climate policies and supporting early warning, risk management, and disaster reduction, particularly for small-island developing states and least developing countries.

The negotiating text also calls for an integrated approach to the four themes, addressing in a balanced way the social, economic and environmental pillars of sustainable development and the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues into policy approaches, programmes and development cooperation. Cross-cutting issues include greater access to sources of finance for developing countries, incentives for technology transfer, increased investment in research for cleaner energy and industrial technologies, and both enabling private sector investment as well as enhancing corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability, increased education on and public awareness of sustainable development, as well as mainstreaming gender in all areas of sustainable development.

While there will be no formal five-year review of the Johannesburg, the current negotiations are an opportunity for member states and major groups to interpret the policy matters in this cluster of four related issues in the broader context of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Agenda 21, the world's long-range road maps for sustainable development. After all, the issues of energy for

sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution and atmosphere, and climate change are a microcosm of the universe of Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and Agenda 21, which touches on virtually every aspect of those landmark documents.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/policy.htm>

At the suggestion of the United Kingdom, the Security Council held an open debate on the relationship between energy, security and climate at its 5663rd meeting held on 17

April. A recording of the discussion is available online at:

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/sc/sc070417pm.rm>.



Global dialogue on development

New agreement adopted on sustainable management of world's forests

Although not legally binding, the instrument highlights the role of forests in development and sets standards for forest management

After fifteen years of discussions and negotiations on a global approach to protect the world's forests, countries meeting in New York for the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests adopted a landmark agreement on international forest policy and cooperation on 28 April. In the words of Pekka Patosaari, Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat, the agreement is a major step towards the creation of a people-centred forest policy. Addressing delegates, Mr. Patosaari declared, "You have sent a clear message to the global community on the critical role of forests in internationally development."

After two weeks of intense negotiations, the final agreement was reached just after dawn on 28 April. Exhausted delegates nevertheless called the agreement a milestone, noting it was the first time States have agreed to an international instrument for sustainable forest management.

Chair of the Forum on Forests, Hans Hoogeveen, hailed the agreement as an "outstanding achievement" and said it ushered in a new chapter in forest management. The new agreement, although not legally binding, sets a standard in forest management that is expected to have a major impact on international cooperation and national action to reduce deforestation, prevent forest degradation, promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty for all forest-dependent peoples.

More than 1.6 billion people, according to World Bank estimates, depend on forests for their livelihoods. The forest product industry is a source of economic growth and employment, with global forest products traded internationally in the order of \$270 billion. At the same time, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that 13 million hectares of the world's forests are lost due to deforestation every year, which, in turn accounts for up to 20 percent of the global greenhouse gas

emissions that contribute to global warming. The world's forests and forest soils store more than one trillion tons of carbon – twice the amount found in the atmosphere.

For years countries debated whether to negotiate a formal treaty or a non-legally binding instrument on forest management. But many developing countries with significant forest cover objected to any action that would compromise their sovereignty or control over their natural resources. The resulting agreement, however, is considered a reflection of a strong international commitment to promote on the ground implementation of sustainable forest management through a new, more holistic approach that brings all stakeholders together. In addition, the agreement is expected to reinforce practical measures at the country-level to integrate forests more closely with other government policies.

Another area of disagreement that has long plagued forest negotiations concerned a financing mechanism to mobilize funding for sustainable forest management. In this vein, the agreement calls on countries to adopt, by 2009, a voluntary global financing mechanism for forest management.

The non-legally binding instrument will now go to the Economic and Social Council for endorsement.

For more information:

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

Population Commission urges governments to face the challenge of ageing societies

Profound changes in population structure offer opportunities for development with adequate foresight and appropriate national policy action

Governments should tailor national policies to confront the socio-economic changes brought about by population ageing. That is the message conveyed by the Commission on Population and Development in a resolution adopted on 13 April at the end of its fortieth session. The resolution calls on governments to prepare health-care systems to meet the challenges posed by growing demand for long-term care for older persons. It also encourages them to explore ways to boost education, health services and job opportunities for the young and old.

Adopted by consensus, the resolution on changing age structures and their implications for development recognizes that ongoing profound changes in the structure of world population offer a “window of opportunity”, especially where both fertility and mortality are falling and the proportion of working-age adults is on the rise. Yet the text also makes clear that translating that window of opportunity into benefits for development requires national policies and a propitious international economic environment.

Hania Zlotnik, Director of the Population Division, said that failure to embark on the demographic transition posed serious constraints on development. “Clearly we all want longer and healthier lives,” Zlotnik said. However, to ensure the sustainability of human life on earth, increases in longevity need to be balanced by reduced fertility. Fortunately, the combination of the two will have, in her view, many benefits even if it takes foresight and commitment to realize them.

The fortieth session of the Commission on Population and Development began on 9 April and ran for a week in New York. As a functional commission assisting the Economic and Social Council, the Commission monitors, reviews and assesses the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development at the national, regional and international levels.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/cpd/cpd2007/com2007.htm>



Dr. Somnath Chatterji, Team Leader of Multi-Country Studies at the World Health Organization and Dr. Nyovani Madise, Senior Researcher at the African Population and Health Research Center, hold a press briefing on

the occasion of the fortieth session of the Commission on Population and Development on 11 April. A recording is available online at

<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/pressconference/pc070411.rm>

Economic and Social Council elects new members to subsidiary bodies

Vacancies filled on Statistics, Social Development and Women's Commissions, among others

The Economic and Social Council held elections on 25 April to fill vacancies in sixteen of its subsidiary bodies, including the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples.

Eight candidates from the various regional groups were considered for the eight vacancies in the twenty-four member Statistical Commission. The Council elected without a vote Togo, Sudan, Lebanon, Oman, Belarus, Lithuania, Honduras and the United States for a four-year term, beginning on 17 January 2008.

The Council also elected Japan, Kazakhstan, Croatia and Colombia by acclamation to the 47 member Commission on Population and Development for a four-year term, beginning in 2008, while postponing the election of five members. It also elected Spain to fill a vacancy in the group of Western European and other States for a term beginning today and expiring in 2011.

Elected by acclamation to the 46-member Commission for Social Development were Ghana, Senegal, Sudan, Japan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, France, Germany and United States, for four-year in 2008 and to expire in 2012.

The Council elected to the Commission on the Status of Women, by acclamation, Eritrea, Senegal, China, India, Russian Federation, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Sweden and the United States for four-year terms, beginning in 2008 and expiring in 2012. The Commission has 45 members in total.

The Council elected by acclamation 20 members to the Commission on Sustainable Development for a three-year term, set to begin in 2008, and which would expire in 2011. Those countries are Gabon, Libya, Malawi, Namibia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Estonia, Romania, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Venezuela,

Belgium, Canada, Germany and Israel. It postponed the election of two members. The Commission is composed of 53 members.

As set out in a Council resolution, eight members of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues were appointed by the President of the Council and eight members elected by the Council. The term of office for all sixteen members is three years, beginning on 1 January 2008.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/subsidiary.html>

NGO Committee resumes 2007 session

The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations will resume its 2007 session from 14 to 18 May in New York. New applications for consultative status, applications deferred from the 2007 regular session and reclassification requests will be considered along with selected quadrennial reports submitted by NGOs in general and special consultative status.

For more information:

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

How to eradicate hunger and poverty?

An informal meeting opens debate for the upcoming Annual Ministerial Review

Are we making poverty history? How are we doing in the fight against hunger and malnutrition? Those questions were at the heart of Economic and Social Council half-day informal event for the 2007 Annual Ministerial Review which took place on 2 April. After a short plenary, the meeting split up into two parallel roundtables led by policy makers, practitioners and academics, which shed light into those issues under the overall theme of joining forces to eradicating poverty and hunger.

In an opening statement, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro, stressed that “the old-plague of poverty remains pervasive,” inequality within and among nations is on the rise and while globalization has lifted standards of living for some, it has left many others on the margins.

Ms Migiro stressed that midway to the Millennium Development Goals target date of 2015, the world as a whole still lags in the race to achieve these goals. She identified three key areas for consideration. Economic policies, firstly, need to prioritize job creation as the critical link between growth and poverty reduction. The Annual Ministerial Review process must also consider the links between agricultural productivity and both hunger and poverty, because three out of every four of the world’s poor live in rural communities. These communities need better and more secure rights to land – she said –, to water resources, and innovative credit solutions such as microfinance, along with better access to markets.

Finally, initiatives should be placed within the framework of a global partnership for development. Employment creation and rural support packages in the developing world have to be backed by better aid, greater debt relief and stronger follow-through on the financing for development commitments.

The plenary also featured interventions by Amb. Dalius Cekuolis, President of the Economic and Social Council, and the Secretary-General of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, Bertrand Durufle, who strengthened the link between global level discussions and national implementation. In the roundtables, Stephen Smith, Director of the research programme in poverty, development and globalization at George Washington University, said mobilization to achieve the Millennium Development Goals where is most needed, in Africa and other low-income regions, has so far seem to have a modest impact. Moreover, the goals do not address concerns of those chronically poor.

Jean-Max Bellerive, Minister of Planning and External Cooperation of Haiti, described his country’s experience in poverty reduction. He stated that Haiti has taken positive steps towards moving its population out of poverty. However, he said, many obstacles remain, the structural weakness of the state being the most basic, which makes the country unable to absorb external assistance. Other barriers to eradicating poverty were politicization of funds, inability to retain human resources, corruption and political instability.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/amr2007/>

Joining forces for development aid

Vienna high-level symposium lays the groundwork for the Development Cooperation Forum

At a time when countries have made pledges for the up-scaling of official development assistance and new donors are emerging, there is new momentum for the Development Cooperation Forum. The Forum, which will be held for the first in 2008, is set to become a key mechanism for pushing international development cooperation forward.

With this message, Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, Jose Antonio Ocampo, addressed a high-level symposium on the experiences of countries in coordinating and managing development cooperation, which took place in Vienna from 19 to 20 April. The symposium is a precursor to the upcoming launch of the Development Cooperation Forum at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva in July 2007.

Participants at the symposium exchanged views on topics such as improving the predictability and stability of development aid to recipient countries, and harmonize donor practices and procedures, which included a presentation on the first UN joint office in Cape Verde. Discussants also explored how to improve the monitoring of aid quality, and lessons learned in ensuring sustainability and development of institutional and human capacities for managing aid.

Ocampo traced a portrait of the status of official development assistance, characterized by a significant recovery since 2002 Conference on Financing for Development, and by additional commitments made in 2005 by the European Union and the G7. Ocampo pointed out that, despite that recovery, the recent surge stemmed from debt relief and emergency assistance in 2005. Indeed, development aid from OECD countries fell by 5.1 percent in 2006 as large debt relief packages were not approved last year. He also welcomed the fast growth of South-South cooperation, and cited as an example the booming Chinese cooperation with Africa.

The two-day discussion was informed by a number of country case studies and presentations that brought in local examples and recent experiences in coordinating and managing development aid from Bangladesh, Cape Verde, Indonesia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Uganda and Viet Nam.

Taking advantage of a multi-stakeholder approach, the symposium included participation from a range of renowned institutions and individuals, including UNECA, OECD/DAC, NEPAD, and CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation. In addition, Victor Borges, Foreign Minister of Cape Verde, contributed with a keynote address on Cape Verde's vision for development cooperation.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/dcf2007/>

Ban Ki-moon meets with current and past presidents of ECOSOC

UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, met on 16 April with the current and past presidents of the Council regarding the reform process, the need for strengthening cooperation between the three principal organs of the UN, and the Council's role in promoting development.

From left to right: Markarim Wibisono of Indonesia (2000), Juan Somavia of Chile (1998 and 1993), Marjatta Rasi of Finland (2004), Dalius Čekuolis of Lithuania (2007), Ban Ki-Moon (Secretary-General), Ali Hachani of Tunisia (2006), Munir Akram of Pakistan (2005), Ivan Simonovic of Croatia (2002), and Martin Chungong Ayafor standing in for Mr. Martin Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon (2001).



Trends and analysis

Lands, territories and natural resources

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to convene in New York from 14 to 25 May

More than a thousand indigenous participants from all regions of the world will come together with government representatives, UN agencies, the academia and civil society to state their views, voice their concerns and suggest solutions regarding their lands, territories and natural resources in New York from 14 to 25 May.

The sixth session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues will address the issues of territories, lands and natural resources. According to Tauli-Corpuz, an indigenous Igorot leader from the Philippines and Chairperson of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, “With the increasing desire of states for more economic growth, senseless exploitation of indigenous peoples’ territories and resources continues unabated.”

While the agenda has an emphasis on implementation of the Forum’s previous recommendations, the session will also include two half-day discussions on Asia and on urban indigenous peoples and migration. The migration of indigenous people to urban areas mirrors the global trend of urbanization yet indigenous peoples in urban areas face many challenges, especially unemployment, limited access to services, and inadequate housing.

Indigenous experts will have at their disposal the results of a number of meetings and workshops on urban indigenous issues, the Convention on Biological Diversity’s international regime on access and benefit sharing, and the formulation of indicators of well-being. In addition to these reports, a number of papers submitted by Forum members will be presented on traditional knowledge, analysis of the Forum’s previous recommendations and their implementation, the implementation of the human rights mandate of the Forum, and enhancement of the reporting by intergovernmental organizations.

Fifty-eight side events have been organized by governments, agencies, indigenous organizations, NGOs and others. The opening of the annual indigenous exhibit and a cultural event and reception will take place on Tuesday, 15 May, with an

impressive array of works by indigenous artists from around the world. Over 1700 participants are expected to attend, in addition to representatives from some 70 countries and 30 intergovernmental agencies.

For more information:

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

Top economists gather in Beijing to discuss global economic outlook

Global imbalances, China’s integration into the world financial and trading system, and South-South economic linkages on the agenda

The semi-annual expert group meeting on the world economy, also known as Project Link, will be held from 14 to 17 May in Beijing, sponsored by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. About a hundred economists from more than fifty countries and several international organizations will take part in the conference.

The outlook for the world economy will be a main point of discussion, including a presentation of the LINK Global Economic Outlook, prepared by DESA in cooperation with the national experts, and other major forecasting agencies such as the IMF, the World Bank and the OECD. Global imbalances, China’s integration into the world financial and trading system, and South-South economic linkages will also be examined. Professor Sir Clive Granger, Nobel laureate in economics, will deliver a keynote lecture on econometric modeling.

Project Link is a non-governmental and cooperative research activity integrating independently developed national econometric models into a global econometric model. It provides a consistent framework for undertaking quantitative studies of the international economic transmission mechanisms and of the effects of international and national policies, developments and disturbances on the outlook for the world economy. LINK forecasts are incorporated into the World Economic Situation and Prospects, a flagship publication of DESA produced jointly with UNCTAD and the regional commissions.

For more information:

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

Do traditional models for bank regulation apply to microfinance?

There may be a growing need for regulation as a result of strategic alliances between different financial institutions but not at the expense of clients and service providers

Financial services are a luxury only a minority of the population can access in the developing world. As a response, microfinance institutions emerged over the past three decades to address this market failure and provide financial services to the poor. Yet at this point, finding ways to effectively regulate microfinance appears a major challenge. To what extent the traditional criteria for bank regulation apply to microfinance?

A panel discussion on regulation of microfinance was jointly organized by the DESA Financing for Development Office and the UN Capital Development Fund on 10 April in New York. The panel was moderated by José Antonio Ocampo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and featured panellists such as Joselito Gallardo, Counsellor, Business Outreach Center Network, Arnaud Ventura, Vice President, PlaNet Finance and President and CEO MicroCred, Mark Bienstman, Senior Adviser for Institutional Relations, World Savings Banks Institute, and Richard Weingarten, Executive Secretary of UNCDF.

Under-Secretary General Ocampo highlighted the tasks undertaken during the International year of Microcredit in 2005, jointly coordinated by DESA and UNCDF, including the publication of the blue book on Building Inclusive Financial Sectors for Development. He indicated that inclusive finance includes a continuum of financial services that the poor need. This includes of course credit but goes beyond credit.

The panel discussed the expansion of microcredit into inclusive finance and the emerging need for regulation as a result of strategic alliances between different financial institutions. There are many reasons why microfinance should be regulated, among them improved sustainability of microfinance institutions, protection of savings, safeguarding the stability of financial systems, mitigation of risk due to currency mismatches, prevention of money laundering, and funding of terrorism. However, several participants noted, regulations should not

restrict access to finance by crowding out clients and/or providers.

Several key issues related to regulation of microfinance were mentioned, starting with whether different agents should be subject to the same type of regulation or whether tiered regulation should be implemented. Another point that was raised is whether regulation should target agents or activities. Who regulates and who supervises are also pertinent questions, especially in developing countries where there are multitude of small institutions and limited supervisory capacity. The need for coherence between regulation of microfinance and other national policies was also stressed.

Recent observations of country experiences seem to indicate that it takes a long time, eight years or so, to establish a regulatory framework for microfinance. The process includes laying down rules, expanding oversight capacity, transforming institutions and resolving political conflicts. Private companies investing in microfinance institutions that are outside the legal framework are regulated by new or temporary laws or fall under inappropriate banking regulation confront many challenges – such as uncertainty because of changing regulatory environment and limitations in access to funding. Savings banks face restrictions on the services that they can provide and are constrained by uneven application of regulation. They favour regulation based on activities rather than institution and based on activities risk profile.

There are many international programmes to support improvement of regulatory environments to expand access to finance. UNCDF has assessed financial sector development in Africa, including the legal and regulatory framework, and developed nationally owned policy and strategies along with their implementation.

Regulation of microfinance appears, in sum, a technical and complex issue. It touches upon the interests of many different stakeholders and is very much embedded in each national context. It is thus extremely difficult to design a set of detailed common guidelines for different countries. Policy makers in developing economies are seeking advice from different actors. Coordination among them is, indeed, crucial. Advice should target the principles of maintaining soundness of financial sectors, protecting savings and expanding access to financing.

DESA has initiated a project entailing regional comparative studies and regional multi-stakeholder

conferences. The ultimate aim is to elaborate good practices in regulation of microfinance on a regional and international basis. The Financing for Development Office in DESA is taking a lead role in this project in collaboration with PlaNet Finance and World Savings Banks Institute.

For more information and to view a webcast of the event: <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>

Elimination of discrimination against women

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the human rights treaty body in charge of monitoring implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, will hold its thirty-eighth session in New York from 14 May to 1 June 2007. Under article 18 of the Convention, States parties are requested to report periodically on the legislative, judicial, administrative, and programmatic measures they have taken to put the Convention into practice, and on tangible progress achieved in the elimination of discrimination.

During the upcoming session, the Committee will examine the initial reports of Mauritania, Serbia and Syrian Arab Republic, and the combined initial and periodic reports of Mozambique, Niger, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Vanuatu. The Committee consists of twenty-three independent experts elected for a four-year term.

The Committee welcomes country-specific information from NGOs in the form of alternative or shadow reports which can be submitted prior to or during the session concerned.

For more information:
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/38sess.htm>

Setting goals and targets for youth development

UN system experts and youth to meet in New York from 29 to 31 May

Since the adoption of the World Programme of Action for Youth in 1995, many Governments, the international community and other stakeholders have embarked on steps to give priority to youth issues. The international community, however, has yet to set specific goals and targets to guide the development and implementation of these activities. The Commission for Social Development at its forty-fifth session in February this year requested the Secretary General, in consultation with organizations, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to identify goals and targets for the World Programme of Action cluster on youth and the global economy, covering globalization, employment, education and hunger and poverty.

To this end, DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development will hold an expert group meeting in New York on 30 to 31 May to try to come up with an agreed set of goals and targets for presentation to the General Assembly in the fall. The expert group meeting will be preceded by preparatory forum on 29 May that gives young people the opportunity to explore the issues before the main meeting the next day.

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

Census mapping and use of geographical information systems

Expert group meeting to review technologies' capabilities in census mapping

An expert group meeting on contemporary practices in census mapping and the use of geographical information systems, organized by DESA's Statistics Division, will be held from 29 May to 1 June in New York. Experts will contribute to a technical report on best practices to be used as input to a series of broader regional workshops in September, as well as an update to the UN Handbook on Geographic Information Systems and Digital Mapping. Participants are expected to review approaches to census mapping and the use of advanced digital technology – such as geographical information systems, global positioning systems, remote sensing, and the internet – in support of census mapping operations. Concepts and techniques in geo-coding, global positioning, digital delineation of enumeration areas, and spatial analysis will be discussed, along with institutional issues.

For more information:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/meetings/egm/CensusMappingEGM07/>

Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society

Consultation meetings to assess progress on WSIS plan of action

In connection with a cluster of WSIS-related events to take place in Geneva, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management together with the Office of ECOSOC Support and Coordination will hold a briefing on 23 May for ambassadors on success, failure, and management of e-governance initiatives. The purpose of the briefing is to inform high-level delegates about the do's and don'ts for successful e-governance in developing countries, with an emphasis on least developed countries. A second consultation will be held on 24 May to assess progress made by stakeholders on the role of public governance authorities and all stakeholders in the promotion of ICTs for development, on ICT applications and e-government, and on international and regional cooperation.

In addition, consultations will be held on parliaments in the information age. The meeting will bring together high-level representatives from legislatures, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and academia to exchange ideas and experiences on current initiatives relating to the role of parliaments in the development of the information society and the use of ICT to modernize parliamentary practices. Special attention will be paid to recent experiences on the use of open source in parliament and ongoing efforts to develop a continental open source parliamentary information system in Africa.

For more information: <http://www.unpan.org/post-WSIS-C1-C7home.asp>

Role of NGOs in the achievement of the development goals

How can NGOs be included in UN processes aimed at poverty reduction? Participants in a meeting on 2 May are expected to shed light on best practices in the field of poverty and hunger as part of preparations for an Innovation Fair, a side event of the Economic and Social Council that will be held in Geneva in July. The preparatory meeting, and the Innovation Fair, are being organized by the DESA Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination.

For more information:

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

Harnessing ICT for social development

Infopoverty World Conference stresses the potential of ICT for social advancement

The UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development hosted the seventh [Infopoverty](#) World Conference 2007 on harnessing the use of ICTs for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals from 19 to 20 April in New York. Participants spoke of the digital revolution as pivotal to promoting broader markets and increased social utility. The final declaration noted the current gap between digital haves and have-nots suggesting that better connectivity, development of new products, increased competition in ICT services, and interoperability standards were possible solutions. Bearing in mind the need to improve conditions in disadvantaged communities, the declaration stressed the importance of the social use of ICTs, stating renewable energy, e-learning, and telemedicine offer considerable opportunities for social development through ICT.

The conference was organized by the Observatory for Cultural and Audiovisual Communication, with the support of the UN Global Alliance for ICT and Development and the Infopoverty Institute at the University of Oklahoma.

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

Technical cooperation

Integration of older persons in development

Capacity-building project trains Senegalese officials

Training government officials to implement the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is the goal of a capacity-building project that the Division for Social Policy and Development in DESA will be carrying out from 2 to 12 May in Senegal.

Integrating older persons in development goals through implementation of the Plan of Action requires technical skills that a number of countries, among them Senegal, sometimes lack.

The Madrid plan was adopted by member states in 2002 but there is no coherent UN system strategy to assist member states in implementing its provisions.

DESA is trying to fill out that gap by working with governments to identify national policy issues on ageing that need to be addressed, provide the technical skills to design, develop and implement policies and programmes. Later, a training-of-trainers methodology will be used to expand national capacity in the sub-region.

For more information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/MIPAA/Thailand06/webpage.pdf>

Tackling gender discrimination in Haiti

DESA consultation mission seeks to integrate women's rights into rehabilitation efforts

Haiti is taking steps to tackle the many challenges it faces as it emerges from conflict. Its reconstruction efforts are bringing about a measurable degree of political stability and basic security. In the drive for reconstruction and stability, however, it is important that the gender dimension not be overlooked. The DESA Division for the Advancement of Women organized a high-level consultation mission to Haiti from 16 to 20 April to help ensure that the rights of women and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are an integral part of all activities undertaken in the country's rehabilitation efforts.

The consultation cast a spotlight on particular aspects and articles of the Convention, such as constitutional and legislative frameworks including marriage and family relations, trafficking of children and girls, violence against women, participation in decision-making, as well as education, employment, health and rural women. There is a need to advance the Convention in Haiti to address such issues as gender-based violence and discriminatory legislation. Poverty is also of concern, and has very real effects on women, particularly in a country with high maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS rates.

The consultation was designed to raise awareness and visibility of the Convention at the highest political levels, and to provide recommendations for priority action by government and NGOs that would strengthen implementation of the Convention's provisions. Three experts on the Convention, Françoise Gaspard, Regina Tavares da Silva and Arlette Gautier, held consultations with high-level officials from ministries, members of Parliament, NGOs and the UN country team.

The Division will now formulate a follow-up programme for Haiti that includes training of government officials in the Ministry for the Status of Women in particular to improve implementation of the Convention in that country.

Since 2003, the Division has offered a programme of support to countries emerging from conflict to enhance their capacity for implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. Similar consultations have taken place in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Afghanistan.

For more information:

http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/TechnicalCooperation/tcprog_emergingconflict.htm

Country practices in compiling international merchandise trade statistics

Latin American workshop in Lima aims to improve the quality and availability of data

The regional workshop on country practices in compilation of international merchandise trade statistics, organized by the Statistics Division of

DESA with the cooperation of the Andean Community and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, is part of a special effort to improve the quality and availability of international merchandise trade statistics data of countries of the region.

Presentations and discussions will centre on the compilation of international merchandise trade statistics, and in particular export processing zones, re-exports, CIF and FOB valuation of imports, and calculation of export and import price indices. The workshop will also cover the results of the Questionnaire on National Compilation and Dissemination Practices, which was sent out in July 2006 and which deals with the full scope of issues related to IMTS, including institutional arrangements, basic concepts and definitions, and data reporting practices.

For more information:

http://unstats.un.org/unsd/trade/WS%20Lima%202007/Lima_workshop_imts_trade.htm

Financing for innovative development

Panel discussions spotlight microfinance as a means to strengthen micro-entrepreneurship

The Financing for Development Office in DESA, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Europe, is organizing two panel discussions on microfinance for innovative enterprises and on rethinking the role of national and regional development banks in transition economies, both covering the Eastern European and Commonwealth of Independent States areas. The discussions will unfold within the context of the meeting of experts on financing for innovative development that takes place in Geneva from 3 to 4 May.

The discussion on microfinance for innovative enterprises will elaborate on serious constraints faced by micro-enterprises accessing external financing and on the importance of microfinance for fostering micro-entrepreneurship and innovation. The debate on rethinking the role of national and regional development banks in transition economies will focus on how to enhance the role of development finance institutions in addressing key development challenges.

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

Laying the groundwork for the Global Forum on Reinventing Government

Preparatory meetings in Latin America, the Caribbean and Western Europe set the stage for the June forum in Vienna

The Division for Public Administration and Development Management is starting its engines for the seventh Global Forum on Reinventing Government on Building trust in Government which will take place in Vienna from 26 and 29 June. Three preparatory regional forums will be held in May, in Brasilia, Bridgetown and Rome.

Organized in cooperation with UNDP and the Government of Brazil, the Regional Forum on Reinventing Government in Latin America will be opened by President Lula Da Silva in Brasilia on 2 May. The objective of the forum is to assist governments to strengthen their public sector and governance capacities, take greater advantage of the potential of globalization, and play its part in the achievement of development objectives. The Latin America Regional Forum will cover citizen expectations and trust in the state, transparent governance, civic participation and access to Information.

In the Caribbean region from 7 to 18 May in Bridgetown, Barbados, the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration and the Government of Barbados, together with DESA and UNDP, will examine the issue of trust in government including improved public management through civic engagement. The Caribbean forum will stress the introduction and application of innovations in public management for better policy development, service delivery and public accountability.

Discussions in Western Europe will revolve around the notion of transformational government and the public administration of the future. The meeting, which is organized in collaboration with the Government of Italy, will take place on 21 May in Rome. An ultimate goal is to figure out how trust in government can be built through innovations in the public sector, and to facilitate the design of national innovation strategies in Europe with an emphasis on the use of information and communication technology for development.

Government ministers, high-level officials, representatives of international organizations and

civil society organizations from the three regions will take part in the forums.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/globalforum7.asp>

E-governance training for senior managers

At the invitation of the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management will offer a training session on e-governance for senior managers from developing countries in New York on 14 May. The focus of the training will cover e-governance strategy development, improvement of government online service delivery, and knowledge management and networking.

For more information:

<http://www.unpan.org/contactus.asp>

Publications and websites

Technical reports



Industrial Development for the 21st Century: Sustainable Development Perspectives

This report highlights key industrial development challenges for developing countries, across different regions and sectors, and how effectively and with what sorts of policies and results different countries have responded.

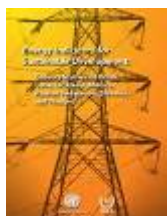
The publication can be downloaded from:
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/industrial_development/index.htm



World Population Ageing 2007

This edition of World Population Ageing updates the original report issued in 2002 in conjunction with the Second World Assembly on Ageing and incorporates new variables. It provides a description of global population trends in population ageing and includes a series of indicators of the ageing process by development regions, major areas, regions and countries. It is intended to provide a solid demographic foundation for the follow-up activities of the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

For more information and to order:
<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E07WPA>



Energy Indicators for Sustainable Development: Country Studies on Brazil, Cuba, Lithuania, Mexico, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Thailand

This title presents seven national case studies from a coordinated research project led by the IAEA, in cooperation with DESA's Division for Sustainable Development. The publication describes how energy indicators are developed at the national level, how they can be used to assess national energy systems and how they assist in

reviewing the effectiveness of policies undertaken or planned.

The publication can be downloaded from:
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/energy_indicators/index.htm



Case Studies of Market Transformation Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Drawing on DESA's involvement in technical cooperation projects, outlines some of the experiences and lessons learned in promoting more energy efficient refrigerators and renewable energy in China, market transformation through appliance standards and labeling, and commercializing renewable energy in India.

For more information:
http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/energy_casestudies/index.htm



Compendium of Innovative E-government Practices

As information and communication technologies change the lives of people around the world, governments must find solutions that increase public value to citizens through, for example, the use of internet which has the power to transform government service delivery and public administration. This title is a compilation of recent case studies of innovative e-government solutions, services and applications with 107 case studies from 48 countries. Topics covered include e-democracy, gender equality, e-education, e-commerce, information access, and citizen service delivery.

For more information: <http://www.unpan.org/dpepa-kmb-eg-egovapps.asp>



Indigenous Women and the United Nations System: Good Practices and Lessons Learned

Despite their enormous assets and contribution to society, indigenous women still suffer from discrimination both as women and as indigenous individuals. They are subjected to extreme poverty, trafficking, illiteracy, lack of access to ancestral lands, non-existent or poor health care and violence in the private and the public sphere. This title gathers a compilation of cases submitted by UN agencies describing their work with indigenous women in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Indigenous Women will be launched in May during the sixth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, in English, French and Spanish.

For more information:

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

Statistical compilations



Population and Vital Statistics Report

The Population and Vital Statistics Report: Series presents most recent data on population size (total, male and female) from the latest available census of the population, national official population estimates and the number and rate (births, deaths and infant deaths) for the latest available year after 1988. It also presents United Nations estimates of the mid-year population of the world, with its various areas and regions. The current issue presents data for 2004 or 2005 (the latest available year).

Vol. LIX, no.1, January 2007,
ST/ESA/STAT/SER.A/240-241

For more information:

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



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.2, February 2007
ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/410

Special features in this issue: Indices of world industrial production by branches of industry and by regions; producer price indices; earnings in manufacturing, by sex; construction of new buildings; total exports and imports by regions; volume and unit value indices and terms of trade.

For more information:

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

Meeting records

Proceedings of the Expert-Group Meeting on Social and Economic Implications of Changing Population Age Structures

This volume contains the proceedings of the Expert Group Meeting on the Social and Economic Implications of Changing Population Age Structures, convened in Mexico City from 31 August to 2 September 2005, to discuss the challenges and opportunities posed by emerging trends in this area, including policy options to take advantage of the so-called demographic dividend and to mitigate the problems arising from changing age structures in different socio-economic and political contexts. Forthcoming.

For more information:

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

Working papers

Our Common Humanity in the Information Age: Principles and Values for Development

This title features statements by stakeholders addressing the challenges of globalization and the common destiny of human beings as neighbours sharing a common humanity. The publication is organized into six sections corresponding to the six values highlighted in the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, namely freedom, solidarity, equality, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. Forthcoming.

For more information and to order:

<https://unpx.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E07043>

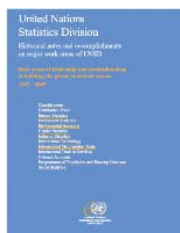
Humanizing the Digital Age

This title will be published jointly by the Global Alliance for ICT and Development, Fordham University, Kadir Has University, ESAD Business School and the South-South Cooperation programme of UNDP. It examines how the information revolution has provided unprecedented opportunities for economic and human development, and argues that success in globalizing markets depends on integration of human knowledge, skills, capacities, efficiency and the speed of people to adapt to fast changing conditions. Forthcoming.

For more information and to order:

<https://unpx.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E07020>

Outreach material



Brochures on the global statistical system

The Statistics Division of DESA has released a pair of brochures on the efforts and achievements of the United Nations in the advancement of the global statistical system from 1947-2007.

For more information and to download:

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

Comings and goings

Comings



Mr. Juwang Zhu was appointed Chief of the Programme Coordination, Major Groups and Partnerships Branch of the Division for Sustainable Development effective 1 April. He has worked on a broad range of sustainable development issues, including

finance, consumption and production patterns, and small island developing States. He has also been engaged in inter-agency coordination in the area of sustainable development. Mr. Zhu joined the United Nations in January 1985, working first in the United Nations Office in Geneva and later at the World Food Council in Rome. He was transferred to the Division for Sustainable Development in October 1993 to service the newly established Commission on Sustainable Development.

The following staff members were also promoted in April:

Ms. Arlene Adriano, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Corazon Cabigao, Programme Assistant, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Ms. Juanita Llanto-Barnett, Staff Assistant, Division for Sustainable Development

Calendar

May

Commission on Sustainable Development

15th session, New York, 30 April-11 May

DESA/UNDP/Government of Brazil Regional Forum on Reinventing Government in Latin America

Brasilia, 2-4 May

DESA/Office of the President of the General Assembly Innovation Fair on NGO Contribution to the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

New York, 2 May

Capacity Building to Integrate Older Persons in Development Goals and Frameworks

Dakar and Saly, 2-12 May

DESA/ECE Expert Group Meeting on Financing for innovative development

Geneva, 3-4 May

DESA/UNDP/CARICAD/Government of Barbados Regional Forum on Reinventing Government in the Caribbean

Bridgetown, 7-8 May

DESA/Andean Community/ECLAC Regional Workshop on Country Practices in Compilation of International Merchandise Trade Statistics

Lima, 7-11 May

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

38th session, New York, 14 May-1 June

Expert Group Meeting on the World Economy (Project LINK)

Beijing, 14-17 May

Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Resumed session of 2007, New York, 14-18 May

Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

6th session, New York, 14-25 May

DESA/Government of Italy Regional Forum on Reinventing Government in Western Europe

Rome, 21 May

World Summit on the Information Society Implementation Follow-up Events

Geneva, 23-24 May

Expert Group Meeting on Contemporary Practices in Census Mapping and Use of Geographical Information Systems

New York, 29 May-1 June

Expert Group Meeting on Goals and Targets for Youth Development

New York, 30-31 May

June

DESA/UNU Conference on Fragile States, Fragile Groups: Tackling Economic and Social Vulnerability

Helsinki, 15-16 June

7th Global Forum on Reinventing Government

Vienna, 26-29 June

Observances

International Day of Families

15 May

This year, the International Day of Families will be marked with a midday event at UN Headquarters on the theme of families and persons with disabilities. The theme coincides with the recent adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2006 and the opening for signature of the Convention recently on 30 March. The purpose is to emphasize the rights of persons with disabilities, the role of family in the empowerment of persons with disabilities, and the need for support to families with family members with disabilities.

World Information Society Day

17 May

World Information Society Day is celebrated each year to enhance public awareness of the role played by telecommunications in the social welfare and the socio-economic development of countries. This year, events in New York will include activities held throughout New York City, some of which are

ceremonial and others practical. The Day presents an opportunity to tell a tale of two worlds. While there has been plenty to marvel at with the advent of technology, more than three billion people have not had the experience of making a telephone call in their lives.

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

Inquiries should be addressed to esa@un.org.