



H.E. Mr. Gilberto Rincon Gallardo, President of the National Council to prevent discrimination in Mexico, addresses the signing ceremony of the new United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which aims to secure the rights of some 650 million persons with disabilities around the world.

A recording of the ceremony is available online at <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/specialevents/se070330am.rm> (2 hours and 50 minutes). A summary podcast is available from UN Radio at <http://radio.un.org/play.asp?NewsID=6643> (4 minutes)

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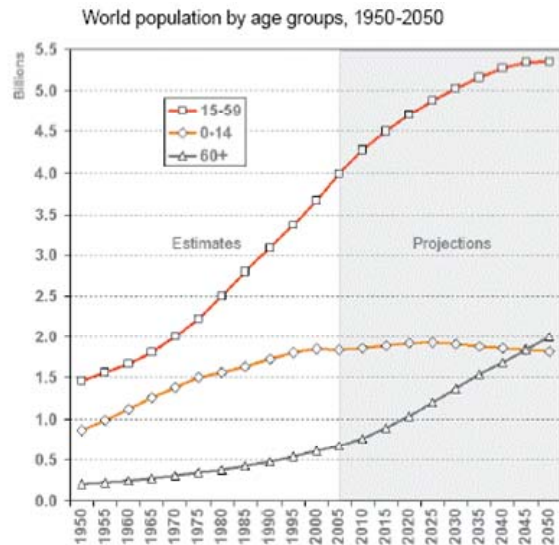
### An ageing world poses new challenges for development strategists

*Older persons are more likely to be poor than working-age adults so social protection systems need to be deepened to ensure old age security in developing countries*

The graying of industrialized countries resulting from declining birth rates and increased life expectancy has been making headlines for quite some time. Yet eyebrows were raised when DESA's Population Division announced recently that nearly eighty percent of people aged sixty years or over are

predicted to be living in developing nations by the year 2050. The developing world is indeed ageing more rapidly than the more advanced regions, and this shift is set to test the viability of long-term development strategies.

According to the newly released 2006 report on World Population Prospects, for the first time in history the number of older persons in the world is set to surpass the number of children by 2045. This demographic crossover is the product of a long-term decline in mortality and, especially, fertility rates globally, which in turn have led to a steady ageing of the world's population. Europe, whose inhabitants are the oldest in the world, already found itself home to more elderly persons than children ten years ago, and the trend shows no signs of abating. Elderly persons in Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Oceania are expected to account



for a quarter of the population by 2050, while thirty-five percent of the population in Europe will be aged sixty or over. In Africa, the proportion of aged persons is expected to double by 2050, to ten percent.

Although the case of Europe stands out, “the biggest change will occur in the developing world, and developing countries will have to cope with a much more aged population,” says Hania Zlotnik, Director of the DESA Population Division. Due to significant reductions in fertility, the median age in Asia will rise from twenty-eight to forty years by mid-century, while in Latin America it will increase from twenty-six to forty years. In China alone, about one third of the population or roughly 430 million people will consist of retirees by 2050. Even Africa with its large youth population can expect to see an increase in median age from nineteen years today to twenty-eight years.

### Income security under pressure

Demographic shifts of this magnitude will trigger changes in the labour market and the world economy, and force a review of health care and social protection systems, but not all countries are equally ready to face these challenges. As Sergei Zelenev, Chief of the Social Integration Branch in the Division for Social Policy and Development puts it, “Developed countries have become aged when they are affluent, and have ammunition to tackle a growing older population.” Less advanced countries must “face ageing problems when are still relatively poor, and have to solve them simultaneously with many other development-related issues.”

A potential shortage of workers is viewed as one of the main problems. The proportion of the population of working age is expected to decline between 2005 and 2050 in every major area of the world except Africa. By 2050, Europe is expected to have fourteen workers for every ten dependants, most commonly children and persons aged sixty-five or over. In other areas, the ratio is likely to range from sixteen to ten in North America, to nineteen to ten in Africa.

It has almost become a mantra that a shrinking number of workers will have to support a growing number of elderly people to maintain public pension systems as we know them. Many developed countries have started to adjust pension and health-care programmes to make them sustainable for future generations. In his report on major developments since the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the Secretary-General points out that early retirement is increasingly discouraged, and that providing incentives to motivate older persons to stay in the work force longer appears an effective and realistic response to the income security problem.

In the developing world, few older persons can afford retirement as pension systems are scarce. This is especially true in the least developed countries. Older persons are also more likely to be poor than persons of working age, stresses the Secretary-General in his report on world population monitoring, focusing on the changing age structures of populations and their implications for development. In Bangladesh, China and India, efforts are underway to curb poverty in old age by granting older workers better access to credit for small business development, especially for workers in rural communities. Given the mass migration of rural youth to cities in recent years, such policies provide a development windfall by offering income opportunities for older workers while at the same time closing the rural-urban gap.

### But social pensions still make a difference

The sense of alarm over pensions that prevails in the developed world does not generally arise in developing countries simply because the majority of individuals lack access to formal pension plans, says Mr. Zelenev. For many, formal pension are an unattainable luxury which perpetuates, and sometimes exacerbates, inequality. He cites the example of India, where ninety percent of workers lack any form of labour market social protection. Moreover, the scale of the informal economy can make it difficult to set up contributory pension plans.

A few developing countries have, however, introduced social pensions or non-contributory pensions that guarantee a subsistence income to low-income older persons whether or not they have worked in the formal economy. Social pensions are important tools for providing a minimal level of protection to older people who have spent most of their lives in the informal sector, or who have never been employed. Recent studies by the International Labour Organization challenge the widely-held view that universal social protection is unaffordable for the poorest countries. According to the ILO, social pensions and health care can be delivered at low per capita costs.

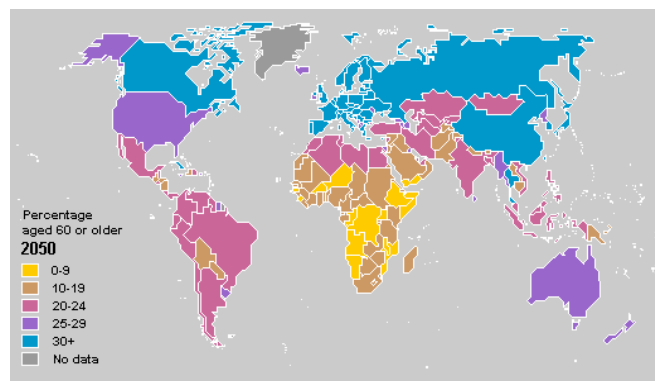
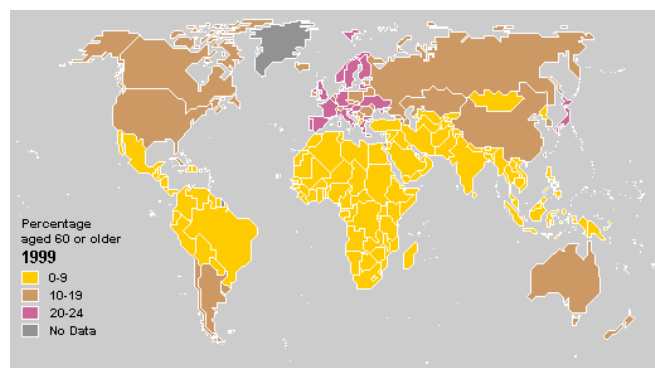
Social pensions have proven to be very effective in reducing poverty among elderly people. Botswana, Mauritius and Nepal have all established universal social pension plans. Even Lesotho, one of the world's poorest countries, has gone down this path. Bangladesh and Thailand are implementing similar old-age allowances.

In the face of globalization and growing competition, the State should not withdraw from social protection systems nor lose sight of vulnerable people, stresses Mr Zelenev. The ratio of workers to retired people in densely populated countries such as China does complicate matters and caution is certainly advised, but says Mr. Zelenev of the current debate on reform of social protection systems, "We have to face reality" and take appropriate action to address demographic and social imbalances. "Very hast steps, such as drastic privatization measures, could have nasty consequences." Raising the retirement age, if controversial, seems to be a preferred option.

### Migration: fertility substitute?

It is a popular perception that migration is a useful means of offsetting the impact of population ageing on labour shortage and a guarantee of sustainable pension systems. That perception is wrong. According to the 2006 revision of World Population Prospects, up to 103 million migrants will move to the more developed regions between now and 2050. Yet far from a replacement effect, migration will have a moderate impact on the age structures of those economies. "We do not expect that migration is going to drive population growth at the levels that fertility has driven them in the past," foresees Ms. Zlotnik. "At best, it is going to keep the population constant or palliate the decline."

For example, the DESA Population Division has estimated that the number of immigrants admitted to



Europe annually would need to be twice as high between 2000 and 2050 as it was between 1995 and 2000 to counter population decline. The volume of immigration needed to offset projected drops in the working-age population would have to be even larger.

Similarly, developing countries with ageing populations are not likely to be able to "import" enough migrants to keep their economies growing, according to the Population Division forecast. Though countries with fertility rates – mainly in sub-Saharan Africa and South and Central Asia – will not have a problem with a lack of labour supply in the next decades, workers will still have to support an ever increasing population of older persons.

### Transfer of human capital and the health care challenge

The spread of elderly people in societies with low fertility rates will also trigger new patterns of consumption. Codrina Rada, Associate Economic Officer in the Development Policy and Analysis Division in DESA, points to an increase in demand for services. In the current context of global integration, a significant demand for services in developed countries could spill over to the economies of the developing world and the global economy as a whole. Two scenarios are envisaged. More demand

for services could lead to lower demand of tradable goods from developing countries. “This could have major implications for export-led growth in developing countries,” forecasts Ms. Rada. On the other hand, “Since labour supply in developed countries is expected to decline, many services could be outsourced – a scenario that would spur faster growth in developing countries.”

A huge demand for caregivers in ageing societies could, however, result in movement of human capital in the opposite direction. Migrants from developing countries may move to developed countries and to ageing developing countries to meet the demand. Although migration would not have a major impact on the host countries, as Ms Zlotnik points out, it may affect the developing economies from which migrants come. There is already a strong demand for such caregivers in many developed nations. The upside for developing countries is a boost in foreign remittances. On the downside, the brain drain, or loss of workers during their most productive years, can wreck havoc on the economic and social fabric of developing countries.

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 certainly most severe in the poorest countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where health workers are most needed. Dire as it may sound, the problem can be tackled over the next ten years provided we start now. The WHO offers ambitious proposals to that end.

At the same time, ageing populations will necessitate a shift in labour from low to higher productivity jobs to make up for potential lower growth in declining working-age populations. Moreover, the presence of a rampant, low-productivity informal sector in many developing regions emerges as a clear impediment to a balanced ratio of workers to retired. All the same, there is a window of opportunity in areas such as Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Secretary-General indicates in his report on World population monitoring, focusing on the changing age structures of populations and their implications for development, that those regions still have a couple of decades to translate an expanded working age population into high productivity economies with improved living standards capable of financing old age security – provided jobs can be generated for an increasing number of workers.

## Realizing the vision of the Madrid International Plan of Action

Despite the challenges brought about by an ageing society, the elderly need not be a drain on the economy. “Older persons are not simply dependants who are taking from the system, but full participants,” underlines Mr Zelenev. “They make contributions as consumers and can keep on being productive by enhancing their skills and through continuous education.”

Five years ago, more than 150 countries adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and recognized that ageing is both an achievement of society and a challenge. The Plan of Action lays the groundwork for ensuring that older persons are empowered and full participants in society and for advancing health and well-being in old age. It also calls for strengthening solidarity between generations. Care-giver responsibilities, for instance, often take on an intergenerational dimension with older persons looking after grandchildren and young adults who in turn provide long-term care for seniors.

The Madrid Plan of Action provides practical tools to cope with the development challenges of ageing such as the need for long-term health care, income security, and social protection. It also calls for mainstreaming ageing issues in the UN development agenda with the struggle against poverty among older persons a pivotal goal. Of course, each country must decide what it is in its own best interest, but the Madrid Plan is a good point of departure. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said, “We should implement its vision.”

*DESA’s World Economic and Social Survey 2007, devoted to development in an ageing world, will be released in July in Geneva.*

*The 2006 revision of World Population Prospects can be found at:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2006/wpp2006.htm>.

*More information on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is available at:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/ageing/>.

*Ms. Hania Zlotnik, Director of the Population Division, presents the 2006 revision of World Population Prospects on 13 March:*  
<http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/pressconference/pc070313am1.rm>.



## International agreement on forests within reach

*New instrument on managing the world's forests on track for adoption this month*

While forests cover about 30 percent of the world's land area, they are shrinking at an alarming rate with areas the size of Panama or Sierra Leone disappearing year after year. About 1.6 billion people rely on forests for their livelihoods and, as world leaders highlighted in the Millennium Declaration, forests play an important part in poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. Creating awareness of the need to protect and ensure that the world's forests are managed sustainably requires a global effort. This month governments at the United Nations Forum on Forests are expected to join forces to adopt a landmark agreement that will serve as a practical guide for implementation of forest-policy objectives.

“The value added of this instrument is that puts everyone on the same page by providing a clearly articulated and practical framework for sustainable forest management,” says Pekka Patosaari, director of the Forum secretariat. Consensus on the adoption of a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests represents, he adds, a “giant leap forward for international forest policy.” The agreement will be a springboard to closer cooperation among forest-related international agreements and processes, and bolster efforts towards sustainable development and poverty reduction.

Consensus on the new instrument on forests has not been achieved overnight, but is the result of a decade or more of intergovernmental discussions. Although forests have been a priority issue since the 1992 Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, it was not until last year that unanimous political commitment to sustainable forest management was attained. The instrument is expected to be a key mechanism for translating policies devised by the UN Forum on Forests into action, as envisaged by the Secretary-General in his report on the Forum's multi-year programme of work.

### Forests take centre stage

At its session last year, the Forum agreed on four shared global objectives on forests, which will also guide application of the new instrument. These goals address the need to curb deforestation, the role of forests in the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and, in general, the principle of

sustainability in forest management. Sustainable forest management – as a broad policy term and framework – aims to ensure that goods and services derived from forests meet today's needs, while securing their availability and contribution to long-term development.

One of the global goals stresses the importance of reversing the loss of forest cover worldwide, including through protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation, while increasing efforts to prevent forest degradation. Other goals relate to enhancing forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits, increasing the amount of forest area under sustainable management, and reversing the decline of official development assistance for these purposes.

Reversing the loss of forest cover is consistent with the Kyoto Protocol, which in article 3.3 calls for the maintenance of forests by afforestation and reforestation, and by controlling deforestation. Deforestation is currently occurring at about the rate of 13 million hectares per year. The net decrease in forest area over the period 2000-2005 is about 7.3 million hectares per year, down from 8.9 million hectares per year from 1990 to 2000. This is according to DESA's Millennium Development Goals Report 2006, which also indicates that the current net loss is equivalent to about 200 square kilometres per day.

“Loss of forest cover occurs largely as a result of human activities,” says Mr. Patosaari, and “the drivers of deforestation are both within and outside the forest sector.” Conversion of land for farming or livestock, unsustainable harvesting of timber, unsound land management practices, and the creation of human settlements are some of its most common causes. Converting forestlands to other uses in turn fuels climate change, UNEP reminds us, as it gives off carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere.

Furthermore, according to the World Bank, every year \$10 billion is lost due to illegal logging. The associated trade is more than five times the official development assistance to the forest sector alone. Mr. Patosaari, points out that illegally harvested forest products and associated trade cause not only loss of



revenue, but also leads to ecosystem degradation, loss of biodiversity and further poverty, particularly in developing countries.

“Forest planting, landscape restoration and natural expansion of forests have significantly reduced the net loss of forest area,” indicates the Millennium Development Goals 2006 report. However, “these newly replanted lands do not have the ecological value of older, more biologically diverse forests, and do not provide the same benefits and livelihoods for local communities.”

### Linking forests with the UN development agenda

Improving the livelihoods of people who are dependent on forests by strengthening forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits is another important target. According to FAO’s biennial report on the State of the World’s Forests 2007, many countries are shifting strategies to stress the role of the forest sector in poverty reduction. But this entails recognition of forest benefits that are systematically undervalued in almost all countries.

Forests open the way to poverty alleviation by facilitating food security and access to safe drinking water. Forests and poverty alleviation therefore, go hand in hand. As the report notes, the countries that face the most serious challenges in achieving sustainable forest management are largely poor or conflict-stricken countries. Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean are regions with the highest losses of wood-covered regions. In contrast, adds the report, most countries in Europe and North America have reversed centuries of deforestation through careful forest management and economic prosperity.

While raising the area of protected forests worldwide is important, the third global goal on forests calls for fostering trade in forest products from sustainably managed and legally harvested forests. The new instrument on forests, says Mr. Patosaari, will help provide a level playing field for the removal of trade barriers, open and non-discriminatory rules for trade and investment, and promoting market access for products from sustainably managed forests.

The substantial financial resources required for achieving sustainable forest management are often beyond the capacity of many developing countries. Reversing the decline in official development assistance in this area – as the Economic and Social Council called for in resolution 2006/49 – and mobilizing new financial resources is therefore of global significance. In this regard, the new instrument

on forests will facilitate the mobilization of such resources from private, public, domestic and international sources.

Adequate financing for sustainable forest management is a necessity. In his 2003 report on the economic aspects of forests, the Secretary-General stated, however, that financing is hampered by inadequate revenue collection and perverse fiscal incentives that encourage unsustainable practices especially in developing countries. Management practices often do not pay for themselves and forestry does not always provide the same level of profit that other land uses do.

The main challenge, says the Secretary-General, is to channel existing financing from unsustainable practices to sustainable ones and to make sustainable forest management more profitable. In his 2003 report, he points out that explicit and implicit perverse subsidies in tropical and temperate forests amount to \$14 billion per year. A recent estimate made by the UN Forum on Forests also suggests that the failure to collect taxes and royalties from legal forest operations amounts to a loss of \$5 billion worldwide, or more than three times the official development assistance channeled to forestry.

### Momentum for implementation

A first step towards sustainable forest management is awareness. For this reason, the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests will provide, in the words of Mr. Patosaari, “a platform for promoting awareness and public involvement in, and understanding of, the sustainable management and conservation of forests.”

The new agreement translates the growing awareness of the international community into political commitment. Even though the instrument is not legally binding, “in international law, the effectiveness of policy instruments is dependent on the political commitment associated with their implementation rather than their legal nature,” said Judge Francisco Rezek, a former member of the International Court of Justice.

*Documentation for UNFF-7 can be found online at <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>.*

*On 14 December 2006, Pekka Patosaari, Director of the UNFF Secretariat, spoke to UN Radio about the non-binding instrument. Listen to the podcast at: [http://radio.un.org/story.asp?NewsID=5889&KW\\_txt=forest](http://radio.un.org/story.asp?NewsID=5889&KW_txt=forest).*

## Global dialogue on development

### World leaders in finance and trade prepare for Monterrey follow-up at Doha 2008

*ECOSOC with the IFIs, WTO and UNCTAD devote their annual meeting to discussions of good governance, participation in decision-making, trade policy, and aid effectiveness*

The spring high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and UNCTAD on 16 April will explore the issues of coherence, coordination and cooperation for the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus on the road to the review conference in Doha. Coming as it does before the new Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum, the Council's exchange with the international financial institutions, the WTO and UNCTAD, is expected to capture the intergovernmental limelight, all the more since preparations for the Doha conference on financing for development are now getting underway.

The plenary session in the morning may include brief statements by the heads of the IMF International Monetary and Financial Committee, the Joint World Bank/IMF Development Committee, the WTO General Council, and the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, along with remarks by ministers and other senior officials from among the Council membership.

This year's dialogue will also feature four simultaneous roundtable discussions on good governance, voice and participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making, realization of the Doha development agenda on effective use of trade and investment policies, along with aid effectiveness and innovative financing for development. The morning roundtables are intended to flesh out these themes, and pave the way for an open floor with free-flowing dialogue among delegates in the afternoon.

The President of the Council, Ambassador Dalius Čekuolis, will preside over the meeting with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon delivering the opening address. A comprehensive presidential

summary of the proceedings should follow in due course.

The one-day meeting takes place in New York following the IMF International Monetary and Financial Committee, and Joint World Bank/IMF Development Committee meetings to be held on 14 and 15 April in Washington.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/bwi2007/>

### Council lays groundwork for first Annual Ministerial Review in July

*The Council chooses eradication of poverty and hunger as the theme of the review*

The Economic and Social Council is getting ready for its first Annual Ministerial Review, to take place during the high-level segment of the Council's substantive session in July, with a half-day informal, preparatory meeting on 2 April in New York. The preparatory meeting will focus on strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development.

The meeting will open with an address by Deputy-Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro. National economic and social councils will also have a say. Their invitation stems from efforts to tighten the link between global level discussions and national implementation. The Secretary-General of the International Association of Economic and Social Councils and Similar Institutions, Bertrand Duruflé, will deliver a keynote address on behalf of the association. After that, the meeting will split up into two parallel roundtables.

"How are we doing in the fight against hunger and malnutrition?" moderated by José Antonio Ocampo, Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and "Are we making poverty history?" moderated by Hafiz Pasha, Assistant Administrator of UNDP, are questions to be discussed by the participants who will include renowned policy-makers, practitioners and academics.

The aim of the roundtables is to assess, at the midway point to 2015, progress made in implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and identify lessons based on experience that can be applied to further action. Approaches that merit scaling-up to

alleviate the plight of the estimated 854 million people worldwide who are undernourished, and of the nearly half of all humanity which continues to live on less than two dollars a day, will receive special attention.

The goal of the Annual Ministerial Review is to speed-up and scale-up implementation of the UN Development Agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, by serving as a high-level forum for policy debate and exchange of views and practices.

*For more information:*

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

## **Taking stock of national experiences in development cooperation**

*Vienna high-level symposium sets the stage for the Development Cooperation Forum*

The biennial Development Cooperation Forum was born at the 2005 World Summit with a purpose: to review trends in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing, promote greater coherence among the development activities of different development partners and strengthen the links between the normative and operational work of the United Nations.

A high-level symposium on the experiences of countries in coordinating and managing development cooperation will take place in Vienna from 19 to 20 April as part of preparations for the upcoming launch of the Forum in July and the first session of the Forum in 2008.

Organized by the Office for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination in partnership with the Austrian Government, the symposium will be preceded by the first meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum Advisory Group which is made up of high-level representatives of key stakeholders, such as recipient and donor countries, multilateral organizations, UN system, private sector and civil society. The Group will advise the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs on the overall strategy for preparations for the Forum, including networking and consultations with different stakeholder groups, as well as strategic goals for the first Forum in 2008.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/index.html#DCF>

## **Seeking to turn sustainable development commitments into action**

*The Commission on Sustainable Development will be holding its policy session this year on energy, industrial development, air pollution and atmosphere, and climate change*

A range of policy options and possible actions for implementation on energy for development, industrial development, air pollution and atmosphere, and climate change will be adopted during the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. This year's session, which will be held in New York between 30 April and 11 May, marks the end of a two-year cycle devoted to this four-theme cluster.

The fifteenth session will build on the review work undertaken by the Commission a year ago and on the discussions that took place recently in an intergovernmental preparatory meeting in New York. Those discussions were captured in a chairman's draft negotiating document that will form the basis of negotiations – negotiations on concrete policy decisions to help turn the Agenda 21 and Johannesburg commitments into reality.

The high-level segment will focus on partnerships, with plenary sessions for statements and dialogue with heads of UN agencies and representatives of major groups. The segment will also feature roundtables on specific topics that have yet to be determined.

The chairman's draft negotiating document framing the Commission's discussions points out many emerging issues, ranging from renewable energy sources to transboundary air pollution and fuel switching. It calls for strengthening technology cooperation, with an emphasis on research and development, as well as the transfer of new technologies. To that end, the document encourages full and effective implementation of the 2005 Bali Strategic Plan, a UN-backed framework for boosting the capacity of governments in developing countries and economies in transition to address their needs, priorities and obligations in the environmental field.



As part of its official programme, the Commission will feature the popular Partnerships Fair and Learning Centre. The Partnerships Fair will include interactive discussions to generate open dialogue on practical issues related to partnerships. The Learning Centre will continue to offer a wide selection of courses to provide teaching and training at a practical level for further implementation of Agenda 21 and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

The Commission on Sustainable Development is the principal United Nations forum bringing countries together to consider ways to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic growth, social development and environmental protection. Four years ago, the Commission approved a multi-year programme of action featuring different thematic clusters of issues for each cycle. The first, in 2004-2005, addressed water, sanitation and human settlements. The 2008-2009 cycle will focus on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

*For more information:*

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

## UN Forum on Forests raises expectations

*Government delegates will come together, joined by representatives of intergovernmental organizations, the collaborative partnership on forests and civil society, to discuss and adopt a new international agreement to manage the world's forests, at this month's seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests which runs from 16 to 27 April in New York*

Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 invited the seventh session of the Forum to conclude by adopting a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and decide on a new multi-year programme of work for the Forum that will establish a framework for discussions through 2015.

The non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests is expected to provide a clearly articulated and practical framework for sustainable forest management at all levels. The instrument will highlight the importance of voluntary national measures, policies, actions and partnerships, and enable countries to better determine their national targets, goals and policies. Recognizing that there are a myriad of forest-related agreements, and processes already in existence, this new instrument on all types

of forests will offer a global platform for coordinating international efforts.

*For more information:*

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

## Population Commission sees the world getting older

The changing age structures of populations and their implications for development is the special theme of the fortieth session of the Commission on Population and Development, which will take place from 9 to 13 April in New York. The world's population is in the midst of a so-called demographic transition, a unique and irreversible process that will result in older populations everywhere, although not everywhere at a uniform pace.

Three keynote speakers have been invited to provide insight into the complexities of specific aspects of demographic shifts. Professor Ronald Lee, Director of the Center on the Economics and Demography of Aging at the University of California, Berkeley will speak on the economic and demographic aspects of intergenerational transfers. Dr. Somnath Chatterji, Team Leader for Multi-Country Studies in the Department of Measurement and Health Information Systems at the World Health Organization, will address the health aspects of ageing. Ms. Nyiovani Madise, Senior Research Scientist at the African Population and Health Research Center in Nairobi, will focus on Africa's young populations. A resolution on the priority theme is expected at the end of the session.

The Commission on Population and Development, as a functional commission assisting the Economic and Social Council, 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>

## Thumbs up to resolutions on Palestinian women, protection from HIV/AIDS, female genital mutilation and forced marriage

*About 140 countries, 330 NGOs and 130 girls participated in the 2007 session of the Women's Commission*

The Commission on the Status of Women concluded its fifty-first session on 9 March by giving a green light to four draft resolutions covering the situation of Palestinian women, the need to rise HIV/AIDS protection for women and girls, ending female genital mutilation and curbing the practice of forced marriages. Delegates attending the two-week session also adopted agreed conclusions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, which provide practical measures to put an end to this persistent form of violence in a package of action-oriented policy recommendations on many issues – from poverty, education, to participation. The fifty-first session enjoyed high levels of participation, with delegates from some 140 countries, 2,000 representatives from 330 NGOs and 130 girls taking part in meetings and events.

The end of the session was marked by the approval of a draft resolution on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women, which would have the Economic and Social Council express the importance of providing assistance to alleviate the harmful impact of the financial crisis they endure – a crisis which has exacerbated the already dire socio-economic and humanitarian situation faced by Palestinian women and their families.

Also by the draft, the Council would demand that Israel comply fully with legal provisions and principles to protect the rights of Palestinian women. It would also reaffirm that the Israeli occupation remains a major obstacle for Palestinian women when it comes to integration and advancement into the development planning of their society, and would encourage all women in the region to take an active role in backing the peace process.

The Commission also approved, without a vote, a draft resolution on forced marriage of the girl child. That draft resolution would urge States to enact and enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with free and full consent of the intending

spouses and, in addition, to enact and enforce laws concerning the minimum age of consent and the that of marriage and raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary. It would also recognize that forced marriage contributes to girls' faring disproportionately worse than boys in terms of access to primary school in some countries, and that early motherhood entails great risk of morbidity and mortality.

The Council, by the terms of another draft resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS approved without a vote, would urge Governments to strengthen initiatives to increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV/AIDS infection, through the provision of health care and health services, including voluntary counseling and health testing, and through prevention education that would promote gender equality.

The Commission, lastly, approved again without a vote, a draft resolution on ending female genital mutilation by which the Council would urge States to take all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit this form of mutilation inflicted on girls and to end impunity.

The fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women began on 26 February and ran for two weeks in New York. The Commission is a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council and the principal global policy-making body dedicated to gender equality and advancement of women. Every year, representatives of Member States gather to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/51sess.htm>

*H.E. Ms. Carmen María Gallardo Hernández (El Salvador), Chairperson of the fifty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, comments on ties between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council in a press briefing on 9 March, noting that the two bodies must continue to harmonize efforts on gender-related issues. A recording is available online at <http://webcast.un.org/ramgen/pressconference/pc070309.rm>.*



## Trends and analysis

### Experts on public administration promote participatory governance

*Committee of Experts on Public Administration to examine the role of citizen engagement in achieving the UN Development Agenda*

Participatory governance and citizen engagement in public policy are reflections of our times. With information technology increasing the demand for information, democratization of government, and higher literacy levels, citizens want to have a say in how they are governed. It is therefore timely that the priority theme for the sixth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration is participatory governance. The session is set to open on 10 April with a welcome address by Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Jose Antonio Ocampo, and will continue until 13 April.

“Participatory governance is important to improve the delivery of public services,” says Elia Yi Armstrong, Secretary of the Committee. “Getting citizens more engaged in public resource allocation and accountability for performance and results is essential to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.” An important underlying idea is that “the poor themselves are involved in planning and monitoring the services to make sure that they match their needs.”

In light of the increasing importance of this issue to Member States, the Committee will explore the approaches put into practice and the obstacles faced by countries that have fostered the participation of citizen in governance and public administration. Its aim is to analyze the role of participatory governance in achieving the UN Development Agenda in order to recommend policy options to Member States.

The Committee will also produce a compendium of basic UN terminology in governance and public administration. Its purpose is to identify the most important and frequently used terminology in governance and public administration in order to increase consistency and clarity in discussions among Member States.

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration reviews pivotal issues in public administration and

governance and advises Member States, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat on trends and strategies to cope with these issues. This year the Committee will examine the theme of the Council’s upcoming Annual Ministerial Review – on strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger, including through the global partnership for development – from the perspective of public administration.

For more information: <http://www.unpan.org/cepa-6.asp>

### Coordinating international economic and social classifications

*UN expert group to assess the status of the work on international classifications from 16 to 18 April*

Ensuring harmonization and convergence among international classifications is the *raison d’être* of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications. In its biennial meetings, the expert group examines the status of the work on international classifications, makes recommendations to the Statistical Commission concerning future direction, and plays the role of coordinating body in the realm of international classifications. The classifications considered by the expert group form the basis on which statistical data is collected and published in various fields of statistics.

The expert group also agrees on strategies for updating and revising classifications, and reviews the underlying principles as well as practical proposals to facilitate the convergence of existing classifications. It is composed of members from international organizations, who are custodians and major users of international and economic classifications, in addition to representatives from developed and developing countries and regional agencies.

The meeting taking place from 16 to 18 April in New York will cover three topics, and review additional work being undertaken in revising or developing economic or social classifications. Topics include a review of the revision process for the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08) and the draft structure for the revised classification, the strategy for the implementation of the newly revised International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC Rev.4) and Central Product Classification (CPC Ver.2) including the development of the ISIC/CPC

companion guide, taking into account recommendations made by the Statistical Commission and, finally, future work within the Family of International Economic and Social Classifications.

Under the last point, the assembled experts will discuss proposals for work on the Classification by Broad Economic Categories, and ongoing work in the area of health classifications including the WHO experience in developing a family of health classifications.

A technical subgroup of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications will meet in New York on 19 and 20 April to carry on with the work on the ISIC/CPC companion guide. The technical subgroup will also work on other tools required for the ISIC and CPC implementation and consider the state of alphabetical indexes and correspondence tables.

The subgroup of the expert group was set up in 1999 with the specific task of carrying out the detailed technical work for the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC Rev.4) and Central Product Classification (CPC Ver.2).

*For more information:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/class/intercop/expertgroup/2007/ac124-2.asp>.

## The pandemic of rising inequality

*Nine out of ten citizens live in countries with deteriorating income distribution, reveals a UNU-WIDER study*

The richest two percent of adults in the world own more than half of global household wealth. That is the extent of inequality according to a recently released study by the UN University's World Institute for Development Economics Research, which was presented by one of its authors, Professor Edward Wolff, on 29 March in New York. The event was organized by the DESA Financing for Development Office in collaboration with the UN University Office in New York and chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development, Jomo Kwame Sundaram.

In his briefing on world distribution of household wealth, Wolff stressed that wealth is heavily

concentrated in OECD countries – almost all of the world's richest individuals live in North America, Europe and high-income Asia-Pacific countries. Each of these groups of countries contribute about one third of the members of the world's wealthiest ten percent.

Mr. Wolff took a glance at the geographical spread of wealth relative to population to conclude that for Africa, China, India and lower income Asian countries, share of wealth is largely less than population share, sometimes even by a factor of more than ten. By contrast, North America has six percent of the world adult population yet, at thirty-four percent, commands a significantly disproportionate share of wealth. The same is true for Europe and Japan.

Among the main findings, the UNU-WIDER study reveals that regardless the size of within-country inequality, most of wealth inequality is between countries. In addition, wealth is more unequally distributed than income across countries, while there are large differences in wealth composition for countries at similar income.

These findings give inequality the appearance of “a global pandemic,” to paraphrase Under-Secretary General Ocampo. As he told the Civil Society Forum last February, “the persistence of economic and social inequalities at the international and national levels impedes the realization of the UN Development Agenda.”

*For more information:* <http://www.wider.unu.edu>

## African Network of the Global Alliance for ICT launched

*The Alliance promotes the use of ICT for the achievement of the development goals*

More than fifty representatives from African Governments, civil society organizations, private sector actors, academia and international organizations took part in the launch and first meeting of the African Regional Network of the UN Global Alliance for ICTs and Development on 23 March.

The network intends to play a significant role in ensuring that regional views and needs mirror the global work of the Alliance. Its aim is to link local

policy-makers, researchers and practitioners to try to boost coordination and collaboration.

The meeting gave a green light to the creation of a Steering Committee made up of three facilitators from government, academia, and civil society organizations from Western, Central and Northern Africa. The Steering Committee will guide the African Global Alliance for ICTs and Development Network with the assistance of the Economic Commission for Africa, which hosts the secretariat. The launch was followed by online discussions on the structure of the Alliance and modalities of action.

In her opening remarks, Aida Opoku-Mensah, Director of the ICT, Science and Technology Division of the Economic Commission for Africa, stressed the need to use the Alliance as one of the weapons for exploiting information and communication technologies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in Africa. "The launching of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development in 2006," she said, "is based on the UN's commitment to building the enabling environment to bring together all stakeholders active in information and knowledge economy to reflect on strategies to ensure the effective implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society plan of action and the use of ICT for development and the achievement of the development goals and other development agendas."

*For more information:* [http://www.un-gaid.org/en/regional\\_networks/africa](http://www.un-gaid.org/en/regional_networks/africa)

## **Fighting corruption in government**

Some 1500 participants are expected to attend the Fifth Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity in Johannesburg from 2 to 5 April. The Government of South Africa will host the event. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management is a member of the international organizing committee and its representative, Esther Stern, will chair a half-day session during the forum on voluntary involvement of the private sector in fighting corruption.

Participants will discuss how best to bolster action for effective implementation of anti-corruption measures, to ensure participation and contributions from non-State actors, and to encapsulate political

will and commitment. A concrete look at law enforcement will enable participants to examine measures and legislation to combat corruption and organized crime, with an emphasis on money laundering.

*For more information:*

<http://www.globalforum5.gov.za/default.asp>

## Technical cooperation

### Assessing strategies to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region

*A project to shed light on the determinants for attainment of the Millennium Development Goals*

Evaluating and recommending options to ensure the timely achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 is the aim of a project on assessing development strategies in the Arab region. The project's inception and first training workshop takes place in Cairo from 2 to 5 April. The workshop has been organized by the Development Policy and Analysis Division of DESA and the regional Bureau for Arab States of UNDP, in close collaboration with the League of Arab States and the World Bank.

A preliminary brainstorming session held last year between 4 and 5 May, and successive inquiries about government interest, country technical capacities, and data availability, helped identify the countries that are ready to participate in the project: Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Tunisia and Morocco. Sudan lacks much of the necessary data to fully implement the project methodology at this stage, but still will take part in project activities as an observer.

The main goals of the workshop are to introduce the project's objectives and methodology, establish milestones, provide country teams with training on methodology, identify needs for tailoring the methodology to country-specific conditions as well as prerequisites of data availability and collection, and lastly to familiarize participants with the intended outcomes of the project.

The project involves empirical investigations of MDG costing and financing using computable general equilibrium modeling or CGE as the anchoring methodology. CGE and other methods at the micro level should enable a proper analysis of the determinants for achievement of the MDGs.

### Amman Declaration commits Arab countries to good governance with civic engagement

*Consensus on the establishment of an Arab Regional Civic Engagement Network*

Seventeen Arab countries committed themselves in Amman on 15 March to join forces to build the capacities of governments, civil society and the private sector in civic participation in public policies in the Arab region, in addition to foster their participation in policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. So was reflected in the agreed Amman Declaration on the opportunities and challenges of civic engagement in socio-economic policies in the Arab region, which highlights follow-up initiatives and responsibilities of governments and local authorities, civil society organizations, international organizations and the United Nations.

The declaration is an outcome of a regional capacity-building workshop held last month, as DESA News announced in its March edition. Consensus was also reached on the establishment of an Arab Regional Civic Engagement Network, set to advance capacity building in public policies. The Division for Public Administration and Development Management organized the event, in cooperation with the Jordanian Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, the National Council for Family Affairs, the UNDP Office in Jordan, and the active participation of ESCWA. The workshop's opening session included a speech by the Minister of Planning and International Cooperation of Jordan, Ms Suhair Al Ali.

The need for people to be part of the entire decision-making and implementation process for public participation to be successful was a key conclusion. Participants also noted that effective and result-oriented participatory techniques require comprehensive capacity-building programmes for all stakeholders.

*For more information <http://www.unpan.org/dpepa-sgmb-meetings.asp>*

## **African Assemblies advance towards a common open source parliamentary information system**

*DPADM has been working since 2002 toward the modernization of parliamentary practices in Africa*

Development of African standards for the management of digital parliamentary and legislative documents was welcomed at the International Conference on African Legal Resources subtitled challenges and opportunities of legislative informatics, held in Abuja between 21 and 22 March. A final declaration was adopted by delegations from sixteen African assemblies and the Pan-African Parliament which also hailed the development of the open source parliamentary information system known as Bungeni and endorsed Akoma Ntoso. The conference was co-organized by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management and the National Assembly of Nigeria under the aegis of the Pan-African Parliament with the support of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament.

By ensuring the effective exchange of machine readable parliamentary documents and automating the flow of information related to parliamentary works, Akoma Ntoso and Bungeni will give African assemblies the opportunity to modernize parliamentary practices and provide advanced information services in a cooperative manner, while opening access to citizens.

The pilot deployment of Bungeni will begin in July. Several parliaments have asked to be included in order to cover different traditions and languages. Angola, Cameroon and Nigeria are the likely to be among the trial participants.

Bungeni and Akoma Ntoso have been developed as part of the implementation of the project on strengthening of parliamentary information systems in Africa, through which DPADM has been working toward the modernization of parliamentary practices in Africa since late 2002. The project has recently evolved into a continental challenge under the Africa i-Parliaments Action Plan, a major initiative undertaken by several African assemblies under the auspices of the Pan-African Parliament.

*For more information: <http://www.parliaments.info/>*

## **Confronting the challenge of employment in Africa**

*DESA, ILO and UNDP Mauritania organize a workshop linking employment and sustainable human development*

Economic growth does not automatically lead to sustainable human development, at least not in sub-Saharan Africa. With this hypothesis in mind, Jean Le Nay, a representative from the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, delivered a presentation at a technical workshop on the challenge of employment in sub-Saharan Africa, held in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 26 to 28 February.

DPADM co-organized the workshop with ILO and UNDP Mauritania. Over one hundred representatives from a dozen French-speaking countries and from ILO, DESA, UNDP and UNIDO attended. Mr Le Nay discussed the employment challenge in the sub-Saharan region. "I tried to show that employment is mostly considered as a by-product of growth in most poverty reduction strategy papers," says Mr Le Nay, and that "in most Sub-Saharan countries a GDP rate of growth above five percent a year does not guarantee that decent employment is being created." In most of these countries, he adds, employment is generated in the informal sector and does not contribute to poverty alleviation. "Another approach to growth and development is then requested and sustainable human development is the appropriate reference."

The workshop proposed to raise the status of employment in national poverty reduction strategy papers coupled with promoting labor intensive techniques through public investment as a major macroeconomic policy.

## Publications and websites

### Technical report



#### Ending Violence against Women: From Words to Action - Study of the Secretary-General

Violence against women is a form of discrimination and a violation of human rights. It causes untold misery, cutting short lives and leaving countless women living in pain and fear in every country in the world. This study calls for efforts to eradicate violence against women to become a higher priority at the local, national and international level. The study identifies ways to close the gap between States' obligations under international norms, standards and policies and their inadequate and inconsistent implementation at the national level.

For more information and to order:

<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06213>

### Handbook



#### Guide to Implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth

This guide focuses on what governments can do to fulfill the vision enshrined in the World Programme of Action for Youth.

Published by the Division for Social Policy and Development of DESA, the report acknowledges a need for a new impetus to be given to the design and implementation of youth policies and programmes. Each section of the book briefly examines the concept of each of the fifteen priority areas of the Programme of Action, and how they affect the lives of youth. It looks at mechanisms and specific policies to enhance the political, cultural and socio-economic opportunities for youth.

The recommendations and ideas contained in the book are guided by analyses, case studies, lessons learned and good practices from by a wide range of sources.

A copy of the guide can be downloaded from:  
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/nationalpolicy.htm>.

### Meeting records



#### Foundations of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development

This title is a resource for understanding the genesis and evolution of the Global Alliance for Information and Communication Technologies and Development and the action it has taken to harness the power of information and communications technology for sustainable development and poverty eradication. The publication is a compilation of documents that were discussed by stakeholders prior to the establishment of the Global Alliance. Proceedings of the Alliance's inaugural meeting in Kuala Lumpur, and its business plan are included. The Global Alliance was launched after comprehensive worldwide consultations with governments, the private sector, civil society, the technical and internet communities and academia.

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

### Statistical compilations



#### Statistical Yearbook, Fiftieth Issue

The UN Statistical Yearbook is an annual compilation of a wide range of international economic, social and environmental statistics of over 200 countries and areas of the world, compiled from sources including UN agencies and other international, national and specialized organizations.

The fiftieth issue contains data available to the Statistics Division as of March 2006 and presents them in 76 tables on topics such as: agriculture; balance of payments; culture and communication; development assistance; education; energy; environment; finance; industrial production; international merchandise trade; international tourism; labour force; manufacturing; national accounts; nutrition; population; prices; research and



development; transport; and wages. The number of years of data shown in the tables varies from one to ten, with the ten-year tables covering 1994 to 2003 or 1995 to 2004. Accompanying the tables are technical notes providing brief descriptions of major statistical concepts, definitions and classifications. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.S/26. Sales number E/F.06.XVII.1.

*For more information and to order:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/pubs/gesgrid.asp?id=368>



### **Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles 2004**

The Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles 2004 presents internationally comparable energy data for selected developing countries. This issue includes

energy balances for 83 countries and electricity profiles for 123 countries. The energy balance data are arranged to show energy production, trade, conversion and consumption for each fuel used in the countries. The electricity profiles cover detailed information on the production, trade and consumption of electricity, net installed capacity and thermal power plant input. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.W/13. Sales number E/F.06.XVII.12.

*For more information and to order:*

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/energy/default.htm>.



### **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. The latest issue is Vol. LXI, no.1, January 2007. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.Q/409. Special features: Civil aviation traffic (passenger-km, cargo net ton-km); total exports and imports by countries or areas (volume, unit value, terms of trade and purchasing power of exports, in US dollars).

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

## **Working paper**



### **Building Common Ground: United Nations Connecting with Silicon Valley**

This working paper published in collaboration with the RiOS Institute presents the insights and

perspectives of leaders and experts in the field of Information and Communication Technologies and Development on the evolving relationship between Silicon Valley and the United Nations, and how Silicon Valley could contribute to the work of the Global Alliance for ICT and Development.

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

## **Outreach material**



### **Wall Chart on the World's Women 2005: Progress in Statistics**

This colourful and illustrative chart presents selected statistics and indicators published in the annex of The World's Women 2005:

Progress in Statistics. It includes key indicators for each country on women and men in the areas of: population, marriage, health, education, economic activity, and participation in political decision-making, and charts the extent of global reporting of sex-disaggregated statistics in those areas. Through easy-to-read maps, it also identifies those countries that conducted a population census in the 2000 census round and those that registered at least 90 percent of births during the period 1995-2003. The table includes, in addition to official data reported by countries or areas, estimates prepared by the United Nations and other international agencies. Publication symbol ST/ESA/STAT/SER.K/18. Sales number E.06.XVII.6.

*For more information and to order:*

<https://unp.un.org/details.aspx?entry=E06144>.

## Websites



### World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision

The Population Division has released an online version of World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision, which provides official United Nations estimates and projections of the world's population from 1950 to 2050. A number of hard-copy publications related to the 2006 revision, including reports and wall charts, as well as CD-ROMs will be issued in the coming months.

*For more information:*

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/wpp2006/wpp2006.htm>



### Sustainable Consumption and Production Initiatives

The redesigned sustainable consumption and production database includes updated information on existing initiatives as well as 40 new initiatives, expanding the total number to 134. The upgraded database includes summaries of initiatives by sector, and highlights a different SCP initiative everyday. It also features better search and browse functions.

*For more information:*

<http://webapps01.un.org/dsd/scp/public/Welcome.do>

## Comings and goings

### Comings



**Ms. Diane Loughran** was appointed Senior Communications Officer in the Office of the Under-Secretary-General as of 5 March. She joined DESA in 1999 to serve as Social Affairs Officer within the UN

programme on ageing. Ms. Loughran has worked in both the private and non-profit sectors, and brings to the position twenty-five years' experience on social development issues.

*The following staff member was also promoted in March:*

Ms. Angela Capati-Caruso, Governance and Public Administration Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

### Goings

*The following staff members retired in March:*

Ms. Maria Victoria Esquivel, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Ms. Olivia Jones, Programme Assistant, Division for Social Policy and Development

## Calendar

### April

#### **Economic and Social Council**

Informal event for the 2007 Annual Ministerial Review, New York, 2 April

DESA/Government of South Africa Fifth Global Forum on Fighting Corruption and Safeguarding Integrity

Johannesburg, 2-5 April

DESA/UNDP/League of Arab States/ World Bank Training Workshop on Assessing Development Strategies to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region

Cairo, 2-5 April

#### **Commission on Population and Development**

40th session, New York, 9-13 April

#### **Committee of Experts on Public Administration**

6th session, New York, 10-13 April

#### **Economic and Social Council**

Special High-level Meeting with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

New York, 16 April

Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications

New York, 16-18 April

#### **United Nations Forum on Forests**

7th session, New York, 16-27 April

#### **Economic and Social Council**

High-level Symposium for the Development Cooperation Forum, Vienna, 19-20 April

#### **Commission on Sustainable Development**

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

### 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

#### **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women**

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

*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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