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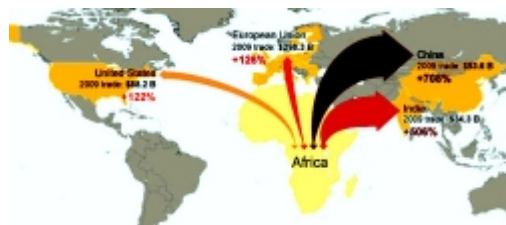
We hope that you are healthy and doing well in these exceptional circumstances.

SDGs for All - March 2020 In Retrospect

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Articles in this monthly newsletter
can also be found on our news website [IDN-InDepthNews](#).

African Ministers Expect 'Break the Glass Moment' Without Major Debt Relief



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – Multilateral lenders and investors are being asked to pony up a modest stimulus package that would halt the spread of the coronavirus in Africa and keep economies from crashing under the

weight of debt-servicing costs.

African finance ministers, at a virtual conference on March 23, calculated that an injection of \$100 billion – including \$44 billion in debt-servicing wavers – would put off the likelihood of a recession and protect growth rates from falling further behind – now at 1.8% from 3.2% earlier in March.

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COVID-19: A Battle Plan for Ensuring Global Food Supplies



[Africa Renewal](#) Talks to [FAO](#) Chief Economist Maximo Torero Cullen

NEW YORK (IDN) – The COVID-19 pandemic has put the world on a crisis footing, with unprecedented actions to

restrict movements and plans for radical deployment of public funds to combat the threat posed by a novel coronavirus that knows no boundaries. Success will entail coherent and robust plans for our food systems. [FAO](#) Chief Economist Maximo Torero Cullen outlines a framework for how countries can think about and craft these plans.

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UN Aims at Writing A Greener Story in Asia and the Pacific



Viewpoint by Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana.

The writer is the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of ESCAP.

BANGKOK (IDN) – Rising economic prosperity and poverty reduction may not tell the whole story of progress in Asia and the Pacific. Telling signs in the natural world recount a narrative that is far from complete. This year has been particularly affected by the COVID-19 global health pandemic, with devastating impacts on our health and the economy. Yet, building on its achievements, the region must continue its drive towards a sustainable conclusion.

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UN Chief's Call for Global Ceasefire Gathering Support



By Radwan Jakeem

NEW YORK (IDN) – In a clarion call for "an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world", UN Secretary-General António Guterres on March 23 urged warring parties across the world to lay down their weapons in support of the bigger battle against COVID-19: the common enemy that is now

threatening all of humankind. The ceasefire would allow humanitarians to reach populations that are most vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19, which first emerged in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, and has now been reported in more than 180 countries. (P33) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [THAI](#)

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New UN Report Warns of Adverse Impacts of Climate Change



By Jaya Ramachandran

GENEVA (IDN) – A new UN study has warned of accelerating climate change on land, sea and in the atmosphere. Compiled by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), parented by the United Nations

[Economic and Social Council](#), the report documents impacts of weather and climate events on socio-economic development, human health, migration and displacement, food security and land and marine ecosystems.

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The World's Response to COVID-19 Has Slashed CO2 Emissions



Viewpoint by Simone Abram*

DURHAM, UK (IDN) – How do you respond to a crisis? It's obvious that the response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been dramatically different to anything provoked by repeated scientific warnings about climate change. The many organisations that declared climate emergencies

throughout 2019 and 2020 have so far enacted nothing like the scale and speed of action to limit the spread of coronavirus.

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COVID-19: Resources Needed for Gender and Social Inclusion



Women Front and Centre

Viewpoint by Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

UN Under-Secretary-General and [UN Women](#) Executive Director.

NEW YORK (IDN) – One thing is clear about the COVID-19 pandemic, as stock markets tumble, schools and universities close, people stockpile supplies and home becomes a different and crowded space: this is not just a health issue. It is a profound shock to our societies and economies, exposing the deficiencies of public and private arrangements that currently function only if women play multiple and underpaid roles.

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Water Security: A Lifeline for People and Planet



Viewpoint by Inge Kaul*

BERLIN (IDN) – In the face of upsurge of the coronavirus, [World Water Day 2020](#) may seem to have no relevance. But the fact is that water is vital for life on earth. It is inextricably linked to climate change, protecting health and saving lives. Water is

essential for practicing hand hygiene and combating the spread of COVID-19 and many other infectious diseases.

Therefore, I am deeply concerned about the relatively low-level of attention and priority accorded to water at the practical-political level.

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Massive African Infrastructure Projects Often Hurt, Not Help, Local People



Viewpoint by Tom Goodfellow*

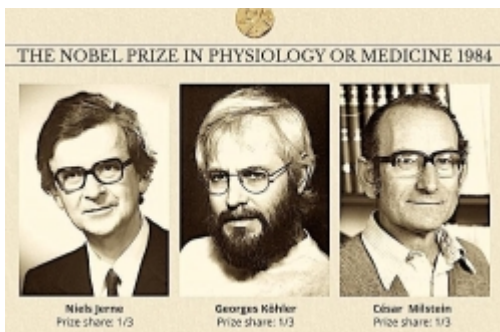
SHEFFIELD (IDN) – Big infrastructure projects are always controversial. Yet in parts of the world associated with severely deficient infrastructure, the positive value of major infrastructure investments is often taken as a given.

This assumption needs to be subjected to much greater scrutiny, as I argue in [new research](#) that explores the narrative of Africa’s “infrastructure gap” and why different bodies are rushing to “plug” it.

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A COVID-19 Vaccine Quickly and Cheaply Is Possible

Viewpoint by John Seaton, August*



viewpoint by JOHN SCALES AVERY

The writer is a theoretical chemist noted for his research publications in quantum chemistry.

COPENHAGEN (IDN) – Public health experts say that if the COVID-19 epidemic is not successfully contained, it could become a global pandemic, perhaps spreading to 80% of the world's population.

With a 1% mortality rate, this would mean that 70 million people would die of the disease. With a 2% mortality rate, the total number of deaths would be twice that number, 140 million people. Comparable numbers of people have died in the tragic wars and pandemics of the past. There is a serious danger that it might happen again.

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Our Addiction to Fossil Fuels Can Kill Us



Viewpoint by John Scales Avery*

COPENHAGEN (IDN) – The Industrial Revolution marked the start of a massive human use of fossil fuels. The stored energy from several hundred years of plant growth began to be used at roughly a million times the rate at which it had been formed. The effect on human society was like that of

a narcotic. There was a euphoric (and totally unsustainable) surge of growth of both population and industrial production.

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25 Years on From Beijing, COVID-19 Highlights Profound Interconnectedness & Persisting Inequalities



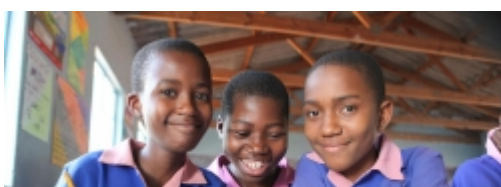
Viewpoint by Anita Nayar and Aishu Balaji

Anita Nayar is Director and Aishu Balaji Program Coordinator of [Regions Refocus](#). This article is based on the civil society statement delivered at the opening of CSW64/Beijing+25 by Anita Nayar, also Co-Chair of the Gender and Trade Coalition.

NEW YORK (IDN) – On March 9, 2020, New York-based government delegates met at the United Nations (UN) under very different circumstances than originally imagined: with a reduced interim program that excluded global civil society and country-based government representatives due to the postponement of the 64th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64) under threat of COVID-19.

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New Laws Allow Zimbabwe to Fine or Jail to Keep Kids in School



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) — Zimbabwe is experimenting with a bold attempt to make parents prioritize education and bring down drop-out rates



drop-out rates.

Harare has amended its laws to make the first 12 years of schooling compulsory. Children are now required by law to stay in school for an extra five years to 16 years of

age.

It is also now an offence to expel children on the grounds of pregnancy or non-payment of fees.

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Unlocking the Potential of Tanzania's Smallholder Farmers



By Kizito Makoye

IRINGA, Tanzania (IDN) – When Osmund Ueland met a group of farmers to pitch his idea about starting a goat milk project at a village in Tanzania's southern highlands to help poor families improve nutrition and boost incomes, he elicited loud applause from the crowd.

Huddled in a dimly lit mud-walled house in wind-swept Masukanzi village, Kilolo district, Iringa region, local farmers unanimously approved the idea saying it was a good step to take for curbing malnutrition and fighting poverty.

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New UN Women Report Warns That Gender Equality Is Under Threat — Major Women Conference Falls Prey to Coronavirus



By Caroline Mwangi

NEW YORK (IDN) —While a new [UN Women](#) report warns that progress towards gender equality is faltering and hard-won advances are being reversed, the 64th session of the [UN Commission on the](#)

[Status of Women \(CSW\)](#) has fallen prey to concerns regarding coronavirus disease (COVID-19). CSW is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by [ECOSOC resolution 11\(II\) of 21 June 1946](#).

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The Civil Society Prepared for Intra-Afghan Peace



By Bernhard Schell

DOHA | KABUL (IDN) — Women, youth as well as community and religious leaders in Afghanistan have been craving for peace and earnestly preparing for it long before the United States signed a landmark

agreement with the Taliban on February 29.

The deal sets the stage to end America's longest war stretching over more than 18 years and allow President Donald Trump to begin the promised withdrawal of American troops. U.S. forces and their allies have been present in Afghanistan since 2001. (P32) [ITALIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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