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## [Sustainable Development at Risk in E. Europe, Central Asia](#)

By Jaya Ramachandran

BERLIN | BRUSSELS (IDN) - Unless adequate steps are taken with relentless determination, the core objective of the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#) agreed by all member states of the United Nations in September 2015, which recommend that "no one be left behind", will not be achieved in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

This is the crux of a United Nations report titled '[Progress at Risk](#)', published on October 12 in Brussels. Goals 8 and 10 of the SDGs – aiming to "promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all" and "reduce inequality within and among countries" – are being ignored. (P31) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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## [Arctic Circle Assembly in Iceland Discusses Sustainability](#)

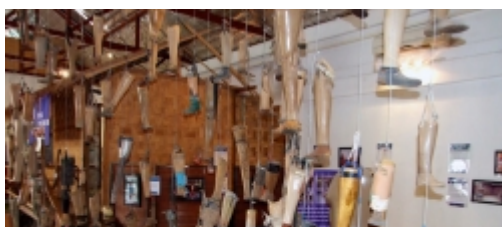
By Lowana Veal

REYKJAVIK (IDN) - With over 2,000 participants, including 400 speakers, the fourth [Arctic Circle Assembly](#) in Iceland's capital Reykjavik was a hive of activity and networking on everything to do with the Arctic. The event has become the largest Arctic event globally.

The concept of the gathering October 7-9 was devised by Olafur Ragnar Grimsson, who until a few months ago had been President of Iceland and had put considerable time into Arctic matters and climate change. Grimsson still plays a central role in the Assembly. (P30) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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## [Laos Adds SDG18 to Handle Unexploded American Bombs](#)



By Kalinga Seneviratne

VIENTIANE (IDN) – U.S. President Barack Obama's early September visit to Laos helped to focus attention on one of the most horrendous war crimes in history, the bombing of the small landlocked Southeast



Bombing of the small nation of Southeast Asian country during the Indochina War in the 1960s and 1970s, and its massive human and development costs.

The Laotians made use of the visit of both Obama and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon for the ASEAN and East Asia Summits to launch their own Sustainable Development Goal 18 to reduce the impact of unexploded ordnance (UXO) on development and economic activities.

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## Water Crisis a Challenge in South Africa's Squatter Camps



By Jeffrey Moyo

JOHANNESBURG (ACP-IDN) – For South Africans living in slums crowded with makeshift homes standing side by side, residents battle to draw water from the very few water taps available.

Like countries the world over, South Africa is mandated to achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all by 2030, but for many South Africans like 24-year old Thembisa Mzwakhe living in Diepkloof, South Africa's populous slum area in Johannesburg, growing up in the shanty area with inadequate water supplies has become normal.

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## Nutrition Insecurity Impedes Food Security in Africa



By Justus Wanzala

NAIROBI (ACP-IDN) - Due to a rapid increase in population in African countries, boosting food production through increasing crops yields and livestock production to eliminate hunger is attracting the attention of governments.

However it is emerging that as Africa tackles food security challenges, it must also fight poor nutrition. Stakeholders in the agriculture observe that food and nutrition security issues require a multi-pronged approach that brings on board farmers, policy makers and researchers.

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## Bold Steps Agreed to Make Land Resilient to Degradation



By IDN-INPS Africa Bureau

NAIROBI (IDN) – A landmark meeting of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has decided to ramp up global efforts to curb desertification and drought that are projected to force 135 million to migrate in the next 30 years.

The fifteenth session of the Committee of the Review of Implementation of the UN

Convention to Combat Desertification (CRIC 15) concluded its three-day meeting on October 20 in Nairobi, Kenya, with the adoption of an outcome aimed at intensifying efforts to combat desertification.

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## OPEC and UN Climate Officials Move To Build Bridges

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By Jaya Ramachandran

BERLIN | BONN (IDN) – [OPEC](#), the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)) that are known to have been at loggerheads

for nearly two decades appear to be building bridges just a few days after the Paris Agreement reached the threshold for entry into force on October 5.

In the run-up to the UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakech, Morocco from November 7 to 18, OPEC Secretary-General Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo visited Bonn to meet with UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa "to enhance cooperation between the UNFCCC and OPEC and exchange views on recent developments".

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## Rural Women Crucial to Achieving Global Development Goals

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By Jaya Ramachandran

NEW YORK (IDN) - Rural women make up 25 per cent of the world's population and in developing countries they comprise 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force that produces much of the world's Food.

They  
are

therefore critical to the success of almost all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), as they all have gender equality and women's empowerment at their core.

Rural women constitute [the backbone of rural communities](#), where, "and in many households they have the key responsibility for food security, education opportunities and healthcare", as the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has stressed.

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## UN Has Good and Bad News for the Poor

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By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) - Those in their late 20s but still living in poverty have been assured that the United Nations continues to have them on its radar. Though recent estimates show that despite significant gains since 2002 – the number of people living below

the poverty line dropped by half – 1 in 8 people still live in extreme poverty, including 800 million people who do not have enough to eat.

An estimated 2.4 billion people have no access to improved sanitation, 1.1 billion people have no access to electricity and 880 million people live in urban slums. In fact opportunities continue to remain scarce for the world's most vulnerable people – 59 million children of primary school age are out of school and the youth unemployment rate is 15 per cent, more than three times the rate of adults.

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## Need for Food and Agriculture to Adjust to Climate Change

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By Ronald Joshua

GENEVA | ROME (IDN) - Climate change, hunger and poverty must be addressed together in order to achieve the [sustainable development goals](#) set by the international community: this is the clarion call emerging from this year's World Food Day celebrations in Rome and in many countries.

At the global [World Food Day](#) ceremony on October 14, FAO Director-General José Graziano declared: "Higher temperatures and erratic weather patterns are already undermining the health of soils, forests and oceans on which agricultural sectors and food security depend."

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