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SDGs for All - March 2019 In Retrospect

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Vatican Encourages Faith Communities to Help Achieve SDGs



By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN | VATICAN CITY (IDN) – Much water has flown under the Tiber bridges since the Holy See declined an invitation in 1923 to join the League of Nations stating that its only competency was in matters of elucidation of questions of principle in morality and public international law.

Forty-one years later, the Holy See became a permanent observer state at the United Nations on April 6, 1964. Since then four Popes have addressed the UN General Assembly: Paul VI in 1965, John Paul II in 1979 and 1995, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in 2008, and Pope Francis in 2015. [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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UN Chief Calls for Urgent Action to Address Dangers Linked to Climate Change



By Caroline Mwangi

NEW YORK (IDN) – Concerned about rising global temperatures and disastrous consequences, UN Secretary-General António Guterres has called on Heads of State to attend the [Climate Action Summit](#) in

New York on September 23, and achieve positive change.

“Don’t come with a speech, come with a plan,” he said, adding: “This is what science says is needed. It is what young people around the globe are rightfully demanding.”

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Gender and Corruption: Where Do We Go from Here?



Viewpoint by M. Emilia Berazategui

The author is Director of Political Institutions and Government for [Poder Ciudadano](#). Her article was carried by [Transparency International](#).

LONDON (IDN) – In a world in which only six countries give women and men equal employment rights, where it will take 108 years to close the gender pay gap, and 202 years will be needed to bring about parity in the workplace, should we be surprised that corruption affects women disproportionately?

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Landmark Report Stresses Importance of South-South and Triangular Cooperation



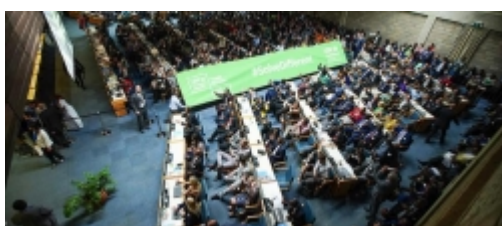
By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK | BUENOS AIRES (IDN) – South-South and triangular cooperation has triggered over decades the vigorous economic growth of countries of the global South such as Brazil, China, India and the Gulf States, and proved to be an important solution for many of today's development

challenges. It should, therefore, be seen as a critical complement to North-South cooperation, says a new report by the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP Group) and the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC).

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UN Environment Assembly Spells Out 'The Future We Want'



By Justus Wanzala

NAIROBI (IDN) – Global gross domestic product has doubled since 1970, enabling immense progress, and lifting of billions of people out of poverty. At the same time, this economic growth has been fueled by a

relentless demand for natural resources. At no point in time nor at any level of income, has our demand for natural resources wavered, notes the [Global Resources Outlook 2019](#).

"Our consume and throwaway models of consumption have had devastating impacts on our planet," says the report presented during the fourth session of the [United Nations Environment Assembly \(UNEA\)](#) in Nairobi, Kenya, March 11-15.

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'Water for All by 2030' Remains Little More than a Pious Wish



By Reinhard Jacobsen

VIENNA (IDN) – More than 2 billion people live without safe water at home. One in four



primary schools have no drinking water service, with pupils using unprotected sources or going thirsty. More than 700

children under five years of age die every day from diarrhea linked to unsafe water and poor sanitation. Globally, 80 percent of the people who have to use unsafe and unprotected water sources live in rural areas.

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A 'Level Playing Field' for Women and Girls Key to Achieving Sustainable Development Goals



By Caroline Mwangi

New York (IDN) – UN Member States have agreed to safeguard and improve women's and girls' access to social protection systems, public services and sustainable infrastructure, ensuring that their design and delivery is transformed to prevent discrimination and create a "level playing

field" for women and girls.

This is the upshot of the two weeks of intense dialogue, the [63rd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women \(CSW63\)](#), concluded March 22 in New York.

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New Global Initiative to Ensure the Future of Congo Basin Forest



By J C Suresh

TORONTO (IDN) – Stretching from the Gulf of Guinea in the west to the Rift Valley in the east, the Congo basin is the beating heart of African biodiversity. Spanning 530 million hectares across six countries – Cameroon, Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea,

Gabon and the Republic of the Congo – the basin contains some 70 per cent of the continent's forest cover and is home to one of every five species on our planet.

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Japan Funds UNIDO Projects in 9 Countries with \$5.8 Million



By Reinhardt Jacobsen

VIENNA (IDN) – Japan will contribute more than US\$5.8 million for sustainable development projects in Ethiopia, Gabon, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, South Sudan, the State of Palestine and Syria. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization ([UNIDO](#)) has welcomed an

official announcement to this effect.

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Germany Backs IIN Chief in Countering Autonomous Weapons



By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN (IDN) – Keeping humans in control of autonomous weapons and artificial intelligence is an important element of UN Secretary-General António Guterres' action plan to implement the Agenda for Disarmament, *Securing Our Common Future*, presented in May 2018.

"Essentially, the question is whether we are in control of technology or whether, ultimately, it controls us," said Foreign Minister Heiko Maas in his [remarks](#) on March 15 at the conference '2019 Capturing Technology. Rethinking Arms Control' at the German Foreign Office in Berlin. The development of fully autonomous killer robots, cyber weapons and new biological agents has created scenarios for which there are to date almost no internationally recognised rules, he added.

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New Report on Arms Control and the Convergence of Biology and Emerging Technologies



By Jaya Ramachandran

BERLIN | STOCKHOLM (IDN) – A new report has warned of the risks and challenges posed by the interaction of developments in biotechnology and advances in three emerging technologies: additive manufacturing (AM or so-called 3D printing), artificial intelligence (AI) and

robotics.

The report from the [Stockholm International Peace Research Institute \(SIPRI\)](#) cautions that the latest advances could increase the possibilities for the development, production and use of biological weapons. The existing biological arms control and non-proliferation governance framework, therefore, needs to be adapted to address the emerging security risks, says the report.

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UN Chief Emboldens the 'Fridays for Future' Climate Movement



By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – "My generation has failed to respond properly to the dramatic challenge of climate change. This is deeply felt by young people. No wonder they are angry," says UN Secretary-General António

Guterres in an opinion piece for [The Guardian](#), in the wake of unprecedented March 15 demonstrations by schoolchildren across the world against climate change inaction.

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Reflections on Evolving International Security Landscape



Viewpoint by A.L.A. Azeez



The writer is Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the UN in Geneva.

GENEVA (IDN) – The security landscape in most regions, as well as globally in general, is becoming increasingly constrained by the day. It is, therefore, timely to reflect on some trends and developments in the international security landscape, and to seek to persuade the parties or forces that shape them, to take all possible steps in the direction of assuring and strengthening international peace and security.

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New Study Shows Ups and Downs in Gender Equality



By Caroline Mwangi

NEW YORK (IDN) – This year's [International Women's Day on March 8](#) has been celebrated on an unprecedented scale by the United Nations and other inter-governmental organizations around the world. And, a new analysis shows improvements in gender equality. But there is a rather long way to go until gender parity

has become a reality.

According to the data presented in the 2019 edition of the biennial IPU-UN Women [map of Women in Politics](#), women's participation in political decision-making continues to rise slowly, with slight improvements since 2017.

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UN Commends Beijing Air Quality as Model for Other Cities



By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK | NAIROBI (IDN) – More than two decades after China's capital city Beijing began looking for ways to improve air quality in one of the largest and fastest growing cities in the developing world, its

successful efforts provide a model for other cities to follow, according to a new report.

Research by the [UN Environment Programme](#) and the Beijing Municipal Ecology and Environment Bureau (BEE) outlines how Beijing's air quality management programme has evolved, and makes recommendations for near, medium, and long-term steps that Beijing can take to maintain its momentum toward clean air.

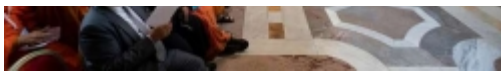
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World Religions Prepare for Global Development Summit



By Ramesh Jaura

VATICAN CITY (IDN) – Nearly six months before the heads of state and government convene to review the implementation of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) at the UN General Assembly's 'SDG Summit' in September, the world religions



Summit in September, the world religions have tasked themselves with elaborating "a road map or lines of action that can connect

religious contributions to the implementation of the SDGs".

"The idea is to work together on this joint 'journey' in order to raise ambition and forge a new global solidarity," Cardinal Peter K. Turkson, a Ghanaian cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church, who heads the [Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development](#), said in an interview with IDN. | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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Food Sans Essential Micronutrients Causes 'Hidden Hunger'



By Brenda Wawa

This article first appeared on Africa Renewal, December 2018-March 2019 issue.

NAIROBI (IDN | INPS) – For years, boosting agricultural production was believed to be the solution to world hunger and malnourishment. But years of intensive farming with chemical fertilizers and pesticides has done little to move the needle on food insecurity, health metrics or life expectancy.

Today, experts have identified a new kind of hunger – one caused not by lack of food but by food that lacks essential micronutrients necessary for growth and development.

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Smart Tech Must Go with the Fundamentals for Its Uptake



Viewpoint by Ibrahim Thiaw

The author is Under-Secretary General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). This OpEd is issued in the context of the International Women's Day observed on 8 March 2019, and the UN's focus on Science and

Technology that enhances gender equality, innovation for change, and is smart.
– *The Editor*

BONN (IDN) – Science and technology offer exciting pathways for rural women to tackle the challenges they face daily. Innovative solutions for rural women can, for example, reduce their workload, raise food production and increase their participation in the paid labour market.

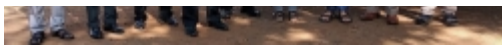
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Universities Need Going to The Grassroots to Help Achieve SDGs



By Kalinga Seneviratne

SHANTINIKETAN, India (IDN) – With [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) the new trend among development communicators, are universities in the developing world equipped to assist in achieving these goals, by educating young communicators in culturally appropriate



communicators in culturally appropriate approaches to development and

sustainability?

This is a question that was addressed at a three-day conference held at the famous university founded by Indian Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.

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Ushering in an Era of Peace and Disarmament



By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN | TOKYO (IDN) – "Amid the continued escalation of global challenges, crises that were previously unthinkable are now becoming reality throughout the world." This is the backdrop to a wide-ranging proposal eminent Buddhist philosopher, educator, author, and nuclear disarmament advocate Dr. Daisaku Ikeda has put

forward.

'Toward a New Era of Peace and Disarmament: A People-Centered Approach' by Dr. Ikeda, President of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), is a treasure of wisdom and knowledge approaching issues through an interdisciplinary lens, taking into consideration the interconnected nature of themes.

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Women Leaders Call for Gender Equality and Inclusion



By Caroline Mwanga

NEW YORK (IDN) – In the lead up to **International Women's Day on March 8**, twenty-six high ranking female officials who have worked across the United Nations have penned an open letter to world leaders calling for greater investment in policies and legal and social frameworks to achieve

gender equality and inclusion.

The group notes in the letter that despite progress there are concerns that in some places the basic rights of women are interpreted as direct and destabilizing challenges to existing power structures.

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Ghana Hosts Africa Climate Week as First of Three Regional Climate Events



By Rita Joshi

BONN (IDN) – The Africa Climate Week, which is being hosted by Ghana from March 18–22 in Accra, is the first of three annual regional climate events this year – the latter two being the Latin America & Caribbean Climate Week and the Asia Pacific Climate

Week.

According to the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate

Change ([UNFCCC](#)), the collective goal of these Climate Weeks is to support the implementation of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the [Paris Agreement](#) and climate action to deliver on the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). In so doing, they bring together a diverse array of international stakeholders in the public and private sectors around the common goal of enhancing climate action.

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'Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change' on International Women's Day



By Caroline Mwanga

NEW YORK (IDN) – UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka has stressed the need for "transformative shifts, integrated approaches and new solutions"

to achieve gender equality, as envisaged in Goal 5 of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#), the road map for a sustainable future by 2030.

"Current trajectories show existing interventions do not suffice," she said ahead of the celebration of International Women's Day on March 8, 2019, at which UN Women is celebrating its 2019 theme of "[Think Equal, Build Smart, Innovate for Change](#)", along with hosting hundreds of festivities around the world through the organization's global network.

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