

# THE OLIVE TREE

Edition 11. January - February 2019



## The Two Global Warmings

Biggest Threats Facing Travel & Tourism

Jetwing  
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Travel Impact Newswire



# พระเจ้าทรงเป็นนิรันดร์

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

## ศาสตร์ของพระราชากับการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน

### His Majesty's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for SDGs

หลักปรัชญาของเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงเป็นหลักในการคิด ตัดสินใจ และการปฏิบัติ สำหรับการดำเนินชีวิตหรือประกอบกิจการงานใดๆ ด้วยการใช้ **ความรู้** และ **คุณธรรม** เป็นฐาน ผ่านการไตร่ตรองด้วยการใช้หลักสำคัญ ๓ ประการ ได้แก่ พอประมาณ ไม่มากเกินไป ไม่น้อยเกินไป มีเหตุผล ตามหลักวิชาการ มีภูมิคุ้มกัน พร้อมรองรับการเปลี่ยนแปลงหรือวิกฤตที่อาจเกิดขึ้น ซึ่งจะนำไปสู่การพัฒนาอย่างสมดุลในทุกมิติ ไม่ว่าจะเป็นด้านเศรษฐกิจ สังคม สิ่งแวดล้อม และวัฒนธรรม อันเป็นแนวทางที่จะนำไปสู่ **ความสุขที่ยั่งยืน** ได้อย่างแท้จริง

"Sufficiency Economy Philosophy" is a mindset for decision-making. We base our decisions on our **Knowledge** using our internal value - our **virtues** - through applying the three principles of **moderation, reasonableness** and **prudence**. We aim for the outcomes of our decision to be balanced among the four dimensions of human life: **economy, society, environment** and **culture**, in order to promote sustainable happiness for all.



The Sufficiency Economy Philosophy of Thailand's late monarch, His Majesty King Bhumibhol Adulyadej, designed in the aftermath of the 1997 Asian economic crisis, offers one of the best models of Alternative Development globally. It is now going mainstream, primarily because it has much in common with the UN SDGs. Thailand, where the 1997 Asian economic crisis started, is certainly according it more respect than ever before. The rest of the world needs to follow if true "Sustainability" is to be realised.



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## Message from EXECUTIVE EDITOR

# IMTIAZ MUQBIL

The travel & tourism industry's high-gear campaigns to cut back on plastic pollution, save energy, prevent food waste, etc., etc. are all important to advancing the sustainability agenda and protecting the natural environment. But travel & tourism has done little or nothing to protect the "other environment" -- that of cultural, social and ethnic cohesion which is just as important as the "natural environment" and which is also under threat.

I call it "The Other Global Warming."

Combined, the "Two Global Warmings" are the biggest man-made threats facing travel & tourism in the years ahead.

In this edition of The Olive Tree, I draw attention to the Alliance of Civilisations, an initiative taken by the United Nations to combat "violent extremism, xenophobia, discrimination, intolerance and fear of the other." The UNAOC "seeks to create forums for inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue, to promote tolerance, diversity and a culture of peace." It provides an open space for UNAOC Group of Friends, UN system entities, civil society including NGOs, faith-based organizations, media and private sector "to share good practices on ways to promote dialogue and understanding with partnerships that work."

I may be mistaken but I do not recall any gathering of travel & tourism "thought-leaders" ever featuring the head of the UNAOC as a speaker, or any travel & tourism organisation seeking a "partnership that works" to address the "The Other Global Warming."

Sadly, this serious imbalance prevails at the global level.

Every year, countries convene at UN negotiating tables to agree on ways to reduce the projected rise in global temperatures. They cite science which proves that the rising atmospheric levels of greenhouse gases is disrupting weather patterns, causing droughts and intensifying storms.

My commensurate argument is that geopolitical science also proves that the rise in "The Other Global Warming" is leading to terrorism, conflicts, racism, xenophobia and other socio-cultural-ethnic tensions which disrupt peace and stability and pose the same level of threat to travel & tourism as climate change.

The UN Alliance of Civilizations has just held its 8th Global Forum. Nether this, nor any of the previous seven forums, received much global publicity. By contrast, the UN's climate change conference attracts peak publicity and billions of dollars in "climate finance".

Why the gap?

2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. That significant event was supposed to mark the end of one era of "The Other Global Warming" -- post-World War II confrontation and conflict which also had its roots in xenophobia, racism, nationalism and fascism. Today, however, new political, social, cultural and indeed physical walls have re-emerged. As the head of the UNAOC says in his speech, many of the same socio-cultural-ethnic animosities whipped up by fascist leaders in the build-up to both World Wars are now back in place.

So what is the tourism industry, which supposedly sells peace, friendship, history, heritage and cultural fraternity and friendship for a living, doing about it?

So far, it would seem, little or nothing.

This edition of The Olive Tree is designed to highlight this glaring blind-spot in the level of attention devoted to the two global warmings, and hopefully initiate efforts to bridge the gap.

Those who don't learn from the mistakes of history are doomed to repeat it. It's time for travel & tourism industry's so-called "thought-leaders" to start devoting a little more attention to learning the lessons of history.



## Message from **CHAIRMAN, JETWING HOTELS**

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# HIRAN COORAY

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The Olive Tree Edition 11, the first of 2019, highlights (on Page 40) a unique award conferred in 2018 by the United Nations in cooperation with USAID, Interpol, and the Freeland Foundation, with funding support from the governments of Norway and Sweden. The Environmental Enforcement Awards recognised the “courage, dedication and integrity” of nine institutions and individuals from China, India, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam in preventing transboundary environmental crime.

Every year, the travel & tourism industry hands out plenty of awards for the “Best This..” or the “Best That...” I feel it is high time for the industry to support and/or create new categories of awards such as these which strive to curb illegal trade in wildlife, illicit trade in forests and forestry products, illegal dumping of waste including chemicals, smuggling of ozone depleting substances and illegal mining.

It was depressing to read that environmental crimes caused by international criminal networks have laid waste to wildlife across multiple continents, causing an \$258 billion per year in damage and material losses. The UN says they are the fourth largest source of illegal crime after drug smuggling, counterfeiting and human trafficking.

The award winners include judges, forest rangers, police officers and customs authorities who have resolutely done their duty with “courage, innovation and integrity”, often requiring them to confront influential and powerful people in both the public and private sectors.

Jetwing Hotels would like to extend its congratulations to the award winners as well as to the organisers. We echo the sentiments of Mr Dechen Tsering, UN Environment Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, when he says, “Humanity is the guardian of the natural world, and these winners are at the tip of the spear. Without their commitment to justice, our environmental laws and safeguards are a paper tiger. And though their work may often go unrecognized, it is their qualities of courage, dedication and integrity we need to see more of to preserve our planet.”

The travel & tourism industry can/should do a lot more to support such courage, dedication and integrity. A good start would be to invite such men and women of courage to share their experiences at industry conferences. They would make far more inspiring motivational speakers than many of those currently making the rounds.

The 17th UN SDG calls for forging of new partnerships to achieve the goals. This is exactly the kind of partnership we need for the future.



# SECTION 1





# Global Warming I

## Alliance of Civilizations seeks ways to alleviate “The Other Global Warming”



*“Commit2Dialogue: Partnerships for Prevention and Sustaining Peace”* was the overarching theme of the 8th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC - [www.unaoc.org](http://www.unaoc.org)) held 19-20 November, 2018, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

According to the Forum organisers, “Over the past few years we have witnessed a rise of violent extremism, xenophobia, and discrimination. Intolerance and fear of the other continue to prevail in many societies. There is an urgent need to re-commit to interreligious and intercultural dialogue and to the promotion of tolerance, diversity and a culture of peace.”

“To this end, the Forum provides an open space for UNAOC Group of Friends, UN system entities, civil society including NGOs, faith-based organizations, media and private sector to share good practices on ways to promote dialogue and understanding with partnerships that work.”

### BACKGROUND

The UNAOC was launched in 2005 as the political initiative of the late Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan with the co-sponsorship of the Governments of Spain and Turkey. On 6 July 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus Resolution 69/312 “United Nations Alliance of Civilizations”. The milestone resolution provided UNAOC with the institutional status and the political guidance necessary to pursue its work in promoting intercultural dialogue, greater understanding and respect among civilizations, cultures, religions and beliefs.

The primary mission of UNAOC is to forge collective political will and to mobilise concerted action at improving cross-cultural dialogue and cooperation among countries and diverse communities to prevent violence and conflict, and promote social cohesion and peace. UNAOC focuses its activities on four priority areas: Education, Youth, Media, Migration.

Since 2008, UNAOC Secretariat has organized seven global forums in seven countries. The UNAOC Global Forum has become a leading platform for promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and understanding, as well as for forging collaboration with like-minded partners.



This year, UNAOC brought together almost 1,000 participants for its 8th Global Forum to share knowledge and explore innovative ways of promoting inclusive approaches to conflict prevention as a pathway for sustaining peace. This year's forum was also designed to serve as a catalyst for building partnerships that will help achieve that goal. As such, its themes and sub-themes were intended to support the Secretary-General's vision on prevention with its emphasis on the complementarity between sustaining peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development including Goal 16 on the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies.

In the first plenary session, prominent politicians and UN officials stressed the role of interreligious and intercultural dialogue for conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Speakers in the plenary, which was moderated by Ms. Nihal Saad, Chief of Cabinet and Spokesperson for the High Representative of UNAOC, included: Mr. José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero, Former Prime Minister of Spain; Mr. Danilo Türk, Former President of Slovenia; Mr. Kevin Rudd, Former Prime Minister



of Australia; Amr Moussa, Former Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; and Mrs. Ana Maria Menéndez, UN Under-Secretary-General and Senior Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on Policy.

Mr. Zapatero, dubbed the “Godfather of the Alliance” by Ms. Saad for his instrumental role in launching the Alliance, made four major points.

The first was that no religion or belief can serve to uphold or legitimize violence.

The second point he made was that diversity, rather than being seen as a weakness or disease, should



be seen as an asset.

Third, Mr. Zapatero said that empathy, respect, and humility were fundamental to dialogue, coexistence, and understanding.

The fourth point is his recommendation that UNAOC engages with the UN Security Council and undertake a mediation role. He encouraged Member States to support UNAOC financially.

Mr. Türk agreed that diversity is an asset. However, he said diversity could also be problematic and needed to be managed.

He laid out four principles for management towards meaningful dialogue. These were: opening up space for youth, managing crises wisely, reaching out to religious communities, and not avoiding critical questions.

Pointing out how identity politics are being abused for political ends, Mr. Rudd focused on how our identities can be enhanced by how kind we are to people of other cultures.

Mr. Moussa stressed the role of outreach, particularly to those who have no access to education, as a foundation for dialogue. While there may be a so-called “Clash of Civilizations,” he called for nations to work together to prevent clashes.

Mrs. Menendez highlighted the gender dimension of peace-building and dialogue, pointing out that without women, there is no alliance of civilizations. She stressed that to adequately address the various and complex problems of the world required the inclusion of half of the global population – women.

She noted that conflicts are complex and that resolving conflicts requires an integrated approach that involves many elements.





# What the 8th Global Forum of the UNAOC achieved

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The following are closing remarks by Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, The High Representative for the UN Alliance of Civilizations, 20 November 2018, summarizing the key outcomes of the 8th Global Forum.

Excellencies, Mr. Secretary-General, Ladies and gentlemen,

Once again, I wish to express my deepest thanks for your active participation during the 8th Global Forum.

I also reiterate my profound gratitude to the State of Qatar and the then Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, for putting their confidence in me and entrusting me with this important task of leading the Alliance during the past 5 years.

I am highly grateful to the Governments of Spain and Turkey, the co-sponsors of the Alliance and to all members of the Group of Friends.

I wish to also extend a special thanks to the Secretary-General, H.E. Antonio Guterres, for his efforts in support of our work.

Last but not least, I am also very grateful to my Chef de Cabinet and all my staff, for their tireless efforts and the excellent support and guidance they afforded me throughout the Forum and during my tenure.

Excellencies,

We are all too aware that despite unprecedented progress in the most recent history of humankind, there are still many threats in achieving peaceful coexistence between people of different cultures, religions and ethnicities.

The 8th Global Forum provided a unique platform for exchanging ideas, engaging with existing and future partners and re-affirming our commitment to the prevention and sustaining peace agenda.

During the course of two days, we identified several crucial pathways to achieve our shared goals.

First, we reaffirmed our commitment to pluralism and mutual understanding, recalling that no individual should be marginalized and treated differently because of who they are, or what they look like, or where they worship.

During the discussions, participants identified

challenges and good practices in building, restoring and solidifying trust between people across cultural and religious lines. To this end, inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue is a useful – though often neglected – soft power tool to achieve greater mutual understanding and trust.

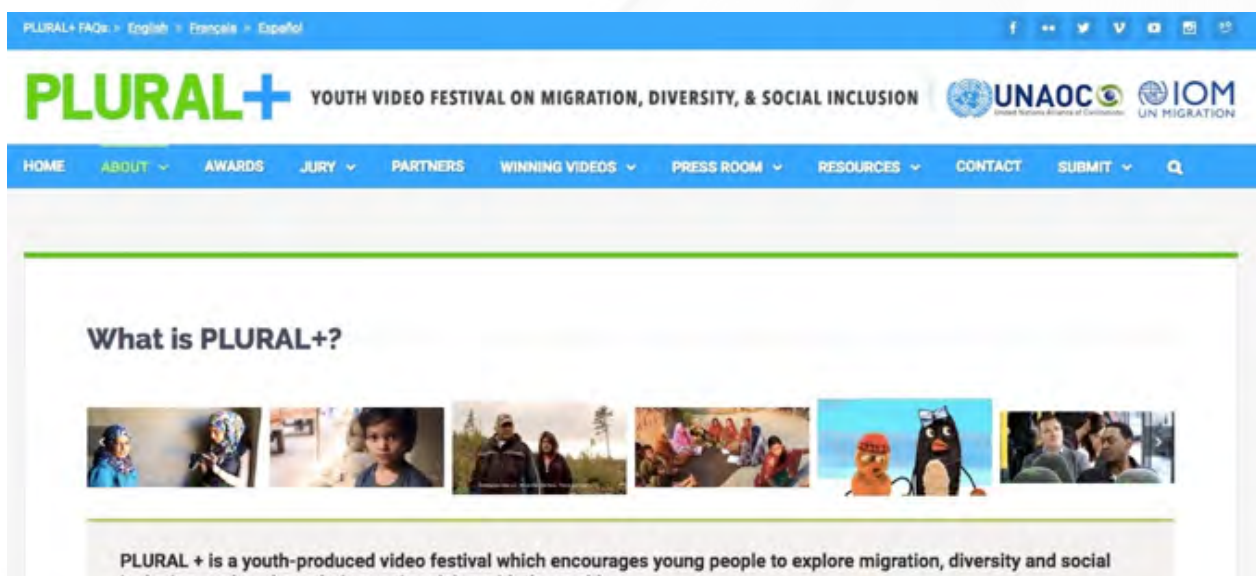
But these dialogue processes should not remain the sole prerogative of theologians and anthropologists. We should continue to carve

out space for community-leaders, youth groups and women to engage in inter-religious and intercultural dialogue in order to support efforts at conflict prevention, reconciliation, and social cohesion.

Second, we recognized that media play a powerful role in influencing thoughts, perceptions and opinions about migrants and refugees. Oftentimes, however, media could be exploited to perpetuate discrimination, exclusion and the incitement to hatred and violence.

Against this backdrop, participants explored the role of media professionals in combatting misconceptions and prejudice in a context where communities are confronted with challenges related to the arrival of refugees and migrants with diverse backgrounds, cultures and religions.

We discussed replication of successful initiatives to prevent inaccurate, negative narratives against migrants and refugees, including by amplifying the voices and experiences of migrants; And we identified good practices in improving the quality of media coverage about migrants and refugees, notably by promoting accurate reporting and ethical journalism; building partnerships between media and civil society; and preventing hate speech on online.



Third, we committed to enhancing the systematic and meaningful participation of women in peace processes. From Colombia to Sri Lanka, Afghanistan to Timor-Leste, women have played instrumental roles in conflict resolution and prevention. Yet we still have a long way to go. Women continue to be marginalized or excluded in many formal peace processes. All too often, they are viewed as victims rather than as agents of change.

The Forum provided an opportunity to shift this narrative. Peace agreements will lack legitimacy if male combatants are the only ones at negotiating tables. If we want to achieve meaningful and sustainable conflict resolution, inclusive peace negotiations are a must. This involves enlarging women's representation as mediators, negotiators, witnesses and signatories in peace process.

Fourth, we intensified our efforts at mobilizing the transformative power of the world's young

people. As in previous Forums, we provided a unique platform for showcasing young people's capacity, agency and leadership.

This year, over 100 youth Alumni from UNAOC's programming shared good practices and experiences in preventing and resolving conflict and violent extremism. This is yet another positive example of how the Alliance is not only working for youth, but with youth.

Fifth, we highlighted the virtues of Global Citizenship Education. This involves building a sense of belonging to a common humanity – not an imagined community created by and for a select few. We must draw on the lessons learned and empower students of all ages with the tools needed to address our global challenges.

Sixth, we provided a platform for forging new public private partnerships. I am pleased to note that in the course of the past two days, we launched several strategic projects and partnerships. They include two Memoranda



of Understanding: one with the Silk Road Institute and another with the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development (GUAM).

Our youth Alumni collaborated with UN system partners to prepare recommendations for implementing the UN Youth Strategy.

The Alumni will prepare a summary report containing their recommendations to present to the UN Youth Envoy.

In a similar spirit, I am delighted to announce the project Empowering Youth Volunteers through Sport. The implementation will start in January 2019. project could not be possible without the



generous financial support of the European Union.

As a part of the cooperation agreement signed in Baku at 7th UNAOC Global Forum, we are partnering with Save the Dream foundation, in a two-year project aimed at developing a common doctrine on “Sport Volunteerism” as a force for interreligious dialogue, equality, peace and conflict resolution. It is coordinated by the International Olympic Truce Center (IOTC) and involves National Olympic Committees, Universities and Youth Organizations. The project could not have been possible without funding from Erasmus+ Sport programme.

I am also pleased to note several Member States pledged to continue their support for ongoing UNAOC project activities.

And finally, during the Ministerial Group of Friends meeting, we had the opportunity to review the five-year period of the implementation of UNAOC’s Strategic Plan. I thank the Group of Friends for their constructive feedback and guidance. I encourage all member of the Alliance to continue to make a positive impact on the future work and direction of UNAOC.

I will remain available in the next couple of weeks to meet with the co-sponsors and any Member of the Alliance to hear more of your views on current and future work and direction.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,



We live in a world that will only become more interconnected and smaller. We must confront this reality head on with courage and foresight, united by our ideals and not divided by our differences.

Regular, constructive encounters within and between societies are the best antidote against division.

Only by shifting the perspective from fear and ignorance, to mutual understanding and dialogue, will we propel humanity towards a more inclusive, peaceful and secure world.

In so doing, we must never lose sight of the importance of promoting and protecting human rights as a precondition for peace and security.

In less than a month, we will commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Drafters of the Declaration, who were representatives with different legal and cultural backgrounds from all regions of the world, penned a shared vision of our common humanity.

It begins with a universal truth – that “Recognition of the inherent dignity ... of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”.

It is not surprising that the Declaration remains the most often cited human rights document. It is the universality of its 30 articles that gives the Declaration its deep resonance. It is the universality of our shared identities and shared sense of dignity that we must faithfully promote and defend.

This year, we also observe the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the genocide Convention, the first international Convention signed on 9 December 1948, 1 day before the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted. And 9 December also marks the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime.

Today, the consequences of not respecting the principles contained in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international covenants can be witnessed in all corners of the world.



We can and must do more to reclaim the inherent dignity of the human person if we are to prevent future societies from descending into horrific violence.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Along with new forms of conflict have come new responsibilities and approaches to confronting these challenges.

But they cannot be confronted alone. We must marshal the full force of the Alliance.

Establishing peace through dialogue and broad partnerships constitutes a necessary cornerstone of stability.

Let us leave this Forum with a renewed determination to collaborate, to share innovative solutions and live up to the commitments we set for ourselves.

I thank you once again and congratulations for a successful Forum.

**“We need to face identity-based tensions squarely and honestly”**

*The following are edited remarks by the UNAOC High Representative at the Group of Friends Ministerial Meeting, November 20, 2018*

Every era experiences its unique set of challenges and tribulations.

Last week, we paused to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War. Nine million combatants and seven million civilians perished as a direct consequence of the war.

The “war to end all wars,” as coined by President Woodrow Wilson, was quickly overshadowed by a deadly wave of nationalism and racism during the interwar period.

Tragically, the world found itself at war again. Yet, from its ashes, the United Nations arose dedicated to promoting the best of humankind, propelled by collective action and common purpose.

It is an unfortunate fact, however, that many of the challenges we face today are not so different from those faced by our founders.

Seven decades after the entry into force of the United Nations Charter, millions have been killed and displaced as a result of war and conflict.

Racism and xenophobia are on the march. We are witnessing a resurgence of hate and intolerance, in which migrants and refugees face the brunt of discriminatory and exclusionary policies.

Terrorist organizations and violent extremists have exploited these tensions, unleashing a barbarism that will forever mark the first two decades of the twenty-first century.

In too many corners of the world, human rights are in jeopardy. And the space for civil society has been shrinking in exactly the places that need it the most.

In this current context, we need to face identity-based tensions squarely and honestly.

This constitutes the UNAOC’s core mission. The pioneers of the Alliance were as determined as the United Nations founders in re-imagining a world, where nations would cooperate rather than clash; where mutual respect and understanding would replace fear and suspicion. I urge all Members of the Alliance to remain steadfast in pursuit of this commitment.

## **PART 2**

Moving operations to New York helped in mainstreaming UNAOC activities into the United Nations Secretariat and other United Nations

entities. This action strengthened the visibility of UNAOC within the United Nations system and beyond. Today, our young organization is an active member of several inter-agency working groups.

During the course of 6 years, I witnessed first-hand how UNAOC projects helped bridge the widening rift between civilizations, having a positive impact on the lives of thousands of people, particularly young people. Allow me to take a moment to illustrate our achievements with a few examples.

In order to have meaningful impact, we anchored our project activities in four areas: youth, education, media and migration.

First, I made it one of my main priorities to create an enabling environment for young peacebuilders. The focus has always been on achieving impact.

Since 2005, UNAOC identified, developed and showcased the contributions of thousands of young people. From Dakar to Amman, Colombo to Uganda, we partnered with thousands of young peacebuilders to prevent crises and advance peace.

Since 2008, the Youth Solidarity Fund has provided seed funding to 57 youth-led organizations to implement projects promoting intercultural and interfaith dialogue. These projects were completed in 34 countries and directly impacted more than 90,000 individuals. A further 1.3 million indirect beneficiaries were reached through project activities.

Between 2016 and 2018, 40 regional youth leaders, aged 18 to 25, from 23 different countries, were trained in intercultural understanding, and conflict analysis during the first and second edition of the Young Peacebuilders programme. These participants reached over 1,000 individuals by organizing step-down peace activities in their own organizations and communities.

I am pleased to note that the Secretary-General's Youth Strategy, and Security Council resolutions 2250 and 2419 provide further impetus to expand our youth programming.

Several of our flagship initiatives were also scaled and reinforced as they celebrated their third or fourth editions – this was the case of the Fellowship Programme and the #spreadnohate campaign for preventing hate speech against migrants and refugees in new and traditional media.

Second, we recognized the importance of harnessing the creativity and innovation of the private sector.

Since 2011, the Intercultural Innovation Award, a partnership between UNAOC and BMW Group, has supported more than 40 organizations in 31 countries to expand and scale their innovative projects encouraging intercultural dialogue. The selected organizations expanded their operations to over 100 countries, impacting around 2 million beneficiaries. This could not have been made possible without the leadership and generous financial contributions from BMW Group.





Third, we strengthened and deepened our relationship with civil society organizations, particularly religious leaders and faith-based organizations in three key areas: advocacy, capacity building and knowledge management. I encourage my successor, and indeed, the United Nations as a whole, to continue to strengthen dialogue among religious leaders and broaden their contribution in peace-building efforts. I look forward to learning more about their specific contributions in conflict prevention, mediation, and reconciliation during the breakout session starting soon.

Fourth, we expanded our Alliance to include new actors.

Today, 120 countries and 26 international organizations are members of the UNAOC's Group of Friends, which also acts in partnership with hundreds of civil society actors.

63 Memorandum of Understanding were signed with academic institutions, think tanks, foundations and international organizations to amplify the impact of UNAOC's work.

Fifth, partnerships and activities were streamlined within the United Nations system. One of my priorities when I assumed the post was to explore the possibilities to develop joint or mutually reinforcing capacity-building initiatives with other United Nations entities. I am convinced that this "whole-of-UN" approach yielded positive results during the past few years.

Last but not least, I have highlighted in the report the financial and structural challenges facing UNAOC. Given the evolving nature of the scope and scale of work of UNAOC over the course of years, there is a critical need to re-configure the structure of UNAOC staffing. I highly recommend

that such action would take place as soon as possible for better coordination and planning across the 4 pillars.

As I conclude, let us remember that no single country or organization can address today's challenges alone.

I take this opportunity to thank the hosts of previous Global Forums, namely the Governments of Spain, Turkey, Brazil, Qatar, Austria, Indonesia and Azerbaijan. Our Forums are not simply about dialogue. They have provided a unique platform to mobilize the energy and creativity of a range of partners. Partners that are committed to delivering concrete projects that make a real difference in local communities.

Today, more than ever, our dedication to the Alliance's goals must remain principled and strong.

I leave you with these parting words: we can either choose to perpetuate an artificial image of the world comprised of exclusive cultures, religions, or civilizations, historically distinct and destined for confrontation. Or, we recommit to a concerted effort – a sustained effort – to promote our shared humanity and interdependence in our quest for stability, prosperity and peaceful coexistence.

I am betting on our collective capacity to offer new imagination and determination for achieving our shared goal: a more harmonious society founded on a culture of peace, respect for human rights and improved development for all.

Further information on the UNAOC can be found here: <https://8thglobalforum.unaoc.org/>



# Global Warming II

## At COP24, countries agree concrete way forward to bring the Paris climate deal to life



Katowice, Poland, 15 December 2018, (UN News) - After two weeks of crunch negotiations – with overtime – the almost 200 parties gathered in Katowice, Poland, for the United Nations [COP24](#) two-week climate change conference, [adopted](#) on Saturday a “robust” set of implementing guidelines for the landmark 2015 [Paris Agreement](#), aimed at keeping global warming well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels.

Following several sleepless nights, cheers and applause welcomed the [COP24](#) President, Michal Kurtyka, as he opened the conference’s closing plenary meeting, which had been postponed close to a dozen times.

He thanked the hundreds of delegates in the room for their “patience”, noting that the last night “was a long night”. General laughter followed when the room’s big screens showed a delegate yawning whole-heartedly; the meeting had been set to wrap up on Friday.

“Katowice has shown once more the resilience of the [Paris Agreement](#) – our solid roadmap for climate action,” said Patricia Espinosa, who heads the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) secretariat and who was speaking on behalf of António Guterres, the UN Secretary-General.

Mr. Guterres, who has made addressing the impacts of climate change one of the top priorities of his term as UN Secretary-General, came three times to Katowice in the past two weeks to support the negotiations but, given the repeated delays, was forced to leave before the closing plenary, due to prior engagements.

The adopted guidelines package, called the “rulebook” by some, is designed to encourage greater climate action ambition and benefit people from all walks of life, especially the most vulnerable.

### **Trust and climate action financing**

One of the key components of the ‘Katowice package’ is a detailed transparency framework, meant to promote trust among nations regarding the fact that they are all doing their part in addressing

climate change. It sets out how countries will provide information about their national action plans, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as mitigation and adaptation measures. An agreement was reached on how to uniformly count greenhouse gas emissions and if poorer countries feel they cannot meet the standards set, they can explain why and present a plan to build up their capacity in that regard.

On the thorny question of financing from developed countries in support of climate action in developing countries, the document sets a way to decide on new, more ambitious targets from 2025 onwards, from the current commitment to mobilize US\$100 billion per year as of 2020.

Another notable achievement of these negotiations is that nations agreed on how to collectively assess the effectiveness of climate action in 2023, and how to monitor and report progress on the development and transfer of technology.

“The guidelines that delegations have been working on day and night are balanced and clearly reflect how responsibilities are distributed amongst the world’s nations,” said Ms. Espinosa in a press statement. “They incorporate the fact that countries have different capabilities and economic and social realities at home, while providing the foundation for ever increasing ambition.”

“While some details will need to be finalised and improved over time, the system is to the largest part place,” she added.

## **Article 6: The one major matter nations couldn’t find consensus on**

Ultimately, the negotiations tripped on one key issue which will be back on the table at the next UN climate change conference, COP25, set to take place in Chile. This is the matter known in specialized circles as “Article 6,” regarding the so-called “market mechanisms” which allow countries to meet a part of their domestic mitigation goals.

This is done for example through “carbon markets” – or “carbon trading”, which enables countries to trade their emissions allowances. The Paris Agreement recognizes the need for global rules on this matter to safeguard the integrity of all countries’ efforts and ensure that each tonne of emissions released into the atmosphere is accounted for.

“From the beginning of the COP, it very quickly became clear that this was one area that still required much work and that the details to operationalize this part of the Paris Agreement had not yet been sufficiently explored”, explained Ms. Espinosa, noting that the majority of countries were willing to agree and include the guidelines on market mechanisms but that “unfortunately, in the end, the differences could not be overcome”.

## **Other key COP24 achievements**

In addition to the political negotiations among Member States on the Paris guidelines, over the past two weeks, the hallways of COP24 buzzed with close to 28,000 participants having lively exchanges, sharing innovative ideas, attending cultural events, and building partnerships for cross-sectoral and collaborative efforts.

Many encouraging announcements, especially on financial commitments for climate action, were made: Germany and Norway pledged that they would double their contributions to the Green Climate Fund, established to enable developing countries to act; the World Bank also announced it would increase its commitment to climate action after 2021 to \$200 billion; the climate Adaptation Fund received a total of \$129 million.

The private sector overall, showed strong engagement. Among the highlights of this COP, two major industries – the sports and the fashion worlds – joined the movement to align their business practices with the goals of the Paris Agreement, through the launch of the Sports for Climate Action Framework,

and the Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action.

Many more commitments were made, and concrete, inspiring actions were taken.

“From now on, my five priorities will be: ambition, ambition, ambition, ambition and ambition,” said Patricia Espinosa on behalf of UN chief [António Guterres](#) at the closing plenary. “Ambition in mitigation. Ambition in adaptation. Ambition in finance. Ambition in technical cooperation and capacity building. Ambition in technological innovation.”

To achieve this, the UN Secretary-General is convening a [Climate Summit](#) on 23 September, at UN Headquarters in New York, to engage Governments at the highest levels.



# COP24: UN climate change conference, what's at stake and what you need to know



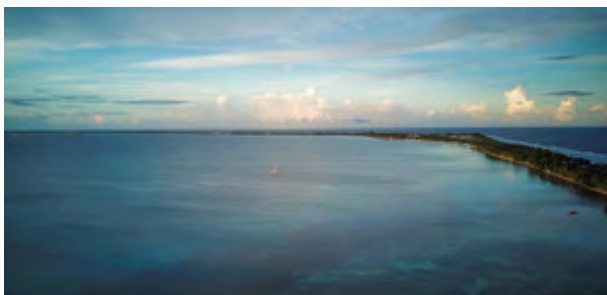
*IOM/Amanda Nero. A boy watches the shore from a boat near Sirajganj, a community affected by severe erosion that has left many displaced. Sirajganj, Bangladesh. October 2016*

Katowice, Poland, 29 November 2018 (UN News) - As global temperatures continue to rise, climate action is lagging and the window of opportunity is closing. The two-week climate change conference in Katowice, Poland, known as “COP24”, involved critical negotiations on

how to address the problem collectively and urgently, and realize critical commitments made by all countries in Paris, three years ago.

UN News put together this guide to [COP 24](#) to answer some of the biggest questions.

## 1. The basics: UNFCCC, UNEP, WMO, IPCC, COP 24, Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement... can someone please make sense of all this?



These acronyms and place names all represent international tools and terms that, under the leadership of the UN, were created to help advance climate action globally. They all play a specific and different role in focussing us all on achieving environmental sustainability. Here's how it fits together:

In 1992, the UN organised a major event in Rio de Janeiro called the Earth Summit, in which the [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#) was adopted.

In this treaty, nations agreed to “stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere” to prevent dangerous interference from human activity on the climate system. Today, the treaty has 197 signatories. Every year since the treaty entered into force in 1994, a “conference of the parties” – a COP – is held to discuss how to move forward and, since there have been 23 COPs so far, this year's will be the 24th, or “COP 24”.

Because the UNFCCC had non-binding limits on greenhouse gas emissions for individual countries and no enforcement mechanism, various “extensions” to this treaty were negotiated during these COPs, including: the famous [Kyoto Protocol](#) in 1997, which defined emission limits for developed nations to be achieved by 2012; and the [Paris Agreement](#), adopted in 2015, in which all countries of the world agreed to step up efforts to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures and boost climate action financing.

Two agencies support the scientific work of the UN on climate change: the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)) and the World Meteorological Organization ([WMO](#)). Together, they set up the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)) in 1988, which is made of hundreds of experts, dedicated to assessing data and providing reliable scientific evidence for the climate action negotiations, including the upcoming ones in Katowice.

## 2. The UN seems to be having a lot of conferences and summits on this subject... Is any of it, well... fruitful?



These meetings have been vital to find a global consensus on an issue that requires a global solution. Although progress has been much slower than needed, the process -- which has been as challenging as it is ambitious -- has worked to bring all countries with very different circumstances, together. Progress has been

made every step of the way. Some of the concrete actions taken so far prove one thing: climate action has a real positive impact and can truly help us prevent the worst.

Here are some notable achievements so far:

- [At least 57 countries](#) have managed to bring their greenhouse gas emissions down to the levels required to curb global warming.
- There are at least [51 “carbon pricing” initiatives](#) in the works; charging those who emit carbon dioxide per tonne emitted.
- In 2015, [18 high-income countries](#) committed to donating US\$100 billion a year for climate action in developing countries. So far, over \$70 billion have been mobilised.

## 3. Why is everyone talking about the Paris Agreement?



The Paris document – which provides the world with the only viable option for addressing climate change – has been [ratified by 184 parties](#), and entered into force in November 2016.

The commitments contained in it are significant:

- Limit global average temperature rise to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C.
- Ramp up financing for climate action, including the annual \$100 billion goal from donor nations for lower-income countries.
- Develop national climate plans by 2020, including their self-determined goals and targets.
- Protect beneficial ecosystems that absorb greenhouse gases, including forests.

- Strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.
- Finalize a work programme to implement the agreement in 2018.

The United States, which joined the Agreement in 2016, announced its intention in July 2017, to withdraw from it. However, the nation remains a party to the Agreement at least until November 2020, which is the earliest that it can legally request to withdraw from it.

## 4. Why is +1.5°C a critical line?



According to scientific research [assessed by the IPCC](#), keeping global warming to no more than 1.5°C global average over pre-industrial levels, will help stave off devastating permanent damage to the planet and its people, including: the irreversible [loss of habitat](#) for animals in the Arctic and Antarctic; much more frequent

instances of deadly [extreme heat](#); [water scarcity](#) that could affect over 300 million people; the [disappearance of coral reefs](#) which are essential for entire communities and marine life; sea level rise which is threatening the future and economy of entire [small island nations](#), etc.

All in all, the UN estimates that 420 million fewer people could be affected by climate change if we manage to stick to a 1.5°C increase, instead of 2°C.

We are still far from turning the corner toward a carbon-neutral future, and the need to move forward is greater than ever. The data tells us it is still possible to limit climate change to 1.5°C, but the window of opportunity is closing and it will require unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

## 5. So why was COP 24 important?



This year's COP in Katowice, Poland, was particularly crucial because 2018 is the deadline that the signatories of the [Paris Agreement](#) agreed upon in order to adopt a work programme for the implementation of the Paris commitments. This requires the singular most important ingredient: trust between all countries.

Among the many elements that need to be ironed out is the financing of climate action worldwide. Because the clock is ticking on climate change, the world cannot afford to waste more time: we must collectively agree on a bold, decisive, ambitious and accountable way forward.



## 6. What evidence was used for the negotiations at COP 24?

The discussions were based on scientific evidence gathered over the years and assessed by experts. Namely and primarily the following reports:

- October's "wake up call" [Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C](#), by the IPCC.
- [2018 Emissions Gap Report](#), by UNEP.
- [2018 Bulletin on greenhouse gas concentrations](#), by the WMO.
- [2018 Ozone Depletion Assessment](#), by the WMO and UNEP.

## 7. How could the general public follow the discussions at COP24?



There are many ways you can keep up to speed on the action:

- Subscribe to the "[Climate Change](#)" [newsletter topic here](#) to receive daily UN News highlights from Poland;
- Check [this page](#) regularly, as it will collect all the top stories filed from Katowice.
- Follow the hashtag [#ClimateAction](#) on Twitter;

## 8. How can you participate in the discussion and do your part for climate action?

You can join the [Climate Action ActNow.bot](#) which will recommend everyday actions to save the planet and tally up the number of actions taken to measure the impact that collective action can have.

By sharing your climate action efforts on social media, you can help encourage more people to act as well.

In addition, the [People's Seat initiative](#), launched by the UNFCCC Secretariat, ensures you can contribute directly to the conversation at COP 24. So make sure to [#TakeYourSeat](#) and speak up!

## 9. What are some examples of initiatives that the UN is supporting to tackle climate change?



As the UN is mainstreaming environmental sustainability across its work, UN News has been highlighting some examples of projects, supported by UNEP or the UN Development

Programme (UNDP), that show the pathway to climate action: in [rural eastern Europe](#), farmers and entrepreneurs can cut emissions, one bog at a time; in the [Lake Chad region](#), tens of thousands of drought-resistant trees are being planted; in [Guatemala](#), the reintroduction of smallholder cocoa production in Guatemala is helping address both economic and environmental problems; in [Bhutan](#), the power of traditional knowledge is being harnessed to support livelihoods and nature preservation; in [Timor-Leste](#), a new generation of green infrastructure is being built; in the [Democratic Republic of the Congo](#), small behavioural change is leading to great impact.

## 10. Why is the UN also planning a Climate Change Summit in 2019?



To build on the outcomes of COP 24, and to strengthen climate action and ambition at the highest possible levels, UN [Secretary-General](#)

[António Guterres](#) is convening a [Climate Change Summit](#) next September. In advance of the 2020 deadline for countries to finalize their national climate plans, the Summit is designed to focus on practical initiatives to limit emissions and build resilience.

The Summit will focus on driving action in six areas: transition to renewable energy; funding of climate action and carbon pricing; reducing emissions from industry; using nature as a solution; sustainable cities and local action; and climate change resilience.

# COP24 negotiations: The five factors that made reaching agreement on climate action so complex

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Katowice, Poland, 11 December 2018, (UN News) -- In the French capital, three years ago, countries agreed to do everything they could to keep global temperature rises to well under 2°C above pre-industrial levels, and as close as possible to 1.5°C.

Now, in Katowice, Poland – with 2018 chosen by the parties themselves as the deadline for the adoption of implementation guidelines or a “work programme” to move forward with – the 197 parties of the UN Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) are gathered to agree on how they will achieve the Paris commitments collectively, build trust among each nation, and bring the 2015 agreement to life.

“Some might say that it will be a difficult negotiation. I know it is not easy. It requires a firm political will for compromise,” said Mr. Guterres during the opening ceremony. “But, for me, what is really difficult is to be a fisherman in Kiribati seeing his country at risk of disappearing, or a farmer or herder in the Sahel losing livelihoods and losing peace. Or being a woman in Dominica or any other Caribbean nation, enduring hurricane after hurricane destroying everything in its path.”

Historically, multilateral climate negotiations have been difficult, as countries often attempt to protect their national interests, including economic ones.

That is why the commitments made in Paris were hailed as groundbreaking in many ways. In addition to the 2°C/1.5°C target, the deal included commitments to: ramp up financing for climate action, including financial support from industrialised nations to developing countries; develop national climate plans by 2020, with self-determined goals and targets; protect ecosystems, including forests; strengthen adaptation and reduce vulnerability to climate change.

Agreeing on how to make all of the above happen, is a politically and technically complex matter that sometimes conflicts with a variety of local realities, country categorisations, scientific questions, money issues, and ultimately, brings into question the ever-so complicated notion of trust among nations.



Here are five of the most major tension points:

## **1. A common goal, but different parties, different realities**

The first point of tension here is that some countries feel the need for global action more acutely than others. Take the plight of small island nations, for example, and areas of extreme weather activity such as the Sahel or the Polar regions.

In addition, industrialized countries are considered to have benefitted for decades from an economy that had no limits on greenhouse gas emissions, and therefore, they should take the biggest responsibility when it comes to the global effort to reverse the trend. But then again, others contend that some currently developing nations, now have record emissions and that climate action responsibility should lie with them to a greater extent.

The Paris Agreement achieved a delicate balance to bring all countries together. All countries, to varying degrees, have recognized that climate change is a global problem that requires a global response, and they have all showed the will to contribute to collective climate action efforts, as evidenced by the fact that 181 national climate action plans with self-determined targets have been submitted to the UN to date.

However, as countries face different realities, with various levels of economic and social development, the actions and obligations of the 197 parties need to be differentiated accordingly, especially when it comes to the financing of climate action – these are known as “common but differentiated responsibilities”. At COP24, a lot of the discussion centres around how to accommodate and handle these different realities fairly for all parties, while ensuring that the greatest and most ambitious climate action possible, can be undertaken.

## **2. Country categories**

The Climate Change Convention, adopted in 1992, divides its 197 parties into two main groups: the industrialized group of 43 nations, and the developing group of 154, including 49 “least developed countries”.

The climate action contributions and responsibilities of each group differ with regards to how transparently and regularly they communicate their actions and provision of support; especially in terms of finance or technology-transfer, now, and in the long term.

Because the two groups were established more than 25 years ago, and taking into account that national socio-economic situations have evolved over time, some parties feel that the composition of these groups should be reassessed as we look to implement the Paris commitments. However, there is no process to change this grouping – and none is planned or anticipated - another complex point for this COP.

## **3. ‘Welcoming’ or ‘noting’ the science?**

To facilitate the political discussions and ground them in fact, various scientific reports are being considered at COP24. One of them is last October’s landmark Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C, prepared by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), drawn up by hundreds of scientists from around the world. The report, commissioned as part of the Paris Agreement, states that limiting the rise in temperatures to 1.5°C by the end of the century compared to pre-industrial era, remains possible, but will require an “unprecedented” shift in every aspect of our societies.

While all countries acknowledge the need to tackle climate change, one of the debates here at the COP is whether the IPCC report should be officially “welcomed” or merely “noted.” This seemingly small language technicality raises a critical question: to what degree should policy be based on science? It

also signals a difference on how urgently and intensely various countries want to engage in climate action moving forward.

#### **4. The ever-so thorny question of financing**

Climate action – which requires new technology, infrastructure and skills – represents a cost that some nations, especially the least developed and most vulnerable, cannot carry alone. In Paris, donor nations committed to mobilising \$100 billion every year to fund climate action in developing countries, starting in 2020. This figure would include public and private contributions, which renders the reporting quite complex... Countries are arguing on how close we are to meeting that target and whether it will be met by 2020.

Another burning issue is the lack of clarity over what constitutes “climate finance”, as many countries report some of their “development aid” as “climate action aid”. This lack of clarity complicates the discussions considerably, and questions regarding reporting, transparency and accountability are on the table.

#### **5. Guidelines for true trust among nations**

All the countries recognize the need for guidelines to be in place, so they can move on to implementing the Paris Agreement, and they are all mindful of the 2018 deadline. However, if we are to course-correct fast and well, efforts and investments are required – including in economic transition, ambitious reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, technology exchange and knowledge-sharing.

What it all comes down to, is the ephemeral trust among nations, an important element that can only be realized if tangible transparency measures are in place.

“We have no time for limitless negotiations,” said UN Secretary General António Guterres. “A completed work programme will unleash the potential of the Paris Agreement. It will build trust and make clear that countries are serious about addressing climate change,” he stressed.

The conversations on reporting and evaluation, with the potential set-up of peer review systems, are very challenging.

The negotiations on all of these issues are meant to last until the end of the week.

“Many political divisions remain. Many issues still must be overcome,” said the head of the UNFCCC secretariat, Patricia Espinosa, as she launched the high-level segment on Tuesday.

“But I believe it’s within our grasp to finish the job,” she stated confidently to the dozens of decision-makers gathered together in the conference hall.

# Winners of UN Climate Action Award Honored in Poland



UN Climate Change News, 11 December 2018 – Fifteen game-changing initiatives in fourteen countries were honoured as winners of the United Nations Climate Action Award at a special ceremony at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 24) in Katowice, Poland, this evening.

“These activities shine a light on scalable climate action around the world,” said Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change. “They are proof that climate action isn’t only possible, it is innovative, it is exciting, and it makes a real difference.”

The Momentum for Change award, spearheaded by UN Climate Change, showcases some of the most practical and replicable examples of what people are doing to address climate change. This year’s winning activities range from an app that promotes the fight against food waste to a government that is taking 100% responsibility for its greenhouse gas emissions.

“Climate action leaders, including those recognized by Momentum for Change, are stepping up to meet the global climate challenge by delivering on the Paris Agreement,” said UN Secretary-General António Guterres. “These inspirational leaders, from communities, governments, businesses and organizations, come from all corners of the globe and all levels of society. Their winning projects range from transformative financial investments to women-led solutions to protect people and the planet. Through their leadership and creativity, we see

essential change.”

The winning 2018 Lighthouse Activities were lauded by ministers, negotiators, NGOs, celebrities, and other conference participants. Acclaimed co-pilot of the first flight around the world in a solar-electric airplane, Bertrand Piccard, served as the event’s master of ceremonies. The award ceremony also featured a speech by Ms. Espinosa, as well as inspirational videos narrated by Sir David Attenborough, poet Aka Niviâna, Bertrand Piccard, YouTube star Caspar Lee, and a musical performance by American cellist and storyteller, Ben Sollee.

The 15 winning activities fall within Momentum for Change’s four focus areas: [Planetary Health](#), [Climate Neutral Now](#), [Women for Results](#), and [Financing for Climate Friendly Investment](#).

The 2018 Momentum for Change Lighthouse Activities are:

## Planetary Health

**[Climate-Efficient School Kitchens and Plant-Powered Pupils](#) | Germany:** Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment and ProVeg International are providing healthy, climate-friendly meals in German schools.

**[Santiago Biofactory](#) | Chile:** Aguas Andinas, Chile’s largest water utility, together with its main shareholder SUEZ, is transforming



Santiago's three wastewater treatment plants into "biofactories" that convert wastewater and sewer sludge, a wastewater treatment by-product, into clean energy.

#### **Composting Waste Treatment: An Ecological Solution to Poverty and Climate Change | Haiti:**

Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods (SOIL) is building composting toilets in Haiti, reducing the spread of diseases like cholera and typhoid, creating jobs, and restoring local environments.

#### **Sri Lanka Mangrove Conservation Project |**

**Sri Lanka:** Seacology, a nonprofit environmental conservation organization, is helping Sri Lanka become the first nation in history to preserve and replant all of its mangrove forests.

## **Climate Neutral Now**

#### **Creating the Greenest Football Club in the World – Forest Green Rovers | United Kingdom:**

The Forest Green Rovers is bringing eco-thinking and technology to a new and large audience: football fans. In 2010, the team began its journey to becoming the world's first carbon neutral football club and has since been described by FIFA as "the world's greenest football club."

**Monash's Net Zero Initiative | Australia:** Monash University, Australia's largest university, has committed to reach net zero emissions by 2030 for all four of its Australian campuses.

#### **Kilimanjaro – Climate Neutral Supply Chain |**

**Norway:** Fjordkraft, the second largest electricity retailer in Norway, is using its purchasing power to inspire all its suppliers to be climate neutral by 2019.

#### **Carbon Neutral Government Program |**

**Canada:** In 2010, British Columbia became the first government at the provincial, territorial or state level in North America to take 100 per cent responsibility for its greenhouse gas pollution, from all 128 of its public-sector organizations.

## **Women for Results**

**"Yalla Let's Bike" Initiative | Syria:** Women are defying traditional gender roles and combatting overcrowded streets by promoting bicycling as a healthy and sustainable mode of transportation in the war-damaged city of Damascus.

#### **Women Leading a Food Sharing Revolution!**

**| UK, Sweden, USA:** Women are leading a food revolution with OLIO, the world's only neighbour-to-neighbour food sharing app. OLIO is co-founded and led by women and two-thirds of the app's users are women.

**HelpUsGreen | India:** Women are creating compost from ceremonial flowers and simultaneously cleaning up the River Ganges.

#### **Feminist Electrification: Ensuring Pro-Women Outcomes in Rural Energy Access | Haiti:**

Energy poverty, a lack of access to modern energy services, is disproportionately affecting women in rural areas. So, EarthSpark International, a women-run enterprise, is meeting this challenge head on by approaching all its energy access projects with a gender lens, something it calls "feminist electrification."

## **Financing for Climate Friendly Investment**

#### **Rwanda Green Fund – FONERWA | Rwanda:**

The Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA) is investing in public and private projects that drive transformative change. It is one of the first national environment and climate change investment funds in Africa.

#### **The MAIS Program | Brazil:**

The MAIS Program (Modulo Agroclimático Inteligente e Sustentável) is helping family agricultural operations adapt to climate change in the Jacuípe Basin, Brazil's semi-arid region.

#### **Catalytic Finance Initiative | Global:**

Bank of America Merrill Lynch is working with partners to mobilize approximately USD 9.5 billion for innovative and high-impact climate mitigation and sustainability-focused investments.

The 2018 Lighthouse Activities were selected by an international advisory panel as part of the secretariat's Momentum for Change initiative, which is implemented with the support of [The Rockefeller Foundation](#), and operates in partnership with the [World Economic Forum](#), donors supporting the implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan, and [Climate Neutral Now](#).

# Going green' is good business says private sector at COP24

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Katowice, Poland, 10 December 2018, (UN News) - Businesses across the world should no longer be viewed solely as greenhouse gas emissions culprits, but more as indispensable partners for climate action, who stand to increase profits from “going green”. That was the key message as the United Nations COP24 climate change conference went into its second week in Katowice, Poland.

For years, sectors such as construction, transport, farming and retailing, have had the finger pointed at them for being major contributors to greenhouse gas emissions globally and for putting profit ahead of environmental protection. But increasingly, new technologies and models are transforming the private sector so that business leaders no longer have to choose between making money and taking better care of the planet.

This is one of the key issues being discussed here at the [COP24](#) conference, where negotiations are continuing on the implementation of the climate action agreement adopted in Paris, in 2015, when 197 parties committed to try and limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

“We are calling on all companies across sectors and regions, to set their science-based targets to a new level of ambition, one that aligns with the 1.5°C target,” said Lise Kingo, who heads [the UN Global Compact](#), a network of 9,500 small and large private companies which have committed to invest more in sustainable development.

Speaking at a press conference at COP24, along with the heads of Maersk - the Danish global shipping company – as well as US confectionary giant Mars, and the French-based water and waste management conglomerate, Suez, she stressed that “this is the only way we can reach the ambition of the [Paris Agreement](#) and the UN sustainable goals by 2030”.

According to the Global Compact, nearly half of the Fortune 500 list of leading US corporations, have set clear energy targets or greenhouse gas reduction goals. Moreover, in 2016, 190 of those companies captured a total of US\$3.7 billion in savings thanks to their emissions reduction measures.

## 1000 solutions to protect the planet while making money

To make it easier for the private sector to adopt environmentally-friendly solutions while also boosting profits, one NGO – the Solar Impulse Foundation – has endeavoured to gather together 1,000 solutions already in operation, and vet them for their positive environmental impact and their profitability before presenting them to governments and the private sector at large.

“This is where can make a big difference for the protection of the environment... showing that it is profitable, that people can create jobs and make money with it,” said the founder of the foundation, Bertrand Piccard, who was also the first person ever to complete a round-the-world flight powered only by solar energy, in 2016.

Seeking to “bridge the gap between ecology and economy”, the 1,000 efficient solutions initiative was launched over a year ago and, so far, more than 1,500 companies have joined, with over 600 projects in the pipeline. So far, 58 solutions having already received the Solar Impulse Efficient Label on sustainability and profitability.

“The point I’m trying to make is that the biggest industrial market and financial opportunity of the century is in transforming the old devices, systems and infrastructures which are inefficient and polluting, into efficient and clean and much more profitable industrial processes, devices, systems, technologies and solutions,” Mr. Piccard told UN News in an interview at COP24.

From solutions which make homes carbon-neutral, to developing cleaner cooling systems, or producing stainless steel more efficiently and more economically, the pioneer hopes the initiative will help make the case that climate action can happen now. He said it should not have to wait until 2050, and can be about “winning, not losing” - something he believes to be particularly critical for the poorer and more remote communities across the world, which are often dependent on others for all their energy needs.

“Energy – if they make it locally with sun, with wind, with biomass, with waves, with hydroelectricity on a small river – would allow them to develop their wealth, their social stability and peace. They would not need to fight for energy, as they would produce it themselves,” he explained, acknowledging that such a shift would require an initial investment by an external entity willing to share the profits with the communities.

“Today we are seeing that the most profitable solutions need a little bit more upfront investment, and afterwards, they bring much more money back,” noted Mr. Piccard. “Take electric buses: an electric bus is just a little bit more expensive to buy than a diesel bus, but over ten years, which is the usual lifespan of a bus, if it’s electric, it brings about \$400,000 in savings.”

## Big clothing brands commit to showing the (run)way to sustainable practices

Along with the construction and buildings sector, as well as fossil-fuel energy producers, the fashion industry is often criticized for wasteful, polluting and highly unsustainable practices.

To course-correct, on Monday, at COP24, dozens of leading companies in the fashion industry – including Adidas, Burberry, Esprit, Guess, Gap, Hugo Boss, H&M, Levi Strauss & Co., Puma, Inditex - which owns brands like Zara and Bershka, as well as retailer Target, signed the [Fashion Industry Charter for Climate Action](#), under the auspices of the UN Climate Change Convention secretariat, UNFCCC.

“The fashion industry is always two steps ahead when it comes to defining world culture, so I am pleased to see it now also leading the way in terms of climate action,” said UNFCCC chief Patricia Espinosa.



The document, open for others to join, and aligned with the goals of the Paris Agreement, presents a vision for the industry to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and defines issues to be addressed every step of the way in the life of fashion products, including: the use of environmentally sustainable materials, low-carbon transport; consumer awareness-raising; ‘scalable’ solutions through resource and political mobilization; and exploring ways to extend the life expectancy of fashion products as well as recycling possibilities.

“I congratulate the signatories of this important charter, which represents a unique commitment and collaboration from an array of fashion leaders. The Charter, like the renowned fashion runways of the world, sets an example that I hope others will follow,” noted Ms. Espinosa.

# COP24: World sports join team UN in race against climate change



Katowice, Poland, 12 December 2018 (UN News) - Major organizations from the world of sport are joining an increasing number of private sector businesses in the race to beat global warming. At the United Nations' [COP24](#) conference in Poland on Wednesday, 17 major players representing sporting bodies, athletes and fans, added their names to the collective scoreboard, with the launch of the [Sports Climate Action Framework](#).

[COP24](#) is a two-week conference that has brought together the 197 parties to the UN Climate Change Convention ([UNFCCC](#)), as well as activists, non-profits organisations, and the private sector, to define the guidelines to implement the historic [2015 Paris climate action agreement](#), aimed at limiting global warming to well below 2°C compared to pre-industrial levels.

The 17 the represent the starting line-up of the Sports Climate Action Framework, include major players like the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA), and the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). Other signatories include the French tennis federation,

Roland Garros, Formula E, the International Sailing Federation, organizers of the Tokyo 2020 Summer Olympics, the Paris 2024 Summer Olympics, the Rugby League World Cup 2021, and the World Surf League.

“With its global reach, universal appeal and the power to inspire and influence millions of people around the globe, sport is uniquely placed to drive global climate action and encourage crowds to join in,” said Prince Albert II of Monaco, who chairs the IOC Sustainability and Legacy Commission, during the [launch event](#) in Katowice. “As countries here in Katowice prepare to turn their climate commitments into reality, we stand ready to leverage the power of sport to support their efforts,” he stressed.

The sports industry bears responsibility for extensive carbon emissions on several fronts; including through travel, overall energy use, venue construction, and catering. With this initiative, it recognizes the need to unite behind a set of principles to get on track for a net-zero emissions economy by 2050.

“We recognize the critical need for everyone to help implement the [Paris Agreement](#) and accelerate the change needed to reach greenhouse gas emission neutrality in the second half of the 21st century,” said FIFA Secretary-General Fatma Samoura.

The sentiment is echoed by UEFA’s President Aleksander Čeferin: “Climate change is the biggest challenge facing the planet. UEFA firmly believes that football, with its strong and ever-growing environmental conscience, in particular in areas such as sustainable event management, has a duty to play a role in addressing this issue.”

The result of a collaboration between the representatives of various sports organisations and the UN, the Framework not only aims to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emission stemming from sports operations, it also calls for leveraging the popularity of sporting role-models, and the passion of many fans, to help change public opinion about the dangers of irreversible climate change.

“You know playing in five different World Cups for my country, it’s one of those things. But at some point, as an athlete, you start to see the

platform that you have, and you see your voice is for a reason, and the power of using it,” former football goalkeeper and [UNICEF Ambassador, Karina LeBlanc](#), told *UN News*.

“Whether you have a reach of Cristiano Ronaldo with 360 million followers or you’re a teacher who has a classroom of kids, it’s about starting the conversation, on how we can all impact change... And the idea of being in a race, with everybody being in the same team, I think that’s what inspires me,” she explained.

Some concrete initiatives have already seen the light of day. The IOC, in collaboration with the UNFCCC secretariat, has produced two guides: “Sustainability Essentials: Sports for Climate Action” and “Carbon Footprint Methodology for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games,” meant to provide essential climate action guidance to sports federations and others. In early 2019, the adopters of the Sports for Climate Action Framework will be invited to form working groups to plan, pursue and enhance work under 16 principles laid out in the Framework.



# SECTION 2



# Courage, Dedication and Integrity Honoured at 2018 Environmental Enforcement Awards



Bangkok, Thailand, 22 November 2018, UNEP media release – Nine institutions and individuals from across Asia have been recognized by the United Nations, USAID, Interpol, and the Freeland Foundation for outstanding work in preventing transboundary environmental crime in an annual award ceremony in Bangkok.

Wildlife trafficking was in the spotlight as winners from China, India, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Thailand and Viet Nam accepted awards for disrupting international criminal networks that have laid waste to wildlife across multiple continents.

Environmental crimes, which include illegal trade in wildlife, illicit trade in forests and forestry products, illegal dumping of waste including chemicals, smuggling of ozone depleting substances and illegal mining, comes at a hefty cost – estimated at up to \$258 billion per year. It is now the fourth largest illegal crime after drug smuggling, counterfeiting and human trafficking.

“Humanity is the guardian of the natural world, and these winners are at the tip of the spear. Without their commitment to justice, our environmental laws and safeguards are a paper tiger. And though their work may often go unrecognized, it is their qualities of courage,

dedication and integrity we need to see more of to preserve our planet.” said Dechen Tsering, UN Environment Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific.

This year’s award winners are:

## Category: Integrity

### **Ms. Le Thi Hang, Judge at Khanh Hoa People’s Court, Nha Trang, Viet Nam**

Ms. Hang is a judge who showed exceptional determination to bring justice to one of the most serious wildlife crime cases Viet Nam has seen. The case began in 2014 when more than 7,000 dead sea turtles were discovered, fully or partially taxidermized, stacked from floor to ceiling at several warehouses near Nha Trang city. Most of them were critically endangered hawksbill turtles, and it was the largest-ever seizure of sea turtles in Viet Nam. Ms. Hang accepted the case when no other judges in Nha Trang city would.

### **Pillar 4 Central Investigation Bureau, Nepal Police**

Despite being a small team with limited resources, Pillar 4 of Nepal Police’s Central Investigation Bureau was able to dismantle an international criminal network smuggling

wildlife species, including black chimpanzees and exotic birds from as far away as Nigeria. By investigating the first ever case in the country registered as “organized crime” related to the illegal wildlife trade, they apprehended nine members of an international network, which included government officials from their own country. Corruption has been highlighted as one of the biggest challenges in combating illegal wildlife trade and Pillar 4 has shown dedication and a high level of integrity in bringing down wildlife criminals regardless of position.

#### **Special Commendation:**

#### **Mr. Wichien Chinnawong, Thungyai Naresuan Wildlife Sanctuary Chief, Thailand**

In February 2018, a small team of rangers led by Mr. Chinnawong encountered a group of hunters camping in a famous wildlife sanctuary and eating highly endangered animals. When it became clear that one of the members of the group was a renowned, wealthy and influential businessman in Thailand, the team of rangers did not show any sign of intimidation and instead carried out their duties as enforcers of the law. Mr. Chinnawong apprehended all suspect poachers and pressed charges against them, including a charge for attempted bribery. While the trial will determine the exact responsibilities of the alleged poachers, the determination and the integrity of Mr. Chinnawong and his team remain undisputable facts.

(The case face by Mr. Chinnawong is not related to transboundary environmental crime, but in light of his outstanding accomplishments, the selection panel has bestowed a special commendation award.)

#### **Category: Impact**

#### **Thailand Team, composed of the Thai Customs, the Royal Thai Police, and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation**

In May 2018 the Samut Prakan Court in Thailand sentenced a notorious wildlife trafficker to 2.5 years in jail. The individual was believed to head a large criminal network responsible for the trafficking of ivory and rhino horns from Africa to Asia. This conviction was the result of a complex investigation that saw a strong collaboration among different authorities in Thailand. The profiling of a foreign smuggler, the arrest of a

corrupt official operating within the airport, a domestic controlled delivery to identify the broker, and the use of digital forensic software to trace the head of the ring were just some of the advanced techniques utilized in this case. The conviction of Mr. Boonchai Bach was particularly successful because it hit the very top of an international criminal syndicate.

#### **Mr. Wang Wei, Director of Investigation II of Anti-Smuggling Bureau of General Administration of China Customs**

Mr. Wei played an instrumental role in China’s National Sword enforcement campaign in the Anti-Smuggling Bureau of General Administration of China Customs to implement China’s new waste import controls. The National Sword policy has changed the landscape of waste trade in Asia and is now being replicated in other countries.

#### **Category: Innovation**

#### **Team of the Investigation and Suppression Division III of the Royal Thai Customs, under the Director Mr. Decha Wichaidit**

The Thai Customs team adopted innovative risk profiling techniques to identify wildlife smugglers travelling to Thailand and Southeast Asia. Through the development of an advanced risk management system, Thai Customs has been able to detect wildlife smuggling patterns for passengers travelling from Africa to Southeast Asia. Their generosity in sharing tactical intelligence with Customs Authorities from neighboring countries resulted in the confiscation of rhino horns and the arrest of couriers in Singapore and – for the first time ever – in Lao PDR in September and October 2017. One of their profiling successes at a Bangkok airport in late 2017 triggered the operation that led to the arrest of a wildlife trafficking kingpin.

#### **International Investigation Division, Korea Customs Service**

Korea Customs designed a special enforcement strategy to fight illegal cross-border environmental crimes and established the environment enforcement team exclusively designated to tackle various types of cross-border environmental crimes such as illegal trade in controlled substances and protected wildlife species. They are also applauded for their collaboration efforts with other countries.



## **Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India**

The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) has adopted innovative enforcement techniques that have dramatically increased enforcement of transboundary environmental crimes in India. Notably, it has developed an online Wildlife Crime Database Management System to retrieve real-time data to help analyze trends and devise effective measures to prevent and detect wildlife crime across India. In order to involve the public in the fight against wildlife crime, WCCB has also developed a scheme to enroll willing persons as WCCB Volunteers.

### **Category: Collaboration**

**Mr. Joil bin Bombon, former Dept. of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia and Mr. R.S. Sharath, former Wildlife Crime Control Bureau, India**

After attending a regional meeting in Bangkok in 2016, Mr. Joil bin Bombon and Mr. R.S. Sharath began an intense exchange of information

on cases of mutual interest. This cooperation intensified over time until turning into coordinated surveillance efforts and joint law enforcement cooperation. The close cooperation between Joil and Sharath – and all other officers working with them – resulted in the arrest of four major turtle traffickers in 2017 and 2018 and an unprecedented disruption of the illegal trade in turtles between India and Malaysia. Their efforts led also to the arrest of 35 people involved in the illegal trade, including public officials.

### **About the Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards 2018**

The 2018 Asia Environmental Enforcement Awards are presented by UN Environment, in partnership with the UN Development Programme, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, USAID, Interpol, the Freeland Foundation and the Government of Sweden. Various partners have helped finance the Awards, including the Government of Norway. The awards encourage countries, organizations and individuals in the region to combat environmental crime and reward excellence in enforcement.

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

These winners would make great speakers at travel industry events. Certainly would be a welcome relief from the same old boring line-up of sponsors and marketers preaching to the converted. Instead of the traditional beauty-contest of “start-ups” seeking investors, funds could be better channelled into rewarding the environmental enforcers. Certainly, travel & tourism would benefit from listening to people of “courage, dedication and integrity.”

# Winners of the ILO 2018 Global Media Competition on Labour Migration



© S. Houttuln / S. Haaij / IRIN

GENEVA (ILO News) Press release, 18 December 2018 – To mark this year's International Migrants Day on 18th December the International Labour Organization (ILO) has announced the four winners of its 2018 Global Media Competition on Labour Migration.

The ILO received more than 250 entries from 72 countries. The competition's reviewing committee had the difficult task of creating a shortlist from many outstanding submissions. An independent panel of four prominent judges finally selected the following four winners in the two thematic areas:

## Labour Migration

1. Sarah Haaij and Saskia Houttuin (media report): "How weavers in Burkina Faso are now on Europe's migration front line ". This entry looks at different aspects of migration in the Sahelian country, including efforts to create local decent work opportunities.

2. Miguel Roth (photo essay/multimedia): "Las preguntas de Solomon ". This multimedia story (in Spanish) profiles Solomon, a Nigerian man starting a new life in Argentina, who, while facing difficulties in adapting to a new country and language, also enjoys the new opportunities before him.

## Fair Recruitment

3. Sophie Cousins and an anonymous contributor (media report), edited by Megan Clement: "Will migrant domestic workers in the Gulf ever be safe from abuse? " This entry tells the harrowing story of some domestic workers who were abused while working in Gulf countries and looks at efforts to prevent the exploitation of domestic workers recruited from abroad.

4. Norman Zafra (photo essay/multimedia): "Obrero film " This multimedia project follows a group of Filipino construction workers who temporarily migrated to Christchurch, New Zealand, to help rebuild the city after the 2011 earthquake.

The aim of the competition is to promote a balanced discourse and quality reporting on labour migration and fair recruitment. This is of particular relevance to the recent adoption of the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, particularly its sixth objective; “Facilitate fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that ensure decent work.” The contest also promotes the ILO’s [\*General Principles and Operational Guidelines on Fair Recruitment\*](#), adopted in 2016.

“The movement of migrants and refugees continues to feature heavily in the media, albeit very often in a negative light,” said Michelle Leighton, Chief of the ILO’s Labour Migration Branch. “The Global Media Competition on Labour Migration is one way for the ILO to encourage balanced reporting that also highlights the positive impact of migration when the labour rights of migrant workers are protected and fair recruitment principles are in place.”

The global media competition is also a direct contribution to the UN TOGETHER campaign, which encourages global action by promoting

non-discrimination and addressing growing xenophobia towards refugees and migrants.

The contest was organized in collaboration with the International Trade Union Confederation, the International Organization of Employers, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Federation of Journalists, Equal Times, Solidarity Center, Human Rights Watch, and Migrant Forum in Asia, as well as the International Training Centre of the ILO. This year’s contest was also supported by the REFRAME and FAIR projects, as part of the ILO’s Fair Recruitment Initiative .

## Disclaimer

*The International Labour Office recognizes the quality of the competition entries submitted. However, the responsibility for opinions expressed and names and terms used in the competition entries rests solely with their authors, and reproduction of the entries does not constitute an endorsement by the International Labour Office of the opinions expressed and names and terms used in them.*

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

This is another example of the kind of competitions that the travel & tourism industry could/should create and/or support. Migrant labour plays a critical role in the travel & tourism work force. Not a single hotel in the Gulf region would be able to operate without it.



# Call for Entries: 2019 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation



UNESCO  
Asia-Pacific Awards for  
*Cultural Heritage  
Conservation*

United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Bangkok Office

With the support of  
**thinkcity**

## CALL FOR ENTRIES 2019

More info: <http://bit.ly/APACHC>

### DEADLINE 31 MARCH 2019

20 YEARS OF CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING  
CONSERVATION PRACTICES IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC

Bangkok, 17 December 2018 – Submissions are now being accepted for the 2019 Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.

The upcoming cycle will mark the 20th year of the Awards honouring best conservation practices in the Asia-Pacific.

The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation recognizes exemplary efforts by individuals and organizations to restore or conserve structures, places and properties of heritage value in the region. It aims to encourage other property owners to undertake conservation projects within their communities, either independently or by seeking public-private partnerships.

Since 2000, the Awards have recognized 233 winners from 21 countries for their thorough understanding of the places, sound technical achievements, and significant social and policy impacts at the local, national and regional levels. By recognizing these practices, the Awards have contributed to meaningful achievements in changing the conversation about what constitutes cultural heritage, who has a stake in its stewardship, and how cultural heritage can contribute to the sustainable well-being of cities, societies and the environment.

UNESCO will celebrate these 20 years of success through a regional event organized in partnership with Think City, a leading community-based urban regeneration organization based in Malaysia. Interested young professionals and members of the public are encouraged to communicate with UNESCO Bangkok for further information via the contact details below.

**Deadline:** The deadline for the receipt of materials is **31 March 2019**.

## Award Categories

Winners will be announced in November 2019 in the following categories: Award of Excellence, Award of Distinction, Award of Merit, Honourable Mention and Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts. The Award for New Design in Heritage Contexts is given to newly built projects that demonstrate outstanding design that is well integrated into historic contexts. Submissions of completed new

architecture and designs that enrich the existing heritage setting are encouraged. Building annexes, as well as new extensions, new buildings, new public spaces and new structures, such as bridges, are all eligible for consideration.

## | Eligibility Criteria

Eligible projects must have been completed within the last 10 years. Houses, commercial and institutional buildings, historic towns and villages, archaeological sites and cultural landscapes, for example, are all suitable for entry.

## | How to Apply

Entries for the 2019 Awards programme must be submitted to UNESCO Bangkok before date, using an official entry form, a description of the project in the official format, and drawings and photographs in hard and softcopy formats.

**To Apply for the 2019 Awards** and for official application materials, please visit: <http://bangkok.unesco.org/content/apply-awards>

In 2018, 41 projects from eight countries across the Asia-Pacific region were submitted for awards consideration, with 10 projects from five countries recognized. The 2018 Award of Excellence was given to the **Shijo-cho Ofune-hoko Float Machiya** in Kyoto, Japan. The Awards for New Design in Heritage Contexts went to **Kaomai Estate 1955** in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and The Harts Mill in Port Adelaide, Australia.

For further details on previous winners, please visit:  
<http://bangkok.unesco.org/content/winning-projects>

Think City is a community-focused urban regeneration organization established in 2009. Its first task was to rejuvenate the World Heritage city of George Town, Penang. Think City works closely with local governments, international agencies and various local communities to build effective partnerships and enhance capacity.

The partnership for the Heritage Awards builds on long-standing cooperation between UNESCO and Think City in promoting best practices in conservation in the Asia-Pacific region.

### **For more information on project submissions, please contact:**

Culture Unit, UNESCO Bangkok

Tel: (66 2) 391-0577 Ext. 511 / Fax: (66 2) 391-0866

Email: [heritageawards@unesco.org](mailto:heritageawards@unesco.org)

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Certainly one competition that many destinations, communities, museums, art galleries, etc., in the travel & tourism industry should enter.

# Sustainable development demands a broader vision, says new OECD Development Centre report



Incheon, Korea, 29 November 2018 (OECD media release) - Economic growth does not necessarily go coupled with well-being. The first industrialised countries increased their populations' well-being with rates of economic growth lower than those experienced by emerging economies: many of the latter are struggling to convert faster Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth into substantive and lasting well-being improvements for their citizens.

Therefore, while economic growth is a crucial tool for development strategies, these strategies must more deliberately target economic, social and environmental dimensions, according to the OECD Development Centre's *Perspectives on Global Development 2019* launched today at the 6th OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy in Incheon, Korea. The report concludes that development strategies must do more to embrace the multidimensionality of development,

acknowledging the fact that growth does not automatically yield improvements in well-being.

The time is ripe for change. Since the 1990s, large developing countries have continuously re-drawn the map of global economic relations in terms of trade, finance and migration, challenging longstanding notions of development. This major transformation has been buoyed by large emerging economies such as China, India, Indonesia, Russia and Brazil, growing faster than the OECD average and creating a ripple effect on other developing countries. Over the 2011-16 period, China and India's contribution to global growth reached 29% and 11% respectively.

Nowadays, developing economies have to find innovative solutions in the face of challenges that did not exist for previously industrialising countries. For example, despite efforts to focus on social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability, few national development plans today are responding to the emergence of new global rules, increasing interdependence among countries, unprecedented population booms, the high mobility of people or fast technological change.

Novel ways of promoting development are emerging, however, outside of the toolbox set out in the aftermath of the Second World War.

"A crucial way to continue innovating on strategies, such as enhancing South-South co-operation, linking migration and development, or extending social protection to poor and hard to reach populations, is by being in the same room and sharing policy experience", said Mario Pezzini, Director of the OECD Development Centre and Special Advisor to the OECD Secretary-General on Development.



“Indeed, once the necessary resources and political will for implementation are available, development strategies have historically proven to be most effective when they are multisectoral, participatory, location-specific and embedded in a multilateral framework. In other words, the multidimensional process of development requires a new vision for global co-operation”, he added.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Every policy-maker in the travel & tourism industry should read this report and take serious note of its key conclusions: 1) Growth does NOT automatically yield improvements in well-being. 2) Developing economies have to find innovative solutions in face of challenges that did not exist for previously industrialising economies. As travel & tourism is now seen as part of the solution in many developing economies, it can take the lead in crafting the “broader vision” now seen as being necessary in the light of the new realities. The era of chest-thumping about “growth” is now clearly over.

**1 NO  
POVERTY**



# SDG 1:

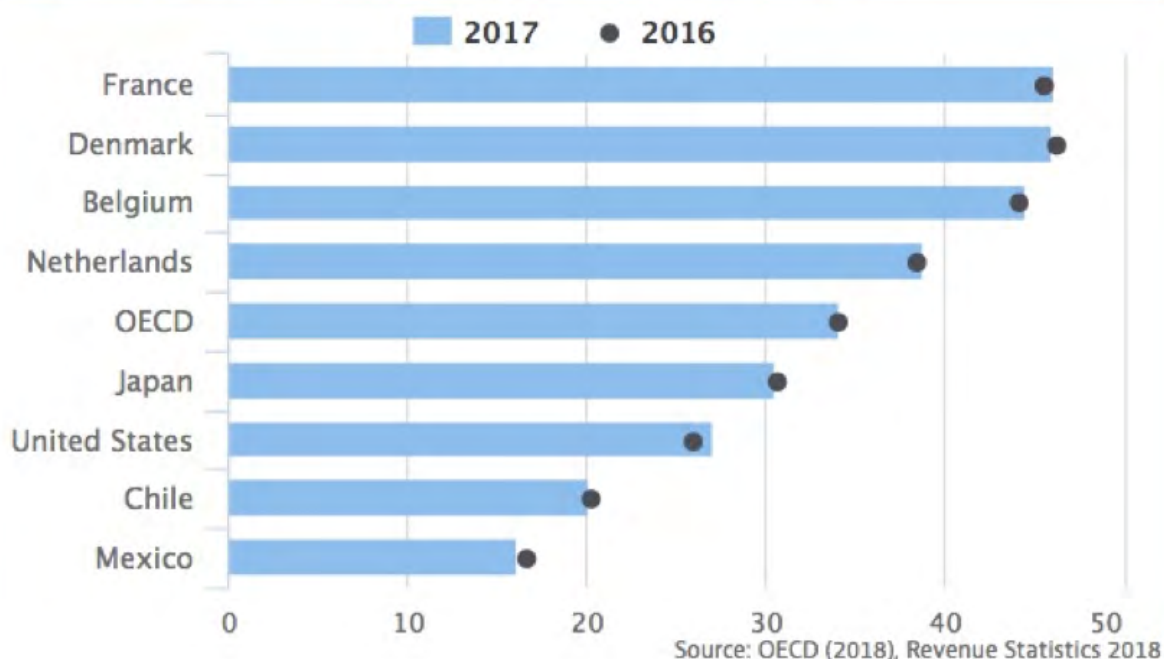
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**Tax revenues grow  
as the tax mix shifts  
further towards  
corporate and  
consumption taxes**



## Tax revenues in OECD countries continue to increase

Tax as a % of GDP in selected OECD countries (preliminary 2017 data)



1 NO POVERTY



## SDG 1: Tax revenues grow as the tax mix shifts further towards corporate and consumption taxes

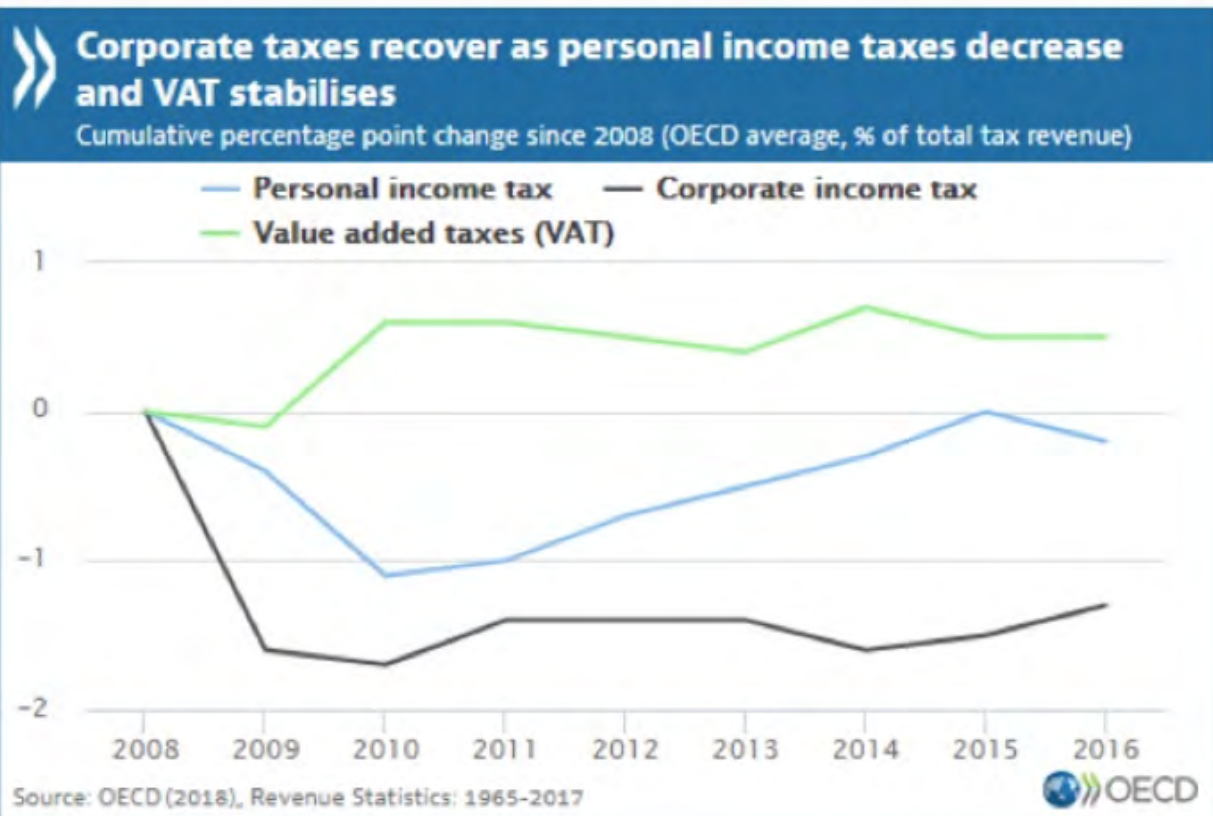
OECD - Paris, 5 December 2018 - Tax revenues in advanced economies have continued to increase, with taxes on companies and personal consumption representing an increasing share of total tax revenues, according to new OECD research.

The 2018 edition of the OECD's annual Revenue Statistics publication shows that the OECD average tax-to-GDP ratio rose slightly in 2017, to 34.2%, compared to 34.0% in 2016. The OECD average is now higher than at any previous point, including its earlier peaks of 33.8% in 2000 and 33.6% in 2007.

An increase in tax-to-GDP levels was seen in 19 of the 34 OECD countries that provided preliminary data for 2017, while tax-to-GDP levels fell in the remaining 15 countries. Tax-to-GDP levels are now higher than their pre-crisis levels in 21 countries, and all but eight (Canada, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden) have experienced an increase in their tax-to-GDP ratio since 2009.

*Consumption Tax Trends 2018* highlights that value-added tax (VAT) revenues continue to be the largest source of consumption tax revenues in the OECD, and have now reached an all-time high of 6.8% of GDP, representing 20.2% of total tax revenue, on average in 2016.





After experiencing an upward trend since the economic crisis, standard VAT rates stabilised at 19.3% on average in 2014 and have remained at this level since. Ten countries now have a standard VAT rate above 22%, against only four in 2008. Two countries (Greece and Luxembourg) increased their standard VAT rate between January 2015 and January 2018, while two countries (Iceland and Israel) reduced their standard VAT rate over this period.

With less scope to raise already relatively high standard VAT rates, countries are increasingly implementing or considering base broadening measures to protect or increase VAT revenues. This includes increasing some reduced VAT rates, limiting or narrowing their scope and curbing VAT exemptions. A growing number of tax authorities have implemented or are considering implementation of measures to tackle the challenges of collecting VAT on the ever-rising volume of digital sales, including sales by offshore vendors, in line with new OECD standards.

[Revenue statistics](#) also contains a Special Feature that measures the convergence of tax levels and tax structures in OECD countries between 1995 and 2016. The Special Feature highlights ongoing convergence across the OECD toward higher tax levels, with greater reliance on corporate income tax (CIT), VAT and social security contributions, and a slight downward shift in personal income taxes.

The latest data confirms this convergence, with CIT, as a share of total taxes, now reaching its highest levels since the global economic and financial crisis, increasing on average from 8.8% in 2015 to 9.0% in 2016. CIT revenues are still lower than their peak in 2007 (11.1% of total revenues), but are now higher than at any point since 2009 (8.7%). Between 2015 and 2016, personal income tax revenues decreased from 24.1% to 23.8% of total tax revenues.

The increase in the average share of CIT was driven by increases in revenues from CIT in 23 countries in 2016, while the fall in personal income tax was seen in 20 countries.

In 2017, the largest increases in the overall tax-to-GDP ratio relative to 2016 were seen in Israel (1.4 percentage points, due to tax reforms which increased revenues from taxes on income) and in the

United States (1.3 percentage points; due to the one-off deemed repatriation tax on foreign earnings, which increased revenues from property taxes). Nineteen countries had increases but no other country had an increase of more than one percentage point.

Ten OECD countries decreased their tax-to-GDP ratios in 2016, relative to 2015, with the largest decreases observed in Austria and Belgium. There were no decreases of more than one percentage point.

Detailed Country Notes provide further data on national tax burdens and the composition of the tax mix in OECD countries. To access the report and data, go to <http://oe.cd/revenue-statistics>

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Does anyone know how much the travel and tourism industry pays in annual taxes? This is one figure that the industry probably does not want to focus too much on. While there is no doubt that global hotels, airlines, convention centres, airports pay significant amount of taxes, there is also no doubt that many technology companies, OTAs, multinational hotel groups, venture capitalists and others are also notorious for evading taxes. So far, the industry has avoided the attention of the taxman, but it is only a matter of time before that changes.

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



# SDG 3:

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**Asia Pacific should  
reduce inequalities  
in access to care  
for the most  
marginalised groups**





## SDG 3: Asia Pacific should reduce inequalities in access to care for the most marginalised groups



Paris, 3 December 2018, OECD media release – Access to health care has improved in the Asia Pacific region over the past decade but women in low-income households in rural areas still have difficulty accessing care due to distance and financial reasons, according to a new OECD report.

Health at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2018 – Measuring Progress Towards Universal Health Coverage says that in Cambodia, Nepal, the Philippines and the Solomon Islands, more than three women in four with the lowest household income reported difficulties in accessing health care due to financial reasons. In Nepal, Pakistan and the Solomon Islands, about two women in three from worst-off households reported having unmet care needs due to distance.

The report reveals that life expectancy has increased by almost six years since 2000 to reach 70 years across lower-middle and low-income Asia Pacific countries, but maternal mortality is still twice the Sustainable Development Goal target in these countries.

The report also tells that the infant mortality rate has fallen dramatically across the lower-middle and low income Asia Pacific countries since 2000, with many countries experiencing declines of greater than 50%. But at an average of 30 deaths per 1 000 live births, infant mortality rate in these countries is still eight times that of the high income Asia Pacific countries and OECD average, and two and a half times the SDG target of 12 deaths per 1 000 live births.

Many countries in the region face a double burden of disease, as they still struggle to reduce maternal and child deaths at a time when the prevalence of chronic conditions and unhealthy lifestyle is growing. More than one third of adults are overweight in Asia Pacific, and one in ten persons is obese, according to the report. Among children, 5% of under age 5 and more than 20% of adolescents are overweight. Between 2010 and 2016, obesity rates increased by 33% among adults and 58% among adolescents.

*Other findings of Health at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2018 include:*

- Between 2000 and 2015, the average maternal mortality rate across lower-middle and low-income Asia Pacific countries was cut by more than half, but is still high at 140 deaths per 100 000 live births, twice the SDG target of 70 deaths per 100 000 live births.
- In high-income Asia Pacific countries, the share of the population aged over 65 years is expected to double, to reach an average of 27.6% in 2050, whereas the share of population aged over 80 years is expected to triple to reach 10.2%. In upper-middle income and lower-middle low-income Asia Pacific countries, the share of population over 65 and over 80 will be two and a half and four times the current share, and reach 23.9% and 14.5% (over 65) and 7.9% and 3.5% (over 80) respectively.

- Lower-middle and low-income Asia Pacific countries spend just under USD 200 per person per year on health, against USD 670 and USD 3 450 in upper-middle income and high-income countries respectively. This amounts to over 4.3% of gross domestic product, on average, in middle- and low-income countries, compared to over 7.3% in high-income countries in 2015. Spending in high-income countries increased by 0.8 percentage points from 2010-2015, twice the increase reported by middle- and low-income countries at 0.4 percentage points.
- On average, household out-of-pocket expenditure accounted for 48.2% of total health expenditure in lower-middle and low-income Asia Pacific countries in 2015, an increase of one percentage point from 2010. Spending on pharmaceuticals accounted for almost one third of all health expenditure across these countries in 2015.
- Disparities in the use of essential services based on income and education remain large. For example, the divide in access to antenatal

care between women in low-income and high-income households remains quite large in Bangladesh, Lao PDR and Pakistan, and in Indonesia, Lao PDR and the Philippines inequalities in the proportion of children with immunisation coverage whose mother has high education compared to no education are large with a difference of more than 50%.

**Health at a Glance Asia/Pacific 2018**, a joint publication of the OECD with the World Health Organisation, presents key indicators on health status, determinants of health, healthcare resources and utilisation, health expenditure and financing, and quality of care for 27 Asia/Pacific countries and territories. This report offers a comprehensive and user-friendly framework to help policy makers make further progress towards improving coverage, access and financial protection of population across the Asia Pacific region.

More information, together with a downloadable PDF of the report, is available at: <http://www.oecd.org/health/health-at-a-glance-asia-pacific-23054964.htm>.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

There is no shortage of marginalised groups in Asia, from refugees to the physically challenged people to the elderly. Today's able-bodied millennials should be very mindful of this. In a few decades, they could be in the same boat. And time flies extraordinarily fast.

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



# SDG 3:

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**UN pushes for  
universal health care  
on International Day**





© UN website



## SDG 3: UN pushes for universal health care on International Day

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 12 December 2018 - Universal health care for all, leaving no one behind, by 2030: that's the call going out on [International Universal Health Coverage Day](#), which this year falls on Wednesday. Why 2030? Because that's the target date for completion of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), one of which ([SDG3](#)), calls for the promotion of healthy lives and well-being for all.

The International Day is supported by [UHC2030](#), a global partnership consisting of Member States, several United Nations Agencies – including the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#), the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)), and the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) – and civil society organizations.

The aim is to raise awareness of the need for strong and resilient health systems and universal health coverage, by sharing the stories of the millions of people still waiting for health care, championing what has been achieved so far, and calling on decision-makers to make bigger and smarter investments in health, moving the world closer to Universal Health Care by 2030.

In 2012, the UN General Assembly unanimously endorsed a resolution urging countries to accelerate progress toward universal health coverage: the idea that everyone, everywhere should have access to quality, affordable health care – as an essential priority for international development: in 2017 the General Assembly made December 12 the official UN-designated International Day for Universal Health Coverage.

The International Day has been backed by UN chief António Guterres, who said in a statement that “strong leadership and community engagement are essential in ensuring that all people get the healthcare they need. On this International Day, let us reaffirm our commitment to a world with health for all.”

This year, the Day is being celebrated two months after Member States unanimously vowed to strengthen primary health care, as an “essential step” towards achieving health coverage for all, at the [Global Conference on Primary Health Care](#), held in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan on 25-26 October.

The commitment was made as a global movement grows for greater investment in primary health care to achieve universal health coverage: so far, health resources have been overwhelmingly focused on single disease interventions rather than strong, comprehensive health systems – a gap highlighted by several health emergencies in recent years.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Health & wellness is a high-growth niche-market in the travel & tourism industry. But when was the last time anyone studied the state of health and wellness within travel & tourism itself? I would wager that the results would not look very good. Stress and alcohol both exact a heavy toll, and travel & tourism abounds with both.

**3** GOOD HEALTH  
AND WELL-BEING



# SDG 3:

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**One small flight  
for a drone,  
one 'big leap'  
for global health**





© UNICEF website



## SDG 3: One small flight for a drone, one 'big leap' for global health

18 December 2018, UNICEF/Pacific - On a small island in the remote South Pacific, a one-month-old baby has become the world's first child to be given a vaccine delivered by a drone, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has announced.

The state-of-the-art craft which transported the vaccine, travelled nearly 40 kilometres over rugged mountain terrain, flying from Dillon's Bay in western Vanuatu to remote Cook's Bay – a scattered community accessible only on foot or by small boats – where 13 children and 5 pregnant women were inoculated by a nurse.

Henrietta H. Fore, the Executive Director of UNICEF [said](#) the tiny aircraft's flight "is a big leap for global health."

"With the world still struggling to immunize the hardest-to-reach children, drone technologies can be a game changer for bridging that last mile

to reach every child," she added.

Vaccines are extremely difficult to transport as they need to be carried at closely controlled temperatures, a particular challenge in warm places such as like Vanuatu, which is made up of more than 80 remote, mountainous islands stretching across 1,300 kilometres, with only limited road networks.

As a result, almost 20 per cent of the country's children miss out on these essential vaccines.

Nurse Miriam Nampil, who administrated the vaccine to the children in Cook's Bay highlighted these challenges: "It's extremely hard to carry ice boxes to keep the vaccines cool while walking across rivers, mountains, through the rain, or across rocky ledges. I've relied on boats, which often get cancelled due to bad weather."

"As the journey is often long and difficult, I can

only go there once a month to vaccinate children. But now, with these drones, we can hope to reach many more children in the remotest areas of the island,” she added.

The effectiveness of employing drones for such critical deliveries was confirmed last week.

In a test flight carried out by the island’s Ministry of Health with UNICEF support, the drone -flown by an Australian company - landed the payloads within just two meters of the target after a 50-km flight over numerous islands and way points.

When it came to the actual flight, the vaccines were carried in Styrofoam boxes with ice-packs and a temperature logger, programmed to trigger an alert should the vaccine temperature swing out of acceptable range.

The delivery is also the first time ever, that a Government has contracted a commercial drone company to transport vaccines to remote

areas. The operator was selected after a bidding process, and as per the contract, they are held accountable and not paid if they don’t deliver.

In the long term, the Government of Vanuatu is seeking to integrate vaccine delivery by drones into their national immunization programme and plans to use drones more widely to distribute health supplies, according to UNICEF.

The data from the trials will also be used to show how drones can be used commercially in similar settings around the world.

“Today’s first-of-a-kind vaccine delivery has enormous potential not only for Vanuatu, but also for the thousands of children who are missing out on vaccines across the world,” explained UNICEF head Fore.

“This is innovation at its best and shows how we can unlock the potential of the private sector for the greater good of the world’s children.”

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

What a great usage of drones. Like all forms of technology, drones will have their positive uses. The key will be to regulate their misuse, and enforce it. Already, drones are proving a security threat to aviation. Yet, they are freely available for purchase anywhere. So what’s the point of all those security checkpoints at airports?

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



# SDG 5:

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**Global wage growth  
lowest since 2008,  
while women still  
earning 20% less  
than men**





© Betsy Davis / UN Women

5 GENDER  
EQUALITY



## SDG 5: Global wage growth lowest since 2008, while women still earning 20% less than men

GENEVA (ILO News) 26 November 2018 – Global wage growth in 2017 fell to its lowest rate since 2008, far below levels before the global financial crisis, according to a new International Labour Organization (ILO) report.

The Global Wage Report 2018/19 finds that in real terms (adjusted for price inflation) global wage growth declined to 1.8 per cent in 2017 from 2.4 per cent in 2016. The findings are based on data from 136 countries.

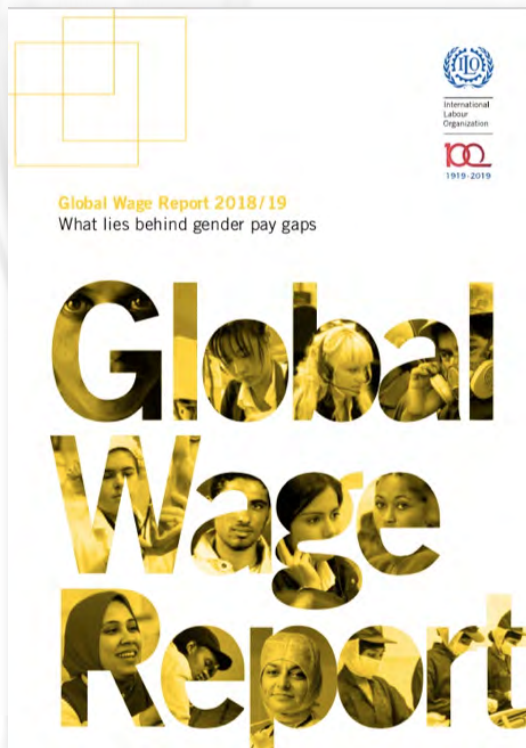
In analyzing wage growth, the report finds that in advanced G20 countries real wage growth declined from 0.9 per cent in 2016 to 0.4 per cent in 2017. By contrast, in emerging and developing G20 countries, real wage growth fluctuated between 4.9 per cent in 2016 and 4.3 per cent in 2017.

“It’s puzzling that in high-income economies we see slow wage growth alongside a recovery in GDP growth and falling unemployment. And early indications suggest that slow wage growth continues in 2018,” said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. “Such stagnating wages are an obstacle to economic growth and rising living standards. Countries should explore, with their social partners, ways to achieve socially and economically sustainable wage growth.”

In the last 20 years, average real wages have almost tripled in emerging and developing G20 countries, while in advanced G20 countries they have increased by just 9 per cent, the report shows. But, in many low- and middle-income economies, wage inequality remains high and wages are frequently insufficient to cover the needs of workers and their families.

## Unacceptably high gender pay gaps

The report calculates gender pay gaps in innovative and more accurate ways, using data covering some 70 countries and about 80 per cent of wage employees worldwide. It finds that globally women continue to be paid approximately 20 per cent less than men.



“The gender pay gap represents one of today’s greatest manifestations of social injustice, and all countries should try to better understand what lies behind them and accelerate progress towards gender equality,” said Guy Ryder.

The report finds that in high-income countries it is at the high end of the pay scale that the gender pay gap is wider, while in low- and middle-income countries the gender pay gap is wider amongst the lower paid workers.

Using empirical evidence, the report also shows that traditional explanations, such as differences in the levels of education between men and women who work in paid employment, play a limited role in explaining gender pay gaps.

“In many countries women are more highly educated than men but earn lower wages, even when they work in the same occupational categories,” said Rosalia Vazquez-Alvarez, econometrician and wage specialist at the ILO

and one of the authors of the report. “The wages of both men and women also tend to be lower in enterprises and occupations with a predominantly female workforce. To reduce gender pay gaps more emphasis therefore needs to be placed on ensuring equal pay for women and men, and on addressing the undervaluation of women’s work,” she said.

Another factor which weighs on the gender wage gap is motherhood. The report shows that mothers tend to have lower wages compared to non-mothers. This may be related to a host of factors, including labour market interruptions, reductions in working time, employment in more family-friendly jobs with lower wages, or stereotypical promotion decisions at enterprise level.

According to the report, a more equitable sharing of family duties between men and women would in many instances lead to women making different occupational choices.

Surprisingly, the evidence shows that even before women reach motherhood, there is already a pay gap. This suggests a need to combat stereotypes and discrimination at the point of entry into the labour market.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Gender pay-gaps. Another well-kept secret in the travel & tourism industry. Research into this topic may generate some shocking revelations.

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY

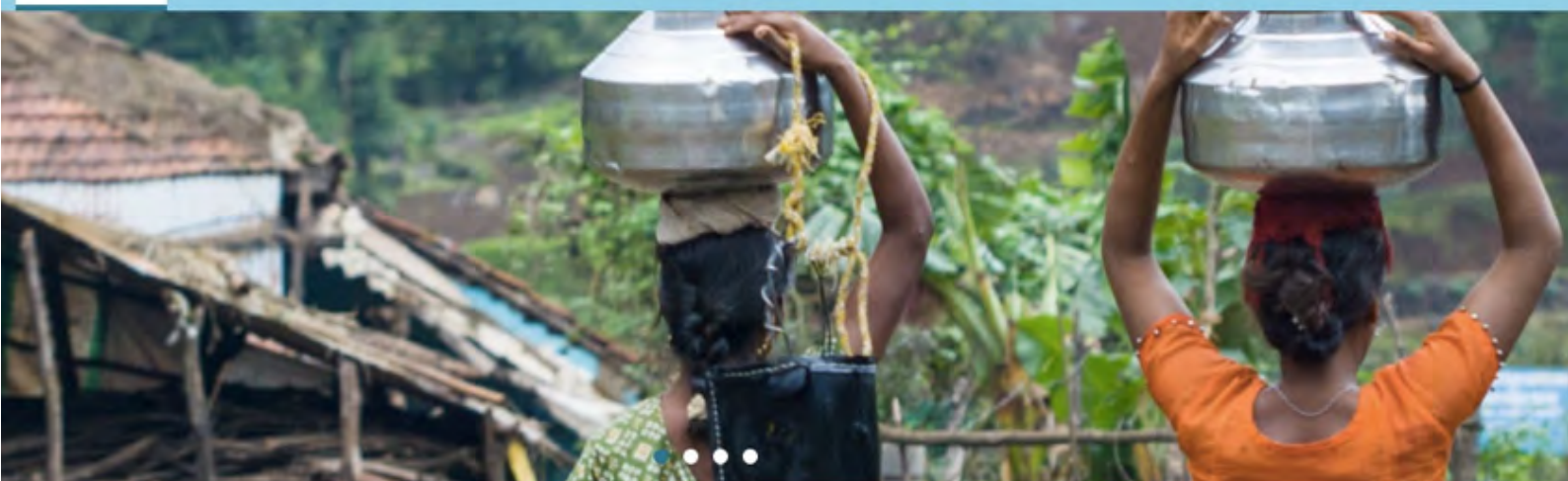


# SDG 5:

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**Discriminatory laws  
and social norms  
still hamper gender  
equality**





## SDG 5: Discriminatory laws and social norms still hamper gender equality

Paris, OECD News, Dec 7, 2018 -- The pace of progress on gender equality around the world remains slow, despite advances in some countries, according to the 2019 edition of the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI).

Since the last edition of the SIGI in 2014, 14 countries criminalised domestic violence and 15 countries strengthened their legal frameworks to delay the age of first marriage by eliminating legal exceptions allowing girls to marry. Similarly, some social norms that are detrimental to equality have become less prominent. For instance, social acceptance of domestic violence has decreased respectively from 50% in 2012 to 37% in 2014 and 27% in 2018.

However, in many of the 180 countries covered by the database, political commitments, legal reforms and gender-sensitive programmes are still not being translated into real changes for women and girls. Despite regional variations, gender-based discrimination remains stubbornly persistent and hard to address. Throughout the world, 16% of girls aged 15-19 have been married before turning 18 in 2018 compared to 19% in 2012. At this pace, it will take over 100 years to eradicate girl child marriage.

“The last few years have seen an unprecedented surge in support for women’s rights. And as much as acknowledging the facts is a decisive step forward, now is the time to turn the rhetoric about gender equality and women’s empowerment into action”, said Juan Yermo, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’ Secretary-General, while presenting the fourth edition of the OECD Development Centre’ SIGI today in Brussels.

First launched in 2009, the database looks at the gaps that legislation, attitudes and practices create between women and men when it comes to rights and opportunities. It also points at where more efforts are needed to achieve effective equality. The SIGI covers four dimensions in the areas that affect the life course of women and girls. Specifically, the new data highlights progress and remaining challenges regarding women’s rights in the family (e.g. early marriage), physical integrity (e.g. female genital mutilation, violence, sexual and reproductive health and rights), access to productive and financial assets (e.g. access to land, workplace rights), and civil rights (e.g. political representation).

This fourth update of the SIGI contains a new cross-country ranking which classifies 120

countries according to their level of discrimination in social institutions; 180 individual country notes including comprehensive information on legal frameworks and action plans to protect women's rights and promote gender equality; and a new database summarising all discriminatory laws, social norms and practices worldwide.

The new data points out the importance of enforcing new legislation to enhance equality and abolish discriminatory laws, including through gender-transformative programmes and action plans. Laws - what is legally feasible - and social norms - what is socially acceptable - are double-edged swords for women: they can act as either barriers or drivers of change.

Social expectations on gender roles still stigmatise working mothers and women in politics, negatively affecting their economic and political leadership: globally, half of the population believes that children will suffer when their mother does paid work outside the home, and that men make better political leaders than women.

Similarly, laws continue to subordinate women's status to their husband's authority: 41 countries recognise the man solely as the head of household; 27 countries legally require women to obey their husbands; 24 countries require women to have permission of their husbands or of a so-called legal guardian (brother, father) to

choose a profession or work.

Drawing on the wake-up call carried out by thousands of women around the world, progress has been made, but the path towards achieving gender equality remains slow. Gender-based discrimination remains a lifelong and heterogeneous challenge for women and girls.

Locally designed solutions combined with adequate legislation are needed for more social change to take hold. SIGI's new Policy Simulator enables policy makers to explore reform options and assess their likely effects on gender equality in social institutions. It enables users to compare a specific country with a range of other selected countries.

#### More information on SIGI 2019

- Access the SIGI 2019 results: [www.genderindex.org](http://www.genderindex.org)
- 180 country notes: <https://www.genderindex.org/countries/>
- The Gender, Institutions and Development Database (GIDDB 2019): <https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=GIDDB2019>
- Policy Simulator: <http://sim-dev.oecd.org/Default.ashx?lang=En&ds=SIGI>

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Discriminatory laws and social norms are inter-related. Most of the laws are written by men in traditionally male-dominated societies. Would the laws be significantly different if more women were involved in writing them? Well worth a debate in its own right.



**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



# SDG 5:

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**‘Global sisterhood’  
tells perpetrators  
‘time is up’ for  
pandemic of  
violence**





Credit: UN Women/Catianne Tijerina



## SDG 5: ‘Global sisterhood’ tells perpetrators ‘time is up’ for pandemic of violence

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 11 December 2018 - From #MeToo to #HearMeToo, the fight to end violence against women continues as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador, Nicole Kidman, joined survivors, activists and other Hollywood celebrities to spotlight the lack of resources that exist to help women push back against violence and abuse.

On Monday, Human Rights Day, the UN Women-managed global grant-making mechanism to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, held a fundraising luncheon in Santa Monica, California, one of the hubs of the #MeToo movement that rose up last year against sexual harassment and abuse, by powerful men in the entertainment industry.

Hosted by Ms. Kidman and UN Women’s Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the event amplified the voices of women and girls around the world who have survived violence or who strive to defend women’s rights, often without garnering media headlines.

“When I became UN Women’s Goodwill Ambassador some time ago”, the Australian-born Academy Award-winning star said, “I met with women and girls who had survived violence and who were supported by the UN Trust Fund.”

“I saw first-hand the real difference it makes in the lives of women and girls,” she continued. “I’m here today to continue this work and amplify the voices of women survivors through the media and help raise significant funds for programs that address this issue.”

Over the past 22 years, the UN Trust Fund has supported 460 organizations, and backed over six million people last year alone.

Actor and activist Gabriella Wright, cited the example of one powerful UN Trust Fund initiative which

had supported a young woman survivor of violence from Zimbabwe, who is deaf. Unlike others in her situation, she managed to access justice by taking her attacker to court. He is now in jail.

“We are witnessing the power of a global sisterhood to end the normalization of violence against women and girls that is telling perpetrators ‘time is up’”, said Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Yet, much needs to be done to end the violence and abuse that impacts one-in-three women worldwide. “We must continue to amplify the voices of all survivors and activists, especially those who are typically marginalized or whose voices have been muted, and come together in global solidarity for change”, she continued, highlighting the need for worldwide mobilization.

Through public events around the planet, including concerts in Chile, Colombia and Bangladesh; murals in Afghanistan and in public transportation hubs in El Salvador, Vanuatu, and The Philippines; global citizens have stood in solidarity with survivors and advocates.

UN Bureau Chief for the South African Broadcasting Corporation Sherwin Bryce-Pease emceed the event which also honoured former US Vice President, Joe Biden.

Since 25 November, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, which launched 16 Days of Activism, has raised awareness and galvanized action against gender-based violence under the banner, “Orange the World: #HearMeToo.”

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Has anyone surveyed the extent of domestic violence faced by the legions of women working in travel & tourism? It would be a very useful survey to set up and monitor annually. However, like many other such indicators, the travel & tourism leadership may not want to go down this path as it may show up another not so rosy side of the industry. That opens the door for an external party to step up and fill the void.

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



# SDG 8:

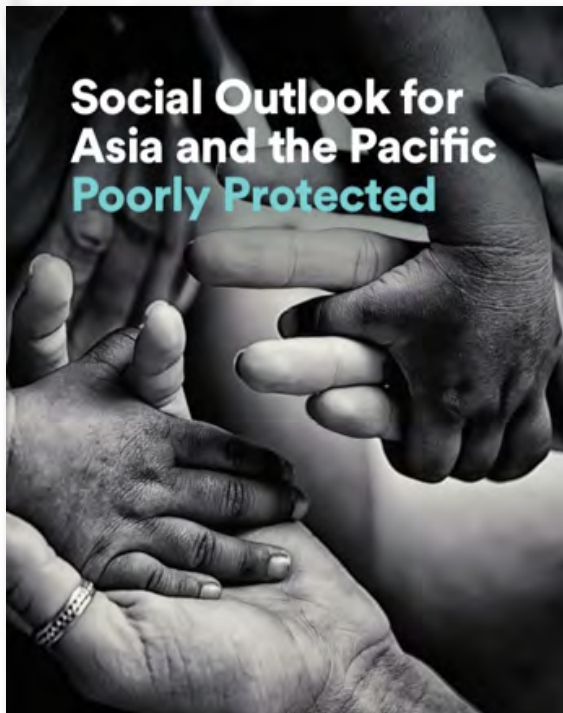
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**Asia-Pacific nations  
urged to step up  
investment in social  
protection**





## SDG 8: Asia-Pacific nations urged to step up investment in social protection



Bangkok (ESCAP news) 30 November 2018 – A new report by the United Nations’ regional arm, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), is calling on countries across Asia and the Pacific to beef up their spending on people, pointing out how greater investment in social protection can be a game changer for ending poverty.

The report, *Social Outlook for Asia and the Pacific – Poorly Protected*, offers new evidence for increasing investment in people in the Asia-Pacific region: around 328 million people would be lifted out of moderate poverty and 52 million people out of extreme poverty, with more countries fully eradicating poverty by 2030, if countries raised their investment in education, health care and social protection to reach the global average. Countries would also see an increase in their GDP growth together with reduced income inequalities.

The report notes that, in developing countries in the region, spending on social protection amounts to less than one-third of the global

average of 11.2 per cent of GDP. This shortfall leaves 60 per cent of the region’s people unprotected against risks such as sickness, disability and unemployment, but also during pregnancy or old age.

This underinvestment is also the main reason why more than one quarter of all people in the region still live in poverty, six in ten people lack access to affordable health care, one in two rely on unclean fuels and close to one in three lack access to basic sanitation.

Launching the study at the Fifth Session of the Committee on Social Development, held by ESCAP from 28 to 30 November, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and ESCAP Executive Secretary Ms. Armida Alisjahbana underscored that despite significant progress on many levels, large swathes of the region’s population, especially rural communities, women, migrants, older person and persons with disabilities, remain trapped in poverty, vulnerability and marginalization.

“Our region has affirmed its commitment to social protection at both global and regional levels, yet while investments in social protections have increased over the past two decades, it remains the preserve of a few, rather than a right for all,” she added.

The report finds that the region needs an additional investment of \$281 billion per year to match global spending levels on social protection as a share of GDP, of which the bulk is needed in the region’s two most populous countries, China and India. It further points out that a country’s level of economic development is not a reason for low social investments.

“Governments with higher political commitment to social investments not only spend a higher share of their budget on their people’s development, but tend to spend more effectively with better outcomes as a result.” The study cites examples of low- and lower-middle income

countries that have been successful first movers in this regard including Bhutan, Mongolia, Thailand and Viet Nam.

The thematic focus of the study underscored much of the discussions at the biennial Committee meeting, where ESCAP member States discussed ways to strengthen regional

cooperation on social protection. ESCAP will take the lead in supporting member States to develop a modality for regional cooperation in coordination with relevant UN agencies.

[Click here to download the report.](#)

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

In an era of intense job-insecurity, social protection is vital. But investing in it is expensive and a major guzzler of tax funds. Perhaps ways can be found for the huge tax-paying capacity of travel & tourism to be channelled directly into creating social safety nets for its own employees, especially at the rank and file level.

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



# SDG 8:

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**Changing world of  
work needs new  
jobs strategy**





## SDG 8: Changing world of work needs new jobs strategy



Paris, 4 December 2018, OECD media release - Governments need to do more to help workers and firms adapt to the fast-changing world of work and drive inclusive growth, according to the new [OECD Jobs Strategy](#).

New evidence in the report reveals that countries that promote job quantity, quality and inclusiveness – such as Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden – perform better than those which focus predominantly on market flexibility. While flexibility and adaptability are essential to stimulate the creation of high-quality jobs in an ever more dynamic environment, the gains and costs need to be fairly shared between businesses and workers, according to the OECD.

“Countries must step up their efforts to adapt policy and institutions to the challenges of a rapidly changing world of work,” said OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría, launching the Strategy in Paris with France’s Minister for Labour

Muriel Pénicaud. “Technological progress, globalisation and demographic change are creating many new opportunities, but not for everyone; policymakers should focus on helping those at risk of being left behind through well-targeted education and training, labour market and social policies as part of inclusive jobs strategies to help everyone get ahead.”

While in the 1990s the OECD Jobs Strategy stressed flexibility in response to widespread unemployment, and in the 2000s it advocated different policy mixes to advance full employment, the new OECD Jobs Strategy provides a comprehensive policy framework to promote not only more but also better jobs and a more inclusive and resilient labour market. This will be increasingly important in light of the digital transformation and rapid technological change that our economies and societies are undergoing. The most recent OECD analysis suggests that nearly half of all jobs are either at high risk of automation or likely to see significant changes.

The new OECD Jobs Strategy argues that a shift in emphasis is needed from remedial to preventive policies, which would boost efficiency and equity at the same time. Wage-setting rules and the tax-and-benefits system can be combined to make work pay and protect workers rather than jobs. Countries need to invest in an effective education and training system, which gives workers the skills needed by employers and offers opportunities and incentives for education and training throughout their working lives. Social partners also have a key role to play in fostering inclusiveness, protecting workers and making effective collective bargaining systems.

The Strategy stresses the rise in various forms of non-standard work, including temporary jobs and self-employment. Despite currently representing only a small share of employment, “gig work” is also on the rise and it may expand significantly in the near future. The challenge for governments is to

accompany innovation in the creation and use of non-standard employment arrangements, while avoiding abuse, creating a level playing field between companies, and providing adequate support to all workers.

Since non-standard forms of work are likely to increase, governments need to ensure that everyone has access to social protection and is covered by key labour market regulations, regardless of contract or employment type. Social protection can be made more effective by extending coverage and adapt or create specific schemes, consistent with the principle of a universal social protection floor, while promoting portability of benefits.

Equality of opportunities also needs to be strengthened, so that socio-economic background does not become the key determinant of success in the labour market, including through targeted interventions during (pre)school years and in the transition from school to work.

Working conditions should be adapted to make it easier for people to combine work, care and social responsibilities. This will increase labour force participation among both men and women, narrow gender gaps and reduce the risk of poverty and exclusion.

Building public support for reforms is vital, according to the new Jobs Strategy. This will require winning a mandate for reform and effective communication, as well as complementary reforms to cushion short-term costs. Once reforms are passed, they must be fully implemented, effectively enforced and rigorously evaluated.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Technology has spared no-one. Hotels, taxis, airlines and travel agents have discovered the hard way how they can be impacted by the “sharing economy”. Many traditional jobs are next in line, especially at the rank and file level. Sadly, our johnny-come-lately travel industry “thought-leaders” have yet to do a comprehensive system-wide analysis of which jobs will be impacted, and how they should respond.

**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES  
AND COMMUNITIES



# SDG 11:

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**Natural Disasters  
Fund helps Pakistan  
reduce vulnerability  
to extreme events**





Screenshot from ADB website



## SDG 11: Natural Disasters Fund helps Pakistan reduce vulnerability to extreme events

Islamabad, 14 December 2018, Asian Development Bank media release - A fund set up to finance up to 70% of the cost of natural disasters-resilient projects is helping Pakistan enhance its resilience and reduce its socioeconomic and fiscal vulnerability to earthquakes and extreme weather events.

The Asian Development Bank assisted the Government of Pakistan set up the multi-donor National Disaster Management Fund with an initial contribution of \$200 million.

Pakistan is a disaster-prone country with earthquakes, frequent floods, and other disasters caused by climate change.

### Transcript

**Battagram district, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, Pakistan** - In 2005, a massive earthquake hit Pakistan.

Over 73,000 people died, more than 70,000 were injured and 2.8 million people lost their homes. The Asian Development Bank quickly established the Pakistan Earthquake Fund with an initial

grant of \$80 million.

“Pakistan Earthquake Fund was a multi-donor effort that was led by ADB, supported by multiple donors especially from the European countries,” says Mian Shaukat Shafi, a disaster resilience expert from the Asian Development Bank.

“So ADB brought all those donors together under a single umbrella. The bulk of it was under social sector and infrastructure. So mainly health and education if you like.”

The fund financed the reconstruction of damaged facilities based on modern criteria.

“Pre-engineering techniques were introduced,” adds ADB’s Shafi. “So in the start it was bit challenging, but I think once this technology was indigenized in Pakistan lot of these facilities open and lot of vendors were basically supporting this whole technology.

Major infrastructure in Pakistan including 435 primary and middle schools were rebuilt.

The primary school in Battagram in the

northwestern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was one of them. The rehabilitation work made the school a safer place. After the school was heavily damaged by the 2005 quake, teachers had to conduct classes in tents even during the winter time.

Conditions have improved dramatically after the school was rehabilitated.

“Because of this earthquake proof building the teachers and students are experiencing peace of mind,” notes Muqarab Shah, a teacher from Neeli Shang Primary School. “And we are very hopeful that this building will remain like this for a very long time.”

In May 2018, a disaster risk management fund was established. The fund to finance up to 70% of the cost of eligible projects that will enhance Pakistan’s disaster resilience.

“The Asian Development Bank came up with this idea of establishing the National Disaster Risk Management Fund,” says General Nadeem Ahmed, Chief Executive Officer of the National Disaster Risk Management Fund.

“This fund will actually provide a platform, not only to the government of Pakistan, not only to the provincial governments, but also to other development partners who want to invest in risk reduction. So they can pool up all their money to one place and that money can be spent in an integrated manner.”

In the past, Pakistan had no central disaster risk management authority or financing window to help coordinate disaster risk reduction efforts. The fund will go a long way in preparing for disaster and reducing disaster risks, rather than waiting for them to strike.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Pakistan is just one country in Asia impacted by natural disasters. Philippines and Indonesia are other badly affected countries. All told, natural disasters are enormously expensive in terms of both direct economic damage as well as recovery costs. This is one area that could benefit enormously from better usage of military budgets.



# SDG 13:

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**Strategic solutions  
to deal with global  
deluge of plastic  
pollution**





# SDG 13: Strategic solutions to deal with global deluge of plastic pollution



## The PLASTIC Initiative

Currently **13 million** tons of plastic enter the world's oceans every year. An estimated accumulation of **12 billion tons by the year 2050**

lead to a bleak outlook for all life, damaging human health, the environment and the global economy.

As one of the current most pressing environmental issues, plastic pollution is a serious threat towards human well-being, the environment and biodiversity.

Asia especially is suffering from severe plastic pollution.

**Over 70%** of the most plastic polluted rivers are found here, including the Indus, Ganges and Mekong rivers.

**We have a plan and we need your help!**



### The Challenges of Plastic



#### Environmental

- Loss of biodiversity
- Degradation of marine ecosystems
- Reduced water quality



#### Health

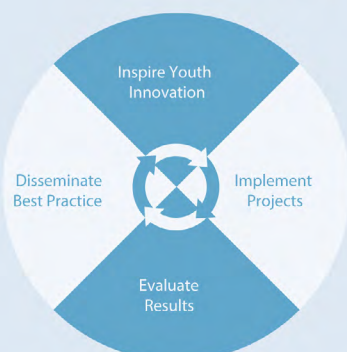
- Contaminated seafood
- Exposure to harmful chemicals from plastic degradation



#### Economical

- Loss of tourism due to pollution
- Clean up cost

### The PLASTIC Initiative - Our Vision



- A Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) and a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) will be established
- A conference of young people, governments, UN agencies, the general public and the private sector will propose new ideas and discuss existing ones to clean up and maintain the concerned ecosystems
- SSC and YAC together select the most promising proposal for funding
- Proposals will be trialed primarily in UNESCO Biosphere Reserves
- Success of the projects will be measured and evaluated
- Most effective strategies will be implemented and disseminated throughout UNESCO's network
- Government authorities will be encouraged to discuss the improvement of their own policies, practices, plans, law and law enforcement, versus plastic-management

**Clean up campaigns alone are not enough.**

We need to address the problem as a whole.  
Reduce plastic usage, plastic wastage and keep ecosystems clean.

**We are all responsible. Please support UNESCO.**

For further information or questions contact [b.boer@unesco.org](mailto:b.boer@unesco.org)



Bangkok, Nov 22, 2018 (UNESCO media release) - By the year 2050, there will be more plastic in the oceans than fish, according to some estimates. That point was driven home again in recent days after a dead sperm whale washed ashore in Indonesia. Just a few months after a pilot whale died off Thailand after ingesting 80 plastic bags, the 9.5-metre sperm whale had nearly six kilograms of plastic in its stomach.

Plastic pollution has reached an all-time high. With a global plastic production amounting to about 300 million tons a year – and an estimated 9.1 billion tons produced to date – 8 million tons is dumped into the oceans every year. Due to the nature of our throw-away society, almost half of the plastic we use is disposed of after being used only once. A plastic bag, for example, has an average working life of 15 minutes but can remain in the ocean for up to 20 years. Other plastics need hundreds of years to fully decompose.

The grisly finds involving dead cetaceans is only a warning sign of far larger problem. Many marine organisms are consuming plastics, mistaking it for food, leading to plastic entering the human food chain through the consumption of fish and other seafood. In the Asia-Pacific, the problem is particularly acute with the majority of plastic waste that ends up in the ocean coming from the region.

Recognizing the urgency of this problem, and marking World Science Day for Peace and Development, UNESCO in partnership with the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Thailand's National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA) and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) hosted two events at UNESCO Bangkok's office and the AIT campus on 12 and 13 November to confront and find solutions to the global issue of plastic pollution, with a particular emphasis on engaging a new generation of students.

'In the last two days, we all have been alerted about the emergency of addressing plastic waste, including marine plastic waste. No doubt, my country is partly responsible for it. And Viet Nam is truly working on dealing with it,' said An Nguyen Hue, from Viet Nam's Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation. 'We are ready to tackle this issue together with other Asian countries and to engage with all stakeholders.'

There are clear models worldwide for reducing waste, as presentations from speakers from China, Germany, India and Rwanda illustrated at the two events. Representatives from Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Singapore also reiterated the regional challenges. As the deaths of the two whales in Indonesia and Thailand have occupied global headlines, there is a growing understanding in the general public about the threat posed by plastic pollution not only to the environment but to human health as well.

*'In the last two days, we all have been alerted about the emergency of addressing plastic waste, including marine plastic waste. No doubt, my country is partly responsible for it. And Viet Nam is truly working on dealing with it. We are ready to tackle this issue together with other Asian countries and to engage with all stakeholders.'* - An Nguyen Hue, from Viet Nam's Department of Science, Technology and International Cooperation





“Raising awareness is a key combating the global plastic problem,” said Henning Schwarze, a German entrepreneur and tourism professional who spoke at the event. ‘Nonetheless regulations needs to be implemented, to reduce plastic consumption in additional sectors and economies, eg, in the construction industry.’

Consumer and retail patterns are also under the microscope, with recent news in Thailand focusing on the prevalence of single-use plastics in the name of ‘convenience’. An individual snack portion, for example, is already packaged in plastic and then typically placed in another plastic bag, along with a disposable spoon, again in its own plastic wrapping. The sheer volume of plastic detritus distributed over the counter every day is staggering – and unnecessary.

The European Parliament recently approved a union-wide ban on single-use plastics, including items such as cutlery, cotton buds and straws, since there are already alternatives available. The ban is meant to be achieved by 2021, with a further goal that 90% of plastic bottles will be collected for recycling by 2025. Rwanda has already banned plastic bags completely since 2008, and the capital, Kigali, has since been recognized as the cleanest city in Africa and quite possible in the world. Among the displays at the World Science Day events was the NSTDA’s biodegradable packaging as an alternative to plastic, as countries in this region consider similar measures.

“There is currently a global consensus of the problem of plastic pollution,” said Remy Norbert Duhuze, Director of the Environmental Regulation and Pollution Control, Rwanda Environment Management Authority. “We are calling for global formal agreement in a form of a convention or a similar multilateral agreement.”

As the soft launch of UNESCO’s Plastic Initiative to gather ideas for plastic waste management, particularly by engaging youth, and testing projects in the 152 UNESCO Biosphere Reserves, the recent events marked a new commitment to a comprehensive, strategic approach to a worldwide problem. Young people from across the Asia-Pacific region are encouraged to participate and bring innovative ideas to the table, with project viability evaluated by a young people and professionals, and crowdfunding conducted over the course of coming years.

Do not wait until 2050, when our oceans will have become veritable rubbish bins. A commitment to combating plastic pollution requires strategic solutions and the participation of every one of us.

#### **Download: Presentations from the Meeting**

[Solutions to tackle plastic waste: The Rwandan experience](#)

[Plastics Pollution in Asia](#)

[Bio-Plastics: Beating Global Warming & Plastics Pollution Crises](#)

[The Next Big Thing: Global warming’s companionship](#)

#### **Further info:**

[Natural Sciences](#)

[Healthy Ocean for Prosperity](#)

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

Travel & tourism has jumped on this bandwagon big time. But it’s only scratching the surface of the damage done by the sheer scale of industry growth. If the industry can mount a huge effort to curb plastic usage, it can and should certainly do the same with all the SDGs.





# SDG 13:

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**Buildings and  
construction sector  
– Huge untapped  
potential for  
emission reductions**



UN News/Matt Wells. UN Environment (UNEP) and Yale University's Ecological Living Module; a sustainable tiny house exhibited at UN Headquarters in New York.



## SDG 13: Buildings and construction sector – Huge untapped potential for emission reductions

Katowice, 7 December 2018 (UNEP media release) - Dramatic action will be needed by governments, cities and business if the global buildings and construction sector is to cut its carbon footprint in line with international agreements, according to a new report released today by the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction.

There is good news. *The 2018 Global Status Report – Towards a Zero-Emission, Efficient and Resilient Buildings and Construction Sector*, highlights that emissions from buildings and construction may have peaked in the past few years, with energy efficiency gains in areas such as heating, lighting and cooking and with more offices and homes being powered by cleaner forms of energy. The study was written by the International Energy Agency and UN Environment.

Efficiency gains are also being realised through

shifts towards energy saving technologies like heat pumps, improved windows and insulation, the use of less energy-intensive materials, and buildings design. However, the report underlines that the buildings sector – a huge engine of the global economy – still accounts for a significant 39 percent of total energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and 36 percent of final energy use.

*“Buildings are a key driver of energy demand, and developments within the sector such as the growing uptake of air conditioners are having a big impact on energy and environmental trends at the global level,” said Dr Fatih Birol, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency. “If we don’t make buildings more efficient, their rising energy use will impact us all, whether it be through access to affordable energy services, poor air quality or higher energy bills.”*



The number of new buildings is likely to grow rapidly in the coming years, especially in Africa and Asia. This rapid growth will challenge the target of a 30 percent energy intensity improvement in buildings by 2030, needed to put the sector on track to meet the goals of the Paris Climate Change Agreement.

*“It’s critical we have a big change over the next couple of years in how we do buildings and construction,”* said Joyce Msuya, Deputy Executive Director of UN Environment. “We only need to look at the current norms and quality of many buildings to see that we can do so much better. We need to raise the bar in energy-efficient, green buildings and far better practice in construction.”

## **Energy efficiency investment in buildings slows**

The new report highlights an emerging gap between total energy efficiency spending – which increased by just over four per cent in 2017 to USD 423 billion – versus rapidly growing total investment in building construction and renovations. This indicates a slow-down in the rate of energy efficiency investment as a share of total investment when compared to previous growth rates.

## **An Emerging Challenge—Cooling Buildings**

The report flies a red flag over the sharply rising energy demand for cooling systems and air conditioners, linked with improving incomes in developing countries and higher temperatures – such as recent heat waves this year in many parts of the globe – as a result of climate change.

Energy use for ‘space cooling’ has already increased 25 per cent since 2010 and there are now more than 1.6 billion air conditioning units in buildings globally. Today, the largest markets are not in the hottest countries on the planet: only 8 per cent of the 2.8 billion people living in places with average daily temperatures above 25 degrees have an air conditioner.

There are many ways to deliver cooling in buildings, and the entry into force of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer could provide a boost to one of them, the global

penetration of air conditioners that use climate-friendly gases. This needs to go hand in hand with efforts to achieve much higher levels of efficiency.

## **The Power of National Climate Action Plans (NDCs)**

The scaling-up of national climate action plans—known as Nationally-Determined Contributions (NDCs)—represents a key opportunity to address a wide range of issues, by addressing policy gaps and unleashing a more committed decarbonisation of the buildings and construction sector.

Currently around 104 NDCs mention specific actions to enhance energy-efficiency in buildings, building codes and energy certifications, yet only a few NDCs cover construction and ‘embodied carbon’ linked with the manufacturing of materials like steel and cement used to construct buildings in the first place.

## **Resilient Buildings – Needed to be —Better Prepared**

According to the report, building standards need to evolve to reflect the urgency for more resilient buildings in the face of climate change and extreme events like storms, floods, high wind speeds and soaring temperatures.

Increasing numbers of real estate asset managers are now mapping climate risks for their buildings in their national adaptation plans communicated to UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Brazil, Burkina Faso, Kenya and Sri Lanka are among the countries that have included buildings in their national adaptation plans.

The report also cites several initiatives that could assist in fast tracking improvements. Close to 500 companies with trillions of dollars in revenue, including several property, construction, cement and steel firms have now joined the Science Based Targets initiative, aligning their emission reductions with the Paris Agreement. In September at the Global Climate Action Summit, the World Green Business Council launched its Net Zero Carbon Buildings commitment.



## **Backgrounders**

The report was prepared by the International Energy Agency and UN Environment.

Download the Global Status Report 2018:

<https://bit.ly/2KW6sVU>

## **About the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction**

Hosted by UN Environment, the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction aims to mobilise all stakeholders from the Buildings and Construction sector to scale up climate actions towards a zero-emission, efficient and resilient sector. <https://www.globalabc.org>

## **About the International Energy Agency**

The IEA is at the heart of global dialogue on energy, providing authoritative analysis through

a wide range of publications, data and statistics, and a series of training and capacity building workshops, presentations, and resources. The IEA works to ensure reliable, affordable and clean energy for its 30 member countries and beyond. Its mission is guided by four main areas of focus: energy security, economic development, environmental awareness and engagement worldwide.

## **About UN Environment**

UN Environment is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UN Environment works with governments, the private sector, the civil society and with other UN entities and international organizations across the world.

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

As tourism booms, hundreds of hotels, airports, convention centres and transportation hubs are coming up worldwide. This item opens the door for the construction sector, as well as project owners, to also become a part of the solution.



# SDG 13:

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**Nations must triple efforts to reach 2°C target, concludes annual review of global emissions**



*UN News/Matt Wells. UN Environment (UNEP) and Yale University's Ecological Living Module; a sustainable tiny house exhibited at UN Headquarters in New York.*



## SDG 13: Nations must triple efforts to reach 2°C target, concludes annual review of global emissions

Paris, 27 November 2018 (UNEP media release) – Global emissions are on the rise as national commitments to combat climate change come up short. But surging momentum from the private sector and untapped potential from innovation and green-financing offer pathways to bridge the emissions gap. Those findings along with a sweeping review of climate action and the latest measurements of global emissions were presented by authors of the 2018 Emissions Gap Report during a launch event [here](#).

The flagship report from UN Environment annually presents a definitive assessment of the so-called ‘emissions gap’ – the gap between anticipated emission levels in 2030, compared to levels consistent with a 2°C / 1.5°C target.

The findings presented today offer the latest accounting of national mitigation efforts and the ambitions countries have presented in their Nationally Determined Contributions, which form the foundation of the Paris Agreement.

Evidence outlined here, just days before the start of the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) show global emissions have reached historic levels at 53.5 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e, with no signs of peaking – the point when emissions switch from increasing to decreasing. Authors assessed only 57 countries (representing 60% of global emissions) were on pace to do so by 2030.





That analysis and a review of progress against national commitments under the Paris Agreement makes clear that the current pace of national action is insufficient to meet the Paris targets. Increased emissions and lagging action means the gap figure for this year's report is larger than ever. Translated into climate action, the authors conclude nations must raise their ambition by 3x to meet the 2°C and 5x to meet 1.5°C.

“If the IPCC report represented a global fire alarm, this report is the arson investigation,” said UN Environment Deputy Executive Director Joyce Msuya. “The science is clear; for all the ambitious climate action we’ve seen – governments need to move faster and with greater urgency. We’re feeding this fire while the means to extinguish it are within reach.”

A continuation of current trends will likely result in global warming of around 3.2°C by the end of the century, with continued temperature rises after that, according to the report findings.

While the authors highlight that there is still a possibility for bridging the emissions gap and keeping global warming below 2°C, the assessment issues a clear warning: The kind of drastic, large-scale action we urgently need has yet to be seen.

To fill this void, the 2018 Emissions Gap Report offers new insight into what meaningful climate action will look like. Through new analysis of global emissions in the context of fiscal policy, the current pace of innovation and an exhaustive review of climate action from the private sector and sub-national level, authors gathered here offered a roadmap for implementing the type of transformative action required to maximize potential in each of these sectors.

Ranging from city, state and regional governments to companies, investors, higher education institutions and civil society organizations, non-state actors are increasingly committing to bold climate action. These institutions are increasingly recognized as a key element in achieving the global emissions goals. Although estimates on the emission reduction potential vary widely, some mention 19 gigatonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (GtCO<sub>2</sub>e) by 2030. This is enough to close the 2°C gap.

Complimented by carefully designed fiscal policy, the potential is even greater.

“When governments embrace fiscal policy measures to subsidize low-emission alternatives and tax fossil fuels, they can stimulate the right investments in the energy sector and significantly reduce carbon emissions.” said Jian Liu, UN Environment’s Chief Scientist.

“Thankfully, the potential of using fiscal policy as an incentive is increasingly recognized, with 51 carbon pricing initiatives now in place or scheduled, covering roughly 15 per cent of global emissions. If all fossil fuel subsidies were phased out, global carbon emissions could be reduced by up to 10 percent by 2030. Setting the right carbon price is also essential. At US\$ 70 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>, emission reductions of up to 40% are possible in some countries.”

These established pathways are further enhanced when policy makers embrace innovative solutions. Authors here outlined five key principles that should be considered to accelerate low-carbon innovation. Including risk-acceptance commercial scalability, holistic economic alignment, mission-oriented approaches and a long term-horizon to increase financial uptake.

The ninth Emissions Gap Report has been prepared by an international team of leading scientists, assessing all available information, including that published in the context of the IPCC Special Report, as well as in other recent scientific studies.

[Download the Executive Summary](#)

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

These targets need to be better understood and adopted within travel and tourism. Every company, destination, community, city and province which relies on tourism can set its own environmental impact reduction targets, and attempt to meet them. Reducing this impact, and measuring the reduction, now needs to become the primary determinant of “success” as against visitor arrivals and expenditure. It’s now a race against time. Travel & tourism has no choice but to become a critical part of the solution.



# SDG 13:

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**How climate change  
is impacting the  
world's most  
majestic mountain  
ranges**



## TYPICAL CLIMATE-RELATED HAZARDS IN MOUNTAINS



**13** CLIMATE ACTION



## SDG 13: How climate change is impacting the world's most majestic mountain ranges

Nairobi, 11 December 2018 (UNEP media release) – Mountain regions occupy about one-quarter of the earth's land surface and are home to 15% of the world's population. Their influence extends far beyond their ranges: they provide goods and services, most notably water, to over half the global population – making them not only crucial for people living in mountains, but also for those living downstream.

But while the world is becoming increasingly aware of the impact of climate change on different ecosystems, current policies offer a very limited focus on the importance of climate change adaptation in mountainous regions.

In a bid to underscore the growing demand for climate change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems, UN Environment is launching its 2018 Mountain

Adaptation Outlook Synthesis report today, coinciding with World Mountain Day. The publication is presented on the sidelines of COP24 in Katowice, Poland, together with a report focusing specifically on adaptation in the Hindu Kush Himalaya.

“Climate change is increasingly impacting mountain regions,” said Joyce Msuya, Acting Executive Director at UN Environment. “Mountain ranges are extremely complex ecosystems home to some of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities. It is critical that we focus on helping these communities adapt to changing climate in mountain regions.”

The reports examine the existing adaptation policies in some of the world's largest mountain ranges, and is part of a series covering the Carpathian Mountains, the Hindu Kush

Himalaya, Southern Caucasus, Tropical Andes and mountain ranges in Central Asia, Eastern Africa and the Western Balkans.

Mountain societies are experiencing a disproportionately high number of disasters compared other environments and the need to adapt is becoming an urgent task. Nonetheless, the rapid and unprecedented rate of climate change is challenging this adaptive capacity, as is evident through the already widespread impacts being felt across mountain regions.

Zeroing in on the lack of specific strategies to deal with the effects of climate change on mountain ecosystems, the report – developed by UN Environment in partnership with GRID-Arendal – provide an in-depth discussion on trends, key risks and common policy gaps for adaptation to climate change both within and across different mountain regions.

One of the major impacts of climate change is the increase of average annual temperatures across all mountain regions and within all countries, leading to a range of short-term risks including: avalanche, landslides, reduced snow cover, wildfires, melting glaciers, degradation of forests and ecosystems, floods, vector-borne diseases and droughts. These risks expose already vulnerable and often marginalized mountain communities and destabilize some of their wealth-generating sectors, including agriculture, tourism and biodiversity.

The Mountain Adaptation Outlook Series is a product of the collaboration between UN

Environment and GRID-Arendal. Since 2015, UN Environment, GRID-Arendal and a series of partners in selected mountain regions, have been working on the project “Climate change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems from a sub-regional perspective” to promote climate change adaptation in mountain regions.

About the Mountain Adaption Synthesis Report  
This Mountain Adaptation Synthesis Report provides a concise summary of the findings of a series of reports, focusing on adaptation to climate change in some of the world’s major mountain regions, with a focus on developing regions and economies in transition. The development of this report is supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment) in the context of its inter-regional project “Climate change action in developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems from a sub-regional perspective” that is financially co-supported by the Government of Austria.

#### **About UN Environment**

UN Environment is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. UN Environment works with governments, the private sector, the civil society and with other UN entities and international organizations across the world.

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

It is not just island nations which are being affected by climate change. Mountain ranges are being just as badly affected. While it may appear that the ski resorts will be most heavily impacted, in actual fact it will reduce the volume of water flowing down the world’s rivers, especially in populous regions such as South Asia. The downstream economic and social impact of that could be quite horrendous.





# SDG 15:

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**UN space-based  
tool opens new  
horizons to track  
land-use on Earth's  
surface**





USGS/NASA. A NASA satellite image shows a vast aluvial fan blossoming across the landscape between the Kunlun and Altun mountain ranges that form the southern border of the Taklamakan Desert in China.



## SDG 15: UN space-based tool opens new horizons to track land-use on Earth's surface

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 12 December 2018 - Satellite-based tracking to chart how land is being used on the earth's surface is about to get much easier and more accessible, the UN food agency has announced, launching a new online portal developed in collaboration with the United States Space Agency, NASA.

The system known as [Collect Earth Online](#), is web-based, free of charge and open to all platforms that will allow users to “systematically inspect” any location on the planet – from glaciers to rainforests - with satellite data, said the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO) on Wednesday.

“This innovation allows the collection of up-to-date data about our environment and its changes in a more efficient and participatory manner, using the local experts that know the landscape and the underlying ecology”, [explained](#) Mette Wilki, the head of Policy and Resources at FAO's Forestry Division.

“It helps us to obtain and upscale practical inputs at a time when environmental challenges are taking on urgent and unprecedented importance”, she added.

The next generation geo-spatial tool also provides access to high-resolution satellite imagery from multiple sources as well as historical imagery and photo mosaics from NASA and European Union satellite networks, making it easier to carry out surveys, collect samples and use crowdsourcing

techniques.

“It leverages four decades of satellite data and can help countries around the world better map and monitor their forests,” said Dan Irwin, the [SERVIR](#) Global Program Manager for NASA.

SERVIR is a program jointly run by NASA and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) that co-develops state-of-the-art geospatial services to help improve environmental decision-making among developing nations.

## **Next steps**

Early next year, the system is to be integrated into the System for Earth Observation Data Access, Processing and Analysis for Land Monitoring, or SEPAL, a cloud-based platform at FAO, making it easier to link reference data directly to processing chains for map creation.

In 2019, the Collect Earth Online system will also integrate TimeSync, a Landsat time series visualization tool created by Oregon State University and the US Forest Service.

Fully operational, the system will also offer further features, ranging from disaster management to glacial monitoring, says FAO, noting that its open-source and cloud-based nature will not only broaden access but will also help safeguard against data loss; a significant value when digital and computing resources are limited.

That opens promising prospects for ventures ranging from trying to protect natural wildlife habitat to broader projects that, for example, measure links between biomass and poverty, said the UN agency.

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

Similar to the earlier story, this is another great usage of eye-in-the-sky technology. Along with drones, satellites are excellent ways to monitor everything from deforestation to damage caused by natural disasters. Like all forms of rapidly-developing technology, however, this will prove to be a double-edged sword.





# SDG 16:

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**Celebrating the  
enduring universal  
values of human  
rights**





*UN Photo. A group of Japanese women look at the Universal Declaration of Human Rights during a visit to the UN's interim headquarters in Lake Success in February 1950*



## SDG 16: Celebrating the enduring universal values of human rights

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 10 December 2018, Across the world, the UN family has been making sure that this year's Human Rights Day – which falls on Monday, and marks 70 years since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – succeeds in raising awareness of the principles enshrined in the document, which are as important and relevant today, as they were in 1948.

Speaking in Marrakesh, where over 160 Governments signed up to the first-ever global migration pact on Monday, UN chief António Guterres said that the Compact is an important step towards safety and dignity for millions of people which “sets out in practical terms how Member States and other stakeholders can respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all migrants, in line with the Universal Declaration.”

The UN Chief was followed by Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, reinforced Mr. Guterres's comments, reminding the audience that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was forged in the crisis of the post-war period as a guide to leading societies away from “conflict, inequality and turmoil,” which is

a “a living document, just as powerful and valid today as it was in the ashes and rubble of global destruction.”

President of the General Assembly, Maria Fernanda Espinosa, also speaking at the conference, referred to the context in which the Declaration was drawn up, mentioning that she had, just a few weeks earlier, placed a wreath before the “Wall of Death” in Auschwitz, a moment that, she said, she is unlikely to ever forget:

“This sentiment, I imagine, was shared by the original architects of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Having borne witness to the atrocities of the Second World War, they, like those who crafted the Charter of the United Nations, understood that human life and human dignity had to be protected, everywhere and at all costs.”

Nevertheless, the fight for human rights is far from over: the Secretary-General said it “saddened” him that the global human rights agenda seemed to be losing ground, noting a rise in authoritarianism, xenophobia and

intolerance. “Egregious human rights violations” such as torture, extrajudicial killings, and detention without trial, still persist, he added.

## **New risks to human rights**

Threats to human rights were also being highlighted at UN headquarters in New York on Monday, where charities, non-governmental organizations and members of civil society were joined by Andrew Gilmour, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, for a discussion about the ways that modern challenges, unforeseen 70 years ago, are impacting rights.

The talk covered digital technologies, which have led to many benefits, but also brought about new risks which could replicate, and even exacerbate existing threats to human rights; and climate change, which risks making much of the planet uninhabitable.

## **Defending human rights in conflict zones**

Upholding human rights in challenging situations is one of the key roles of the United Nations peacekeeping missions, which share a 70th birthday with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the UN peacekeepers and staff working in these challenging environments have been celebrating the occasion in a number of ways.

In Afghanistan, the UN Assistance Mission

(UNAMA) renewed its call for human rights and fundamental freedoms to be respected in the country, welcoming breakthroughs such as the work of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, new laws empowering the media, a new Penal Code reflecting the country’s commitment to promote fundamental freedoms, and the presence of women in civil service positions and in the private sector.

Meanwhile, in South Sudan, commuters in the capital, Juba, got the chance to see their military in a different light on Monday: as athletes.

Hundreds of military personnel – as well as police and prison officers, fire-fighters and members of the wildlife services – took part in a 10-kilometre race around the streets of the capital, organized by the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), to promote awareness of human rights and the need for peace in the conflict-affected country.

Speaking on Monday, David Shearer, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS, said that “the only way that South Sudan is going to recover is by having peace and respect for human rights. If respect for human rights is there, then there is peace. If there is peace, it involves respect for human rights and people’s ethnicity and political persuasion. The two things go hand in hand.”

You can read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and find stories, videos, and archive audio about the document, [here](#).

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

Human rights are all about how humans are treated, especially within the context of the rule of law and international norms. Travel and tourism can play a major role in advancing this cause. If gays and lesbians have every right to be treated respectfully, so does everyone who applies for a visa. Human rights are also about people who get displaced by land grabs, and giving people recourse to redress in labour disputes. Most companies have “Human Resources Departments”. It may be time to change the name to Human Rights and Resources Department.





# SDG 16:

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**Violence against women a 'mark of shame' on our societies**



NO MAS  
FEMINICIDIOS

Picture Credit: Denis Bocquet

*“No more femicides,” reads this graffiti, scrawled on a wall in Mexico City, where public outcry has been mounting against gender-motivated killings.*



## SDG 16: Violence against women a ‘mark of shame’ on our societies

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 25 November 2018 - Violence against women and girls is not only a fundamental human rights issue but also a “moral affront” against them and a “mark of shame” on all societies, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has said, calling greater action by everyone around the world to root out the scourge.

In a message on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, Mr. Guterres also underscored that such violence and abuse is a major obstacle to inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.

“Not until the half of our population represented by women and girls can live free from fear, violence and everyday insecurity, can we truly say we live in a fair and equal world,” said the Secretary-General. The UN chief also noted that at its core, violence against women and girls is the manifestation of a profound lack of respect – a failure by men to recognize the inherent equality and dignity of women – and that it is tied to the broader issues of power and control in societies.

“We live in a male-dominated society,” he said, adding that women are made vulnerable to violence through the multiple ways in which they are kept unequal, harming the individual and has far-reaching consequences for families and society.

The violence, he said, can take many forms: domestic attacks to trafficking, from sexual violence in

conflict to child marriage, genital mutilation and femicide.

In his message, the Secretary-General said that increasing public disclosure by women from all regions and all walks of life of the sexual harassment they faced is galvanizing power of women's movements to drive action to eliminate harassment and violence everywhere.

This year, the global United Nations UNiTE campaign to end violence against women and girls is highlighting our support for survivors and advocates under the theme 'Orange the World: #HearMeToo'. "With orange as the unifying colour of solidarity, the #HearMeToo hashtag is designed to send a clear message: violence against women and girls must end now, and we all have a role to play," said Mr. Guterres.

## **| 'End the culture of silencing' – head of UN Women**

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN Women, the Organization's entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women, also highlighted that the theme is a call "to listen to and believe survivors", to end the culture of silencing, and to put the survivors at the centre of the response. "The focus must change from questioning the credibility of the victim, to pursuing the accountability of the perpetrator," she said, underscoring that #HearMeToo is "therefore also a strong call to law enforcement."

According to UN Women, the vast majority of perpetrators of violence against women and girls face no consequences; and only a minority of cases are ever reported to the police, an even smaller percentage result in charges, and in only a fraction of those cases is there a conviction.

"Police and judicial institutions must take reports seriously, and prioritize the safety and wellbeing of survivors, for example by making more female officers available for women reporting violence," said Ms. Phumzile.

Laws must recognize that sexual harassment is a form of discrimination against women and a human rights violation, she added, calling for legal protections for both formal and informal places of work to ensure that the most vulnerable workers, like those dependent on tips from customers for their income, will have a better chance to speak out against abuse, and be heard.

Employers also have an important role, added Ms. Phumzile,

"In every country [they] can make vital impacts by independently enforcing standards of behaviour that reinforce gender equality and zero tolerance for any form of abuse."

Although women and girls account for a far smaller share of total homicides than men, they bear by far the greatest burden of intimate partner/family related homicide, and intimate partner homicide.

## **| Homes 'most dangerous' place for women, finds new UN report**

In a stark finding, a new UN report has revealed that globally some 50,000 women were killed last year at the hands of intimate partners or family members, urging greater coordination between police, justice and social systems to better protect women and girls.

Globally, about 87,000 women lost their lives in homicides (intentional killings) in 2017, according to the [Global study on homicide: Gender-related killing of women and girls](#), issued by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The study also found that tangible progress in protecting and saving the lives of female victims of homicides has not been made in recent years, despite legislation and programmes developed to

eradicate violence against women.

“Women continue to pay the highest price as a result of gender inequality, discrimination and negative stereotypes [...] they are also the most likely to be killed by intimate partners and family,” said Yury Fedotov, the Executive Director of UNODC, calling for targeted criminal justice responses to prevent and end gender-related killings.

Among its conclusions, the report calls for greater coordination between police and the justice system as well as health and social services and emphasizes the importance of involving men in the solution, including through early education.

## **| The International Day**

In December 1999, the UN General Assembly designated 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, inviting governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to hold activities designed to raise public awareness on the issue.

The Day also commemorates the brutal assassination in 1960, of the three Mirabal sisters, political activists in the Dominican Republic, on orders of Dominican ruler Rafael Trujillo (1930-1961).

## **IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM**

As travel and tourism is one of the biggest global employers of women, there is no doubt that many of the women face varying levels of domestic violence, especially amongst the rank and file. Has anyone done a survey to gauge the extent of this, and its socio-economic impact? If so, I would be very keen to get the results.





# SDG 16:

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**Global Survey  
charts War on  
Human Rights  
Defenders**



*UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders Michel Forst*



## SDG 16: Global Survey charts War on Human Rights Defenders

Geneva, Forum Asia media release, 20 December 2018 -- On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the United Nations (UN) Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders Michel Forst published a world report presenting the recent developments in 140 countries.

The report is based on various sources provided by States, National Human Rights Institutions, UN reports and civil society actors. FORUM-ASIA together with its members contributed to the chapters on the Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand and Cambodia.

The World Report is the first global survey of the situation of human rights defenders since the landmark Global Survey conducted in 2006 by the then UN Special Representative Hina Jilani. The World Report shares the purpose of its

predecessor: “to identify the main areas of progress and the remaining challenges that need to be addressed in relation to the implementation of the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognised Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.”

Twelve years have passed since the earlier survey and the World Survey is produced to mark the 20th anniversary of the Declaration.

The World Report documents the much discussed closing of civic space and suggests that it has become, in too many locations, a war on human rights defenders.

As noted in Michel Forst’s General Assembly report, any enthusiasm for the affirmation of the Declaration in 1998 was tempered by the gap

between the aspirations and promises of the earlier Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the lived reality of too many people at that time.

Twenty years after the affirmation of the Declaration a similar gap exists between it and the situation of too many human rights defenders.

In relation to current widespread challenges, the World Report reveals the following three key issues facing human rights defenders globally:

1. the evolution of the use of the term “human rights defenders”;
2. the development of mechanisms and practices to support human rights defenders;
3. and the use of legal and administrative frameworks to both protect and persecute defenders.

Working Paper Series 5: Civic Space – Challenges and Ways Forward

## Working Paper Series 5: Civic Space – Challenges and Ways Forward



20 December 2018 - Civic space is primarily about the exercise of people’s freedoms and rights in the public sphere. It is the exercise of freedoms and human rights that sustain and expand civic space. A vibrant civic space is what makes democracy work within a society and ensures a democratic and accountable state. Hence, the extent of the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion or belief, is what defines the quality of civic space within a given society.

Following previous working papers on business and human rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), this Working Paper of FORUM-ASIA seeks to highlight the experiences and perspectives on civic space from local and global contexts. Such understanding and appreciation of multiple contexts of civic space will help us to develop strategies to strengthen and revitalise civic space at the national, regional and global levels.

For the PDF version of this publication, [click here](#)

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Human rights are a critical component of democratic traditions, especially the right to dissent and the right to justice. The travel & tourism industry has experienced its fair share of human rights violations, ranging from land-grabs to blatant discrimination at security checkpoints. Unfortunately, travel & tourism is not known for its propensity to provide space for dissent. A grievous omission on the agenda of Sustainable Development.





# SDG 16:

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**First full satellite  
survey of  
devastated ancient  
Aleppo raises  
recovery hopes**



Destruction in the Ancient City of Aleppo and Matbakh al-Ajami. Picture date: 2014 © UNESCO



## SDG 16: First full satellite survey of devastated ancient Aleppo raises recovery hopes

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 17 December 2018 - The first comprehensive survey of the devastation inflicted on the ancient Syrian city of Aleppo by years of urban warfare, has been published thanks to ground-breaking satellite imaging tools, developed by UN agencies – an essential first step towards its eventual reconstruction.

The [study](#), “Five Years of Conflict: The State of Cultural Heritage in the Ancient City of Aleppo,” was made possible thanks to the work of satellite imagery analysts from the UN Institute for Training and Research ([UNITAR](#)), and culture heritage experts from the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), working closely with historians, architects and archaeologists.

The technology allowed them to remotely assess the damage, immediately following the end of the years-long siege of east Aleppo in 2016. It also made it possible, for the first time, to monitor areas rendered inaccessible by continuing security challenges and restricted access to the city.

The study shows that, between 2014 and 2015, most of the historic buildings south of the ancient Citadel were destroyed or severely damaged, including the New Serail, Madrasa al-Sultaniyya, Hammam Yalbougha al-Nasiri and al-Khusrawiyya Complex. It provides assessments of 518 properties, including the Citadel and the city’s Great Mosque.

Introducing the report, Audrey Azouley, Director-General of UNESCO, said that the technology

provides a “remarkable tool with unmatched precision for documenting and understanding heritage” adding that it could also pave the way “for the eventual recovery of the city.”

[Aleppo's](#) history stretches back over 4,000 years, with a succession of civilizations, including Hittite, Greek, Roman and Ayyubid, leaving their mark on the city over the centuries. It is one of six Syrian World Heritage sites added to UNESCO's [List of World Heritage in Danger](#) in 2013.

Until it was engulfed by intense fighting in 2012 between Government and opposition forces, Aleppo was viewed as one of the best examples of urban conservation and preservation, said Ms. Azouley. Today, it lies largely in ruins, with its “invaluable centuries-old landmarks severely damaged or destroyed.” The report shows that 10 percent of the historic buildings of Aleppo have been destroyed and more than half the buildings assessed showed severe to moderate damage.

The eventual restoration of Aleppo, with the help of the technology developed by the UN, is highlighted by UNESCO as an important part of the process of healing communities in the wake of conflict and other crises. The agency has offered its assistance to the residents of the city in rebuilding their neighbourhoods, so that future generations can appreciate its unique heritage once conditions allow. This video, produced by UNESCO and Japanese broadcaster NHK, shows historic sites of Aleppo, as they were before the Syrian conflict.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

As in the earlier story, this is another fine example of how eye-in-the-sky technology can be used for good. But the full study is also a tragic reflection of the enormous damage caused by a higher strata of drivers, especially global geopolitical rivalries and power-shifts. The people making the decisions at that higher level do not give a damn about the human suffering they cause. I would strongly recommend downloading this study and using it to push for more initiatives to hold these ruthless people accountable. Wars and conflicts caused by “The Other Global Warming” have devastated many destinations over decades. It has to be brought to an end sometime.





# SDG 16:

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**UN affirms  
'historic' global  
compact to support  
world's refugees**



UNICEF/Nybo. A group of Rohingya refugee children cross a makeshift bamboo bridge in Kutupalong refugee settlement in southern Bangladesh, where hundreds of thousands of refugees are sheltering after being forced to flee their homes in Myanmar.



## USDG 16: UN affirms ‘historic’ global compact to support world’s refugees

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 17 December 2018 - The [United Nations General Assembly](#) affirmed a non-legally binding Global Compact on Refugees on Monday, marking the latest move by Member States to support the rights of over [68.5 million people have been forced to flee worldwide](#), including more than 25.4 million people who have crossed borders to become refugees.

An overwhelming number of majority States, 181, voted in favor of adopting the [compact](#), with the United States and Hungary opposing the move. The Dominican Republic, Eritrea and Libya abstained.

UN Refugee Agency ([UNHCR](#)) Chief, Filippo Grandi, said the pact was “historic” and speaking at an event at UN Headquarters in New York to mark the compact, noted it was the first time the Assembly has seen an agreement between and beyond States, that acknowledges the need to work collectively for the rights of refugees.

“In this world of ours, which often turns it back to people in need, that has shamefully politicized even the pain of exile, that has demonized and

continues to demonize refugees and migrants and sometimes even just foreigners, this compact, in synergy with the other compact, the compact on migration, can really represent tangibly, a new commitment to international cooperation,” said the UNHCR chief.

He said it represented “a new commitment to shared values of solidarity and the quest to just and sustainable solutions for disadvantaged people.”

This global compact for refugees, [which is separate from the newly-adopted Global Compact for Migration](#), aims to strengthen the international response to large movements of refugees and their protracted situations, and was prompted by the historic, [2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#), in which all 193 Member States agreed that the protection of refugees should be a shared responsibility.

The Declaration tasked UNHCR with authoring the refugee compact, which came to fruition after 18 months of extensive consultations between Member States, experts, civil society, and refugees.

Just last week, the [Global Compact for Migration](#), also non-legally binding, was adopted by 164 Governments at an international [conference in Marrakech](#), Morocco in a bid to support safe, orderly and regular migration.

This “great achievement for multilateralism,” as UN senior migration official, Ms. Lousie Arbour called it, specifically targets the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrants, which comprise a different group of people on the move than refugees. [More on that and the crucial differences, can be found here.](#)

Approximately 85 percent of refugees live in developing countries, according to UNHCR, where services are already strained. Though donors have been generous in financing aid to refugees, Mr. Grandi noted that the disproportionate burden on middle and low-income countries is evident, and leaves us “at the mercy of economic downturns.”

Thus, part of the compact’s [pledge](#) to joint action entails addressing the specific challenges faced by developing host countries.

In addition, Mr. Grandi urged States to re-evaluate the way refugees are supported to be more inclusive: “The image that we have of refugees is the refugee camp. We want to get away from that.”

Both the Global Compact on Migration and Global Compact on Refugees, surface a time of heightened division across the world and within societies, [Deputy Secretary-General](#) Amina

Mohammed said.

“In recent years we have seen a contagion of closed borders, contrary to national refugee and human rights law. Millions of refugees are facing years in exile, or risking their lives on dangerous journeys to an uncertain future. And that is why this global compact is such an important step,” she said.

Ms. Mohammed stressed that the effort “to shoulder our responsibilities toward refugees, to find solutions that respect their human rights, to provide them with hope, and to recognize the legal responsibility to protect and to support them,” are not only important goals in themselves, but play a critical role in achieving the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) by 2030, “that seriously leave no one behind.”

Adoption of the compact, is “not the end, but the beginning” of the international community’s work on the issue, general Assembly President, Maria Fernanda Espinosa declared. What’s left is implementation.

Echoing the call to further action, Mr. Grandi warned that the compact on refugees “is not a silver bullet that will solve all the problems,” but with concrete international engagement, could “be transformative.”

“Without this international cooperation we will not be able to face neither this all the other global challenges that await us in the future,” he added.

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

Refugees are the human cost of “The Other Global Warming”. People forced to flee their homes due to war and conflict caused by ruthless people with no regard for human life or suffering — just as long as they themselves are unaffected. Perhaps visitors should be taken on tours of refugee camps so that they can get a better picture of the reality on the ground. That will convert them into powerful peace activists and do far more good than boring, talk-shop peace conferences.





# SDG 17:

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**Most 'precious' and  
'scarce' resource  
of our time is  
dialogue, UN chief  
tells Doha policy  
forum**



UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe. Secretary-General António Guterres.

17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



## SDG 17: Most ‘precious’ and ‘scarce’ resource of our time is dialogue, UN chief tells Doha policy forum

United Nations, (UN News Centre) 16 December 2018 -- Following a productive two weeks of global dialogue for the United Nations and its Member States, alongside governments and advocates, [Secretary-General António Guterres](#), speaking in the Qatar capital, Doha, underscored the importance of international cooperation in the “enormous challenges” of our time, drawing the curtain on a job finished at Sunday’s [Doha Forum](#).

Recapping his recent participations in the successful adoption of the [Global Compact on Migration](#) in Marrakech, an [agreement](#) on a ‘rulebook’ in Poland laying out the way forward for the 2015 [Paris climate accord](#), and a [breakthrough](#) in Yemen peace talks in Sweden, Mr. Guterres said “each of these... underline a core reality in today’s world.”

“To put it simply: We face enormous challenges that can’t be solved by any country on its own,” he told attendees at the two-day meeting’s conclusion.

From Saturday to Sunday, policy leaders at the Doha Forum discussed international alliance, and addressed topics of terrorism, cybertechnology, and the media, among [others](#).

On the Forum’s sidelines, heads of the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism ([UNOCT](#)) and the State of Qatar, along with Vladimir Vorokonkov and Major General Abdul Aziz Al Ansaari, respectively, jointly signed

a Contribution Agreement whereby Qatar agreed to support UNOCT's counter-terrorism strategy implementation.

Qatar's contribution of \$75 million, which will be stretched over a period of five years, includes support for strengthening the counter-terror office's strategy, backing efforts to support victims of terrorism, and preventing violent extremism.

The commitment is one of a host of new agreements signed between Qatar and the UN on Sunday, Mr. Guterres shared during his briefing to journalists, and praised such strides as a "quantum leap" in the Qatar-UN relationship.

The funds for strengthening the UN's counter-terrorism activities were part of a full pledge from Qatar that amounted to \$500 million. There will also be agreements to provide annual support to UN Developmental Programme (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

In his [keynote address](#), Mr. Guterres said: "Perhaps the most precious – and increasingly scarce – resource in our world today is dialogue," he said, and added that more exchanges like those taking place at the Forum are needed, but dwindling trust is paralyzing the conversation. He said platforms like the Doha Forum, which nurse the exchange of ideas, are lacking in number, but vital.

"As I said at the [UN General Assembly](#), our world is suffering from a bad case of trust deficit disorder." "The world is more connected, yet societies are becoming more fragmented," he decried. "Challenges are growing outward while many people are turning inward."

"This is the ultimate paradox in today's world," he said, calling it a chaotic "in-between" period for world order, and pointing to fear as the ultimate driver.

"The best-selling brand in our world today is fear. It gets ratings. It wins votes. It generates clicks."

The UN's duty in conflict is that of "an honest broker," and "impartial element," Mr. Guterres explained to students at Hamad Bin Khalifa University as part of his visit to Doha.

[The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) sets ambitious goals for its Member States to tackle the complex challenges of our time, which the UN chief nominated as "the blueprint" for the important role of fair globalization.

Spotlighting climate change, Mr. Guterres said this challenge is a battle for our future, "and in this conflict, nature does not negotiate," but to our advantage, emerging technologies can help us overcome this scourge, so long as such developments are monitored.

To ensure the "pace and promise" of technology is responsibly maximized, he urged for investment in education, a new generation of support for people struggling to adapt, and a need for collective mobilization, to ensure technology will be "a force for good."

Mr. Guterres highlighted that just as the tech sector is transforming, so are our livelihoods; which encompass the work-life balance which will be "completely different in the future we are facing."

"We need an education, not to learn how to do things, but to learn how to learn because many of those that are today in schools and universities will have jobs that simply do not exist and are not even envisionable today."



He concluded his address on a hopeful note, applauding recent milestones by nations who have championed war and poverty through effective collaboration.

“When we work together, we can achieve great things for the good of all people.”

“International cooperation works. and that cooperation has never been more critical to repair broken trust and uphold dignity for one and all.”

## IMPORTANCE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM

What a powerful quote from the UN Secretary-General, “Our world is suffering from a bad case of trust deficit disorder.” Clearly, that is a challenge for the “health & wellness” sector in a geopolitical, as against physical, context. If the travel & tourism industry can adopt this quote as its new calling, it could go a long way towards walking the talk of its much-ballyhooed claim to be an “Industry of Peace.”

