KATHMANDU, 12 Aug: The United Nations in Nepal launched International Year of Youth in collaboration with the Ministry of Youth and Sport.

Addressing the programme, Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal said the UN initiatives to mark the year of youth world pave the way for the information of policies and plans to clatter to the youth’s needs.

“The government is working to prepare a youth-friendly budget to respond to the problems of the youth”, said Nepal.

Robert Piper, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Nepal, expressed concern that too much ‘harvesting’ of youth energy and talent is being done by political parties. He said, “The youth sector is riven with politics. In schools and campuses youths are being used as the ‘shock-troops’ of political conflict, too often leading to violent confrontation.”. Adding, “Violence has no place in youth politics and if by 20 or even 18, party-affiliation has became a way of life— and livelihood—parties risk creating levels of dependence and expectations they will struggle to sustain for the decades ahead.” He called upon all to see less youth at the barricades and more youth in the central committees and policy-making bodies of the parties. Mr. Piper also said that young women in Nepal face unprecedented challenges ranging from poor access to services to sexual exploitation and gender-based violence. This group deserves special attention. “If nothing else, because investing in young woman makes good sense. If you educated a girl, you educate a family—the benefits from investing in young women will be reaped from generations to come.” he added.

The theme fro the internal youth year is “Dialogue and Mutual Understanding”. The year aims to encourage dialogue and understanding across generation and promote the ideals of peace, respect for human rights and freedoms, and solidarity. The them encourages young people to dedicate themselves to fostering progress, including the attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015.
PICTORAL: PM inspecting arts displayed by youths; the RC welcoming the PM and Ministers; the RC and Youth and Sports Minister speaking; A skit by youth in progress.
PICTORIAL: A MEDEP products stall in display; Youth art display; Members of youth wings of various political parties; Newari instrument been played.
KATHMANDU: 30 Aug: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the Poverty Alleviation Fund (PAF), two of the largest organisations working in Nepal’s most food insecure areas, joined forces today by signing a Memorandum of Understanding and forming a strategic alliance to alleviate poverty and food insecurity in the Mid to Far-Western Hill and Mountain regions. The MoU was signed by Ms Dominique Hyde, Officer-in-Charge, WFP Nepal and Mr Raj Babu Shrestha, Executive Director of PAF, in the presence of PAF Vice Chairperson, Vidyadhar Mallik.

WFP and PAF will collaborate to provide vital food and nutrition assistance whilst engaging beneficiaries in income generating and community infrastructure projects through food/cash-for-work. Specific projects to be considered include: small scale irrigation, cash crop plantation, enhanced farming techniques and poultry farming. WFP also plans to provide food for training activities that will benefit members of community organizations of PAF..

“The alliance between the Poverty Alleviation Fund and WFP Nepal, together with the commitment of the government of Nepal, demonstrates something can and is being done to empower the rural poor and end the trap of hunger and poverty that has plagued the lives of people in the Mid and Far-Western Hills and Mountains for too long,” said Dominique Hyde, Officer-in-Charge, WFP Nepal.

The strategic alliance between PAF and WFP paves the way for a new model of reaching and assisting the poorest and most vulnerable communities in Mid-to-Far Western Nepal - where household agricultural production is commonly sufficient for only 3-5 months of the year. By leveraging the capacity and experience of both organisations, joint projects will effectively maximize the coverage and impact of humanitarian and livelihood development interventions.

“This partnership is about two organisations with significant on-the-ground capacity and experience joining hands to effectively reach the most vulnerable and isolated communities in this country,” said Vidyadhar Mallik, vice chairperson of PAF Nepal.
"This agreement reflects the importance of collaboration among different development partners, government institutions and PAF for the sake of more focussed and synergic efforts to make a difference in the lives of the poor living in the far-flung areas of Nepal," Mallik added. The PAF agreement follows a partnership agreement signed between WFP and the Ministry of Local Development on Sunday that will see WFP receive US $35.8 million to help the government provide a social safety net in the Mid to Far-Western Hills and Mountains. All three organisations are supported by the World Bank and the agreements mark a significant step forward in development partner and government collaboration to address poverty and food insecurity in the most remote area of the country.

"With this arrangement, the World Bank, WFP, PAF and the Ministry of Local Development are sending a clear message to the poorest and most isolated communities of the Mid and Far West that they will not be forgotten and that tangible peace dividends will reach them in the form of improved livelihoods and reduced poverty and hunger," said Dominique.

The first phase of collaboration will begin in 16 VDCs in Mugu, Jumla and Bajura districts. PAF is supporting poor communities of these VDCs to pursue different income generation and infrastructure related activities for the last 5 years.

WFP provides food, cash and/or micronutrient supplementation in exchange for work on agriculture and livelihood improvement projects that will benefit 1.6 million Nepalese in 2010. Till mid July 2010, PAF has been able to organize 400,818 poor households in the form of 14,828 community organizations to pursue different income generation and infrastructure related projects to secure their livelihoods and lead a dignified life in its 40 programme districts.

PAF was formed by the Government of Nepal in 2060 BS (2004) as a national instrument to uplift livelihood of poor people in rural areas who are deprived of basic facilities like food, shelter, health, education and drinking water.
A year ago, 23 year old primary school teacher Chandani Gurung would never have dreamed of the life and opportunities she has today, working for the United Nations in her hometown in Dadeldhura, Far-Western Nepal.

Chandani not only comes from one of the most remote and poor areas in Far-Western Nepal, she and her family of 15 are also Janajaties, an indigenous group that faces considerable social and economic exclusion in daily life. Caste discrimination is still present throughout Nepal, and today many from marginalized communities face discrimination in educational, economic, health care, and political and religious spheres.

Luckily, Chandani’s father understood the importance of education and he worked hard to support her to finish school and become a teacher. In April 2009, Chandani applied and was selected for one of two United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) inclusive internship positions, with the other position going to Sujit Sanal, who is a Dalit (a lower caste known as the “untouchables”) from Khalanga, Dadeldhura. The 11-month internship at WFP’s Dadeldhura field office helped Chandani build the knowledge, skills and self-confidence she needed to begin an esteemed professional career and build a better life for her and her family.

“Interning at WFP gave me an opportunity to learn new things about the professional work environment and learn the social and communication skills. It was also a really great experience to learn about the workings of the UN system. It was a dream come true for me” said Chandani.

Two months before she completed her WFP internship in March 2010, Chandani successfully interviewed for an administrative assistant position with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Dadeldhura. “I could not have possibly imagined getting a job at FAO if I had not worked as an intern at WFP,” Chandani said. “It is very difficult for us to get opportunities for jobs. I felt very happy in knowing I was able to have the same opportunity as a Brahmin or Chhetri,” she added.

In 2010 and 2011, WFP plans to expand its internship programme to select more candidates from socially excluded communities for its field offices as well as country office in Kathmandu. “Our local internship programme has demonstrated success in creating opportunities and building the skills and confidence among young people from socially excluded communities,” said Pramila Karki Ghimire, WFP Country Programme Coordinator and initiator of the Internship Programme. “This is an affirmative action programme aimed at training people from the excluded groups to build their capacity and experience needed to compete with others who would normally have had better opportunities. We believe this is a small step towards a fairer and more equitable future for Nepal but a very big opportunity for people like Chandani and Sujit.” added Pramila.

Interested young people from Dalit and Janajati groups who have completed high school education (+12 equivalent) are encouraged to contact Pramila Karki Ghimire at pramila.ghimire@wfp.org or 5542607 ext. 2402 for more information.
HETAUDA, August: The participants of the Center for Constitutional Dialogue (CCD) sponsored three-day workshop on federalism in the proposed Tamsaling province stressed the need for informed debate on federalism and Constituent Assembly (CA) State Restructuring Committee report. The workshop took place from August.

Badri Aryal, Nepali Congress leader from Dhading noted that there has not been a single round of public discussion on the federal structure in the proposed Tamsaling province before now.

“There is a need to change the mentality of the leadership of all the political parties to better understand federalism,” said Aryal. He noted, “The Federalism Dialogue is a praiseworthy initiation to reach beyond Kathmandu, but we need to go out and speak to the villagers, as well”.

A total of 61 participants, including civil society leaders, rights activists, government officials, intellectuals, and political party leaders from ten districts attended the three day Tamsaling Province Federalism Dialogue. They came from Dhading, Dolakha, Kavre Ppalanchowk, Lalitpur, Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Ramechhap, Rasuwa, Sindhuli and Sindhupalchowk districts.

Professor Krishna Khanal and Professor Krishna Hachhethu, TU Central Department of Political Science, provided their expertise and experience on federalism, with an overview of the CA State Restructuring Committee report, federal structures at the provincial level, nation building, priority rights, minority rights, and fiscal federalism.

The participants entered into detailed discussions on the distribution of power between center and province. The participants also discussed minority rights in the provincial structure, local government and local service provision, as well as the basis of the formation of provinces and resolution of inter-provincial relations.

Dawa Lama, CPN- UML Chitwan District representative, expressed dissatisfaction that the federal structure was proposed by the State Restructuring Committee has not been discussed within the parties. He said that the proposed federal structure would only end up splitting the Tamsaling province.

“How would the fourteen provinces address the diversity of one hundred and one castes in the country,” said Lama.

Responding to Lama’s queries, Professor Khanal said that the report does not advocate ethnic federalism. “The new federal structure is based on a balanced combination of identity and economic feasibility, not ethnic federalism.”

Reviewing the CA State Restructuring and Distribution of State Power Committee report on forms of federal structures, Professor Hachhethu pointed out some weakness in the committee report. “The report proposes centralized federalism while the provinces will become multi-cultural; however, the report is silent on the protection of the minorities within each province.”

Samjahana Tolenge, a journalist from Kavre district said, “Previously, there had not been enough discussions on what will be the basis of the proposed federal state. This Federalism Dialogue has been helpful for all of us.”

Professor Hachhethu pointed out the need for amendment in the proposed committee report as the report is successful in reflecting the diversity in macro level but failed to do so in micro level. “The Committee advocates more centralized federalism, whereas the participants in these Federalism Dialogues prefer more decentralized federalism.”

Tek Bahadur Tamang, Tamsaling Dal said that “the SRC committee report was prepared with a few political party leaders within the confinement of a room, rather than listening to the people”.

Shyam Maya Magar, National Indigenous Women Federation said, “these discussions should be held with the CA members and the key political party leaders who have the least knowledge about the consequences.’ Magar said, “This workshop has provided me clear information on federalism and cleared out misinformation about federalism.”

Nima Hyolmo, President of Hyolmo Mukti Morcha, Sindupalchowk said that the population of hyolmo is only 559 in the country so it should be taken into account the number of the population when the state restructuring is done or else it will be an injustice to the Hyolmo population.

A CCD representative, Mom Biswokarma, said that the suggestions provided by the participants will be discussed with the CA members in Kathmandu.

The CCD has already conducted ten Federalism Dialogues in the proposed federal states of Limbuwan, Kirat, Sunkoshi, Mithila-Bhojpura-Koch-Madhes, Tamuwan, Narayani, Magarat, Lumbini-Awadh-Tharuwan, Karnali and Khatpad province.
OHCHR raises awareness on transitional justice through street drama

KATHMANDU, 30 Aug: The Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal (OHCHR-Nepal) in collaboration with local partner, Community Youth Information Centre in Surkhet has recently concluded a transitional justice awareness campaign through street drama performance in Mid and Far Western Regions of Nepal. The campaign which commenced on the 1st of March, was aimed to make aware conflict victims, teachers, students, and local civil society organizations about their role in ending culture of impunity and seeking justice. It also intended to find an alternative way of bandh, chakka jam, and all obstructions while enjoying their rights to protest. The play also aimed to make people aware about their rights and emphasized plight of conflict victims, and access to justice.

It was performed in fifty different locations of ten districts wherein more than eighteen thousand people observed the play. The districts covered by this campaign are Banke, Rukum, Salyan, Dang, Pilihan, Kanchanpur, Kailali, Bardiya, Dailekh, and Surkeht. It was presented in the open air that suits the local audience. It made local audience feel that the play was really about themselves.

This campaign made local actors keen and committed to incorporate transitional justice components in their programs and expressed their commitment to support the process constructively.

Further, it also offered an opportunity to empower and express pain and plights of the conflict victims. Dialogues in the drama were in local dialects and the settings resembled with local contexts, therefore it was easy to understand and fun for them. Team leader of the drama performance Deepak Budha observed, ‘many victims have now realized that justice was possible for them and some have already started to approach local authorities for more information.’ The local actors, however, suggested UN Human Rights Office to replicate it and launch this campaign nationwide as a follow up interaction with the conflict victims and local actors. As a result, it would force the authorities and concerned parties to promptly address the problem which remains pending since 2006.
KATHMANDU, 30 Aug: An Inter-School Speech Competition has been organized on 2 August in Lalitpur to sensitize students on the importance of safe drinking water and enhance their knowledge on drinking water treatment options. The competition with the theme “Drinking Water Treatment Options” has been organized jointly by Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO), UN HABITAT, EAWAG/SANDEC and Coca Cola Company.

The students participating from 4 different schools presented their speech about different drinking water Point of Use (PoU) options particularly chlorination, boiling, filtration and Solar Water Disinfection (SODIS) technique at the programme. Among them, four students were selected as the winner in four different categories. Reshu Shrestha from Shree Shanti Secondary School was awarded in Bio-Sand Filter category, Pramod Sunuwar won the award in SODIS category whereas award in Chlorination category went to Karishma Rawot and Colloidal Siver Filter category to Sangeeta Aalemagar of Kumbheshowr Primary School.

The winners were felicitated with certificate and prize by the Senior Environment Journalist Bhairav Rishal, who believed that safe drinking water is essential for a healthy life. Since the quality of water available in Kathmandu Valley is not reliable to drink without treatment, Rishal suggested every individual to treat drinking water at their households.

Speaking about the environmental situation in Kathmandu Valley, he said that aquatic inhabitats of the river in the valley have disappeared completely due to river pollution. In his opinion, discharge of untreated wastewater into these water bodies is the major cause of this pollution. He said that it is occurring due to lack of public awareness on environmental sanitation.

Executive Director of ENPHO Suman Shakya said that the child mortality rate due to various waterborne diseases has been decreased remarkably in Nepal due to successful efforts made by different WATSAN organizations in raising public awareness on safe drinking water and promoting drinking water PoU options.

ENPHO, UN HABITAT, EAWAG/SANDEC and Coca Cola Company has organized a week-long Water and Hygiene Campaign in 10 selected schools of Lalipur. The campaign has been initiated with the aim to sensitize students on safe drinking water, encourage them in its use and prevent waterborne diseases.

Apart from speech competition, the campaign conducted various activities including student orientation programmes, educational exposure visit and school cleaning campaigns.

In response to the campaign activities, Public Health Section officer of Lalitpur Sub-metropolitan City Karuna Bajracharya stated that the awareness raising activities on safe drinking water conducted in Lalipur have remarkably improved public health condition by controlling waterborne diseases in the municipal area. Lekhnath Panthi of Lalitpur District Public Health Office informed that incidence of waterborne diseases has been found reduced in Lalitpur due to promotion of PoU options. He urged all the students to convey the message of disinfecting drinking water at their homes and communities. Dibya Mani Gyawali, vice-principal at Shree Shanti Secondary School suggested all to disinfect drinking water at household level to end the use of unsafe drinking water.

UN HABITAT and Coca Cola Company has been conducting “Partnership for Safe Water” programme in Lalitpur Sub-metropolitan City for past few years. This campaign has been conducted in the same schools covered by the Partnership for Safe Water programme. The programme has also implemented its activities in other 5 municipalities of Nepal as well to extend safe drinking water and proper sanitation facilities to urban poor.
KATHMANDU, 31 Aug: “Impact Study carried out so far in UN-HABITAT supported countries has shown Nepal as the best achiever in urban water and sanitation (WATSAN) perspective”, stated Andre Dzikus, Chief, Water and Sanitation Section II, Water, Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch, UN HABITAT, Nairobi.

Speaking at a dissemination workshop in Lalitpur on 21 July, Dzikus has shared this opinion. The workshop had been organized by UN HABITAT Water for Asian Cities Programmes to share the findings of the study carried out to evaluate the impact of WAC programme in urban WATSAN sector in Nepal. The programme has been receiving support from Water and Sanitation Trust Fund (WSTF) – managed by the Water, Sanitation and Infrastructure Branch (WSIB) under the Human Settlements Financing Division of UN-HABITAT.

Based on the Nepal Country Impact Study report, Dzikus also mentioned about the tangible impacts that WAC programme did in last five years in urban WATSAN sector in Nepal. He believed that these achievements will help to increase the investment of donor countries and agencies in the country.

He stressed on the need to strategize the community involvement approaches to optimize the impacts of available WSTF. He appreciated WAC partners for their praiseworthy contribution in gender and poverty mapping, which has been appreciated and brought in use by the key ministries in Nepal.

Krishna Prasad Acharya, joint secretary, Ministry of Physical Planning and Works expressed his commitment to take initiative to replicate the successful WATSAN practices in new urban areas of Nepal. He said that WATSAN organizations have done an appreciable job in urban WATSAN sector, which has increase coverage of safe drinking water and improved sanitation in urban areas.

At the programme, Dr. Roshan Raj Shrestha, UN HABITAT Regional Chief Technical Advisor, South Asia stressed that the urban water and sanitation should be given compatible priority along with other development sectors to achieve remarkable improvement in WATSAN in urban areas.

According to him, the UN-HABITAT has been running various WATSAN projects under its WAC Programme in 35 municipalities, 18 small towns and 8 peri-urban area of Nepal. These projects have conducted various WATSAN activities with focus on pro-poor WATSAN governance, urban water demand management, integrated urban environmental sanitation, and income generation for the urban poor. He informed that the programme has directly benefited more than 232 thousand people improving their living standards with remarkable improvement in water supply and sanitation in the programme areas.

Sharing about the partnership between the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage (DWSS) and UN-HABITAT in building the capacity of local agencies and communities in small towns of Nepal, Gajendra Thakur, Director General, DWSS suggested UN-HABITAT to allocate their support in hardware components of the project so that WATSAN services could improved and made easily accessible to urban poor.

Dr. Mahendra Subba, Deputy Director General, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction informed that the department has completed poverty mapping in 10 municipalities with support of UN-HABITAT. He urged the development organizations to design their development plans based on these poverty maps to benefit poor and marginalized groups dwelling in these municipalities. He also informed that the department has allocated separate budget to continue poverty mapping in other municipalities, too.
UNESCO builds capacity of Community Learning Centres in Nepal

KAILALI, 31 Aug: An intensive five-day capacity building programme for managers and facilitators of Community Learning Centres (CLC) came to a successful conclusion in Dhangadi today.

The event, co-organized by the UNESCO Office in Kathmandu, forms part of an initiative to support the Non-Formal Education Centre of the Ministry of Education to advance the development of CLCs nationwide.

The training was specifically aimed at enhancing the capacity of CLC management committee members and facilitators in community mobilization, awareness raising and networking to support social integration through lifelong education for everyone in the community.

The Dhangadi event is the first workshop in a series of three, with further training to be held in Nepalgunj in the second week of September 2010; and Rupandehi in the first week of October 2010.

Managers and facilitators from 100 CLCs across the country are expected to benefit from the instruction. A CLC is a learning centre outside the formal education system, usually set up and managed by local people in order to provide various learning opportunities for community development and improvement of the quality of life.

UNESCO supported the Ministry of Education to establish the first CLC in Shreekot, Baitadi in 1998. Today there are more than 800 CLCs across Nepal. The government intends to expand the programme to every village development committee and municipality.

UNESCO is presently carrying out a comprehensive assessment of CLCs in Nepal that will provide policy guidance to national government and communities to better grasp their potential for improving literacy and life skills.

Non-Formal Education Centre in Nepal receives UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy

The Non-Formal Education Centre in Nepal will receive the UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy for its remarkably effective National Literacy Campaign integrating themes such as the environment, maternal and child health, women’s development and income generation. The prize, supported by China, is worth US $20,000.

The six laureates of the UNESCO International Literacy Prizes for 2010 were proclaimed by the Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova, on the recommendation of an international Jury, which met between 5 and 9 July 2010.

The UNESCO International Literacy Prizes are awarded every year in recognition of excellence and innovation in literacy throughout the world. Complying with the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) thematic calendar, the theme for this year’s Prizes is “Literacy and Women’s Empowerment”.

The award ceremony will take place at UNESCO in Paris on the occasion of the celebration of International Literacy Day, 8 September 2010 in the presence of Shankar Prasad Pandey, Secretary General of the Nepal National Commission for UNESCO and Secretary of the Ministry of Education.
KATHMANDU, 31 Aug: The use of UNESCO’s model curricula for journalism training in Nepal could boost the country’s media sector, participants of a consultation meeting on the adaption of the model agreed last month in Kathmandu.

But before the scheme can be successfully adopted, it needs to be adapted by journalism educators in Nepal to meet local needs and resources; take full cognizance of the social, economic, political and cultural contexts of the country; highlight the connection between journalism and democracy; and foster a more cross-disciplinary approach within journalism training centres.

Participants identified issues and concerns that may affect the adaption of the model curricula. A lack of qualified teachers to teach courses listed in the curricula was a common concern.

Many journalism schools also lack equipment and facilities. In some cases, curriculum planning involves an academic process.

Key stakeholders in the area of media education in Nepal will now work on adaptation strategies, including examining curricula adaptability in terms of courses, curricula-infrastructure, and teaching and learning resources.

UNESCO will work closely with Tribubhan University, Kathmandu University and the Press Institute of Nepal to facilitate the adaptation of the curricula and provide necessary support through the International Programme for Development of Communication (IPDC).

The consultation on 19 and 20 July 2010 brought together representatives of journalism training institutions and trainers and experts in journalism education from several universities in Nepal.

The importance of the connection between democracy and journalism is a key component of UNESCO’s Model Curricula for Journalism Education. It also assists media training institutions to create quality learning programmes.

The model curricula can easily be adapted to the specific social, economic, political and cultural context of Nepal, meeting delegates agreed.

It includes 17 courses written by media professionals who have worked in countries in transition. They form a complete and homogeneous teaching programme enabling students to understand and to master essential tools for quality journalism. The model curricula offer a set of competencies, course listings and descriptions for bachelor, masters and diploma programmes.
Department of Political Affairs introduces new website
http://www.un.org/depts/dpa/

The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) has revamped its website in order to better illustrate the work of the United Nations to prevent and resolve deadly conflict through political means. New features include:

- A more dynamic home page with images, video and regularly updated news on political issues managed by the Department.
- Greater visibility for UN political missions and good offices efforts in the field;
- Enhanced presentation of regional and thematic priorities as well as UN electoral assistance activities and UN peacemaker;
- Expanded content on emerging themes such as preventive diplomacy and mediation support, cooperation with regional organizations and counter-terrorism;
- More information for donors and member states on voluntary funding and requesting assistance.

General Assembly 65th session - Provisional agenda (A/65/150)


The provisional agenda for the 65th session of the General Assembly had been issued (A/65/150). The session will open on Tuesday, 14 September 2010.

General Assembly 65th session - High-level meetings and general debate (A/65/HLPM/INF/1)


The information note for delegations on the Arrangements or the High-level meetings and the general debate of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly is now available (A/65/HLPM/INF/1). The meetings will be held in New York from 20-30 September 2010. Included in the note are information on schedules, protocol, security, media arrangements and information on catering and dining facilities.

General Assembly Resolution tables (UN Documentation Research Guide)

The General Assembly Resolution tables in the UN Documentation Research Guide have been updated, e.g. 1st Session, 1946. Each session now includes detailed information about each resolution, including: Resolution symbol, Committee, agenda item, Meeting Record symbol, Draft Resolution symbol, and Resolution title. In addition, the access page has been updated to include links to all sessions on one page.

Security Council working methods (S/2010/507)


In an effort to enhance the efficiency and transparency of the Security Council’s work, as well as interaction and dialogue with non-Council members, the President of the Security Council has issued a note containing an annex with concise and user-friendly list of the recent practices and newly agreed measures which will serve as guidance for the Council’s work (S/2010/507). The present note incorporates and further develops the notes by the President of the Security Council of 19 July 2006 (S/2006/507), 19 December 2007 (S/2007/749) and 31 December 2008 (S/2008/847), by superseding those notes.

United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification 2010 – 2020

http://unddd.unccd.int/

With more lands around the world facing increasing deterioration and degradation, the United Nations General Assembly declared the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification.


Chaired by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the UN Private Sector Forum will convene approximately 350 Heads of State and Government, Chief Executive Officers, Civil Society Leaders and Heads of UN Agencies during the UN Summit on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Peace and Security

DPKO/DFS Guidelines: Integrating a Gender Perspective into the Work of the United Nations Military in Peacekeeping Operations

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) – new website


MONUSCO took over from an earlier UN peacekeeping operation – the United Nations Organization Mission in Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) – on 1 July 2010. It was done in accordance with Security Council resolution 1925 of 28 May to reflect the new phase reached in the country.

United Nations Peacekeeping Operations –
Economic & Social Development

Land and Natural Disasters: Guidance for Practitioners (UN-HABITAT)
http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=2973
The Guidelines provide a holistic approach to addressing land issues from the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster through early recovery and reconstruction phases. It is targeted at humanitarians and land professionals, as well as government officials. The Guidelines take an inter-disciplinary approach to land, one that also brings together humanitarian emergency relief and early recovery perspectives. Throughout the text, readers will find many short cases illustrating practical aspects of bringing land issues into the post-disaster recovery process. Tools and other useful references are also included. The information provided in these Guidelines will be of interest and use to anyone directly working to support rapid yet sustainable recovery of human settlements following a natural disaster. The Guidelines were produced through a partnership between UN-HABITAT, the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), FAO and the Early Recovery Cluster.

A high-level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly will be held from 20 to 22 September 2010 to accelerate progress towards the MDG target of 2015. In preparation for the meeting, the ILO and other UN agencies have garnered reports on case studies that can be replicated and scaled up, highlighting lessons learned, identifying remaining challenges, and making recommendations for progress.

UNIFEM’s Partnerships with Regional Organizations to Advance Gender Equality
English, French & Spanish:
The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has released an evaluation report on its partnerships with regional organizations to advance gender equality. It aims to determine how UNIFEM’s partnerships contribute to institutional change and progress, and to provide information that contributes to a more systematic and effective approach to partnerships.

Human Rights

OHCHR: Media Guide to the new UN independent experts - Who are they? What is expected of them? And how can you contact them?
A group of international human rights experts took over their mandates on 1 August 2010, appointed by the UN Human Rights Council to Special Procedures mandates.

English, French & Spanish:
The Second follow-up report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/64/890) as requested in General Assembly resolution 64/254 has been released. The first follow-up report was issued as document A/64/651. The report of the Fact-Finding Mission, better known as the Goldstone report was published as document A/64/490.

Humanitarian Affairs

News Focus: Pakistan floods
Pakistan floods
ReliefWeb: http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dnc.nsf/doc108?OpenForm&emid=FL-2010-000141-PAK&rc=3
The UN and its partners will need nearly US$460 million dollars to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of millions of people in flood-devastated Pakistan. The Government now estimates that more than 14 million people across the country have been affected in some way, and the emergency is still evolving and assessments are ongoing.

ReliefWeb – CREATE A BRIEFING KIT
http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/id/FL-2010-000141-PAK&rc=3
Create your customized briefing kit to get a concise overview of a humanitarian situation in a single PDF file. Once the desired options are selected, you will be able to download the kit or receive an email that allows you to download the kit at a later time.

New websites within the UN System

Background Note: 30 June 2010(DPI/1634/Rev.110/Corr.1, August 2010)
8 Sept: International Literacy Day

Literacy is a cause for celebration since there are now close to four billion literate people in the world. However, literacy for all – children, youth and adults - is still an unaccomplished goal and an ever moving target. A combination of ambitious goals, insufficient and parallel efforts, inadequate resources and strategies, and continued underestimation of the magnitude and complexity of the task accounts for this unmet goal. Website: http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/literacy

14 Sept: International Day For The Preservation Of The Ozone Layer

On 19 December 1994, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed 16 September the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer, commemorating the date, in 1987, on which the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was signed. States are invited to devote the Day each year to promote, at the national level, activities in accordance with the objectives of the Montreal Protocol and its amendments.

15 Sept: International Day Of Democracy

Stressing the continuing need to promote democratization, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, the General Assembly agreed on 08 November 2007 to observe 15 September each year as the International Day of Democracy. In adopting by consensus a resolution on the issue, the 192-member body reaffirmed that “while democracies share common features, there is no single model of democracy and that democracy does not belong to any country or region.”

21 Sept: International Day Of Peace

The International Day of Peace was first established in 1981 by a resolution 36/67 of the United Nations General Assembly to coincide with its opening session every September. In 2001 the resolution 55/282 was strengthened to fix the date annually on 21 September and for it to be a day of nonviolence and cease-fire. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the Member States of the General Assembly. http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/peaceflag/whatis.html