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## SDGs for All - May 2018 In Retrospect

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### Multilateralism in Action is Something We Need to See More Of

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By Miroslav Lajčák

*Miroslav Lajčák is President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly. Following are extensive excerpts from his Statement at 74th session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with focus on Inequality in the Era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on 14 May 2018 in Bangkok, Thailand. – The Editor.*

BANGKOK (IDN-INPS) – In 2015, we made a promise. We committed to leaving no one behind. And, the theme of this session is a stark reminder of our promise: Inequality in the Era of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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### Kazakhstan Promotes Sustainable Development Goals in Global Diplomacy and International Activities

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By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – When Kazakhstan took over the presidency of the UN Security Council in January 2018, it set out with a seven-point agenda: a world free of nuclear weapons; preventing and ending military confrontations at regional and global levels; making Central Asia a model for a regional zone of peace, security, cooperation, and development; reaching peace and security in Africa; fighting international terrorism and violent extremism; advancing the nexus between security and development; and adapting the UN system to the needs of the 21st century.

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### Africa Committed To Gender Equality, Women's Empowerment

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By Jeffrey Moyo

JOHANNESBURG (IDN) – Twenty-nine year old Ruramai Gwata had no reason to celebrate the International Women’s Day observed on March 8 every year. She lay in hospital nursing her wounds following a severe assault by her husband over a domestic dispute.

While licking her wounds two months later, as the world commemorated Mother's Day, Gwata was plagued by agonising memories of how her two children witnessed her abuse by her husband.

Jobless Gwata, though a qualified jobless teacher, is by no means a rare exception in Africa. Because of the fate of women like Gwata the continent’s bid to achieve the United Nations [Sustainable Development Goal 5](#) by accomplishing gender equality and empowering all women and girls by the year 2030, threatens to remain a pipe dream. (P05) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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## [The Road to Climate Summit in Poland Leads Through Bangkok](#)



By Jaya Ramachandran

BONN (IDN) – Since the climate negotiations in Bonn failed to pave the way for a successful United Nations climate summit COP24 in Poland in December, an

extra round is being convened from September 3-8 in Bangkok.

Commenting the negotiations in Bonn, concluded on May 10, the Least Developed Countries (LDC) Group Chair Gebru Jember Endalew expressed concern at "the lack of urgency" to move the negotiations forward, despite the fact that "it is time to look at the bigger picture, see the severe impacts that climate change is having across the world, and rise to the challenge."

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## [UN Predicts Loss Of \\$43 Trillion Through Land Degradation](#)



By Jutta Wolf

BERLIN | BONN (IDN) – Land degradation has reached staggering proportions. If the current pace continues unabated, a gargantuan amount of \$43,000,000,000,000 (\$43 trillion) will be lost to the world economy by the year 2050, warns the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification ([UNCCD](#)).

But the anticipated colossal loss can be avoided by spending \$4.6 trillion on addressing a combination of human-induced processes adversely affecting the biophysical environment and huge stretches of fertile lands.

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## [Access to End-Use Technologies Key to Catalysing Development in Africa](#)



By Joshua Masinde

NAIROBI (IDN) – Productive use of energy holds the key to livelihood transformation in Africa’s rural areas. Small industries could improve their production processes and efficiency if they had better access to electricity and technologies.

Without electricity, rural micro-enterprises make do with labour intensive and time-consuming manual tools, and often pass up many opportunities for value addition or product diversification.

Satisfying the need for power of commercial enterprises presents an opportunity for private sector players such as [JUMEME](#), a Tanzanian company that develops solar-powered mini-grids to connect businesses and households in remote areas. (P04) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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## UN Climate Talks Show Business Support For Paris Agreement



By Jaya Ramachandran

BONN (IDN) – Over 700 leading businesses around the world, together representing 2.62 gigatons of emissions equivalent to the total annual emissions of [India](#), have made strategic climate commitments through the

'We Mean Business' coalition's [Take Action](#) campaign.

Organizers of the [Global Climate Action Summit](#) (GCAS) to be held in San Francisco from September 12-14, 2018 have provided new evidence of how cities, states, regions, businesses and investors are taking climate ambition to the next level. In doing so, they are helping to build momentum for a successful outcome for the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland (COP24) from December 3-14.

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## Parliament Moves To Block UK As Safe Haven For Dirty Money



By Robert Johnson

LONDON (IDN) – An estimated \$21 to \$32 trillion of private financial wealth is located, untaxed or lightly taxed, in secrecy jurisdictions around the world as the [Financial Secrecy Index](#) names tax havens, which play a key role in facilitating the illicit flow of money across borders.

From the [Lava Jato](#) scandal to the Panama and Paradise Papers, time and again attention has been drawn to the pernicious role of offshore territories. In fact, if counted together, the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories and Crown dependencies would top the Financial Secrecy Index, given the staggering scale of their undisclosed financial activities.

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## Young People Head SDG Publicity in Iceland



By Lowana Veal

REYKJAVIK (IDN) – Iceland has decided to spearhead publicity for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by setting up a 12-person council of young people aged between 13 and 18, under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

Over 140 young people applied for the 12 places and, according to Nilsina Larsen Einarsdottir, coordinator of the project, "all of them had many brilliant ideas, so the choice

was extremely difficult."

Einarsdottir, who works with UNICEF in Iceland as a specialist in child and youth participation, has teamed up with the PMO for the project.

Another set of young people will be recruited next year for the same purpose. (P03) [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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## A Ugandan Brings Home The Value Of Neglected Minerals



By Prossy Nandudu

KAMPALA (ACP-IDN) – With the African population expected to increase by roughly 50 percent over the next 18 years to over 1.8 billion in 2035, demands for mineral resources will also climb sharply to meet the need for additional housing units, roads,

energy and other urban infrastructure using development minerals, averred Dr Patrick Gomes, Secretary General of the [African, Caribbean, Pacific \(ACP\) Group of States](#).

"In most ACP countries, growth rates are recorded due to the construction, mining and transport sectors. Interventions in this sector may be an effective way to help countries achieve the UN's [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) by 2030," he told a high-level ministerial meeting of the Group at the ACP Secretariat early this year in Brussels.

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## U.S.-Led NATO Tops Global Military Expenditure Of \$1.7 Trillion



By Ramesh Jaura

BERLIN | STOCKHOLM (IDN) – Countries around the world are increasing their military expenditure. While the 29 [NATO](#) members together account for 52 per cent of world spending and the United States continues to have the highest military

expenditure among them, China, India and Saudi Arabia are contributing the lion's share of the continuing growth.

Total military expenditure rose to \$1739 billion in 2017. Though this whopping amount marked a marginal increase of 1.1. percent on 2016, it comprised 2.2 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) or \$230 per person, according to new figures from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute ([SIPRI](#)).

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