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Data, Evidence Take Centre Stage at Adolescent Health Congress



By Stella Paul

NEW DELHI (IDN) – For three years, 13-year-old migrant Manasa spent nine hours a day picking chilli on a neighbour's farm in southern India's Guntur district.

But when a team of local health activists conducting a door-to-door survey in her village in the summer of 2015 found that students had stopped attending school, the finding was shared with a senior official in the provincial government who ordered the village heads to crack down on those employing children on their farms.

Along with 20 others, Manasa was rescued and sent back to school where she is now in her fifth year and dreams of becoming a teacher some day.

Across India and the world, credible data and evidence gathered by the governments and NGOs have been helping improve the lives and health of thousands of adolescents like Manasa. (P30) [ITALIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT](#)
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No Real Progress Toward Gender Equality Since October 2000



By Santo D. Banerjee

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) – While normative frameworks to empower and protect women in conflict situations have made steady advancement in the last 17 years since the adoption of a landmark resolution by the Security Council, real progress in women's meaningful engagement in all phases of peacebuilding and their protection from

abuse and exploitation are seriously lagging.

The representatives of UN member states at the ministerial and diplomatic levels agreed during a 10-hour Security Council debate on October 27 on 'Women,

Peace and Security' that progress on the ground must be accelerated by way of more funding for gender expertise in peacebuilding.

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Mayors, Innovators Explore Solutions for City Sustainability



By A.D. McKenzie

PARIS (IDN) – As thousands of Parisians headed to work on a recent Monday morning, an underground train in the Eiffel Tower area clanked to a halt, with the driver announcing an accident involving a member of the public on the tracks. Commuters had to quit the vehicle, scrambling to find

alternative means of getting to their destinations.

The irritation and confusion were palpable, as streams of people exited the station. But for those who could cycle, Paris provides a public bike-sharing system, and dozens rushed to the bicycle stands, even as others headed to nearby bus stops or made the decision to walk.

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Traditional Knowledge and Education Major Themes at Arctic Circle Assembly



By Lowana Veal

REYKJAVIK (IDN) – “Islanders have nothing to do with climate change though they may suffer the most,” Nainoa Thompson from the Polynesian Voyaging Society told an Arctic Circle seminar focusing on global perspectives on traditional knowledge, science and climate change. Thompson comes from Hawaii, but his co-speakers

came from Thailand, Chad, Fiji, Kenya and Norwegian Lapland.

The plight of South Pacific islanders was one of the main themes of this year's [Arctic Circle Assembly](#), organised in Reykjavik for the fifth consecutive year. This year's event (held from October 13 to 15) was particularly broad in scope, with a choice of 105 breakout sessions (seminars) as well as speeches and panel discussions. (P29) [INDONESIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [KOREAN TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [TAGALOG](#)

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Conference on Eritrea Stresses the Need to Protect Refugees



By Klara Smits

BRUSSELS (IDN) – More than 30 organizations gathered in Brussels at the conference on '[Eritrea and the Ongoing Refugee Crisis](#)' have expressed "deep concern" about the remarks by Donald Tusk, President of the European Council,

that now there is "a real chance of closing the Central Mediterranean route" with a view to halting the flow of refugees from the Horn of Africa. Tusk was commenting the [conclusions](#) of the European Council meeting.

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NEPAD Critical to Africa's Development, Peace and Security



By Ronald Joshua

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) – Despite instability and security challenges, ranging from human and drug trafficking to terrorism and the illicit flow of resources away from the continent, the New Partnership for Africa's Development – now fully embedded in the development paradigms of both the United Nations and the African Union –

remains the "rallying point" in Africa's pursuit of growth.

The partnership, known as [NEPAD](#), is particularly critical in the areas of social and economic development. The recent finalization of the [Tripartite Free Trade Area agreement](#) is an important step that would harmonize three sub-regional blocs, which previously had their own rules and models for trade.

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Cuban Youth Mastering the Art of Economic Improvisation



By Julia Rainer

TRINIDAD, Cuba (IDN) – Trinidad, one of the most popular cities in Cuba, is a place where time seems to stand still. At least that is what the thousands of tourists who come here every year from all over the world are made to believe.

Colonial cathedrals and majestic houses have been guarding the city for hundreds of

years and are beautifully restored as if time had never passed. Indeed, the picturesque city – together with the marvellous surrounding sugarcane plantations – were declared [UNESCO world cultural heritage](#) in 1988.

It is part of Trinidad's unique charm that nothing is supposed to change – a concept that can be transferred to Cuba's tourism strategy as a whole. (P28) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [CHINESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SPANISH](#)

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UN Chief Opts for Preventive Diplomacy Over Post-Conflict Peacekeeping



By Shanta Roy

NEW YORK (IDN) – Faced with an increasing number of unresolved political and military crises – including in Syria, Yemen, Afghanistan, Cyprus, Kashmir, Palestine, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – UN Secretary-General António Guterres has appointed a High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation to

guide him on the road ahead.

The primary mandate of the Board will be preventive diplomacy – based on the age-old axiom that prevention (diplomacy) is far better than the cure (post

age-old axiom that prevention (diplomacy) is far better than the cure (post-conflict peacekeeping).

The creation of the new Board has been prompted mostly by the paralysis of the 15-member Security Council – the UN’s most influential body with power to declare war and peace – which remains deadlocked even as the five veto-wielding permanent members, namely the U.S., UK, France, Russia and China, are more pre-occupied protecting their own political, economic and military interests than saving the world at large. (P27) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [KOREAN TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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Forum Calls for More Support to African Entrepreneurs, Youth



By A.D. McKenzie

PARIS (IDN) – Africa is the world’s most entrepreneurial region, according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development ([OECD](#)), but “manufacturing is receding”.

To discuss solutions as well as highlight some of the challenges facing the continent, the organisation’s [17th International Economic Forum on Africa](#) brought together government leaders, businesspeople, civil society and others in Paris on October 4, with a focus on entrepreneurship and industrialisation.

“Of the 25 countries with the strongest economic growth between 2004 and 2014, 10 were African,” says the Paris-based OECD. Yet, “not enough jobs have been created for the rapidly expanding youth population” and “growth has not been inclusive enough,” the organisation adds.

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Giving Visibility – and Land Rights – to the Indigenous



By Fabíola Ortiz

STOCKHOLM (IDN) – Indigenous peoples are all but invisible on the development agenda but a hoped for change is on the cards with the launch of the world’s first and only funding institution to support the efforts of local and native communities to secure rights over their lands and resources.

“Include us, so that we can protect our lands for our children and protect the planet’s biodiversity for all the world’s children,” said by Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples during the launch. Recognising the land rights of native and traditional peoples is a low-cost solution toward achieving the world’s development, environment and climate agendas. (P26) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SPANISH](#)

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UN Observes Mahatma Gandhi's 148th Birthday Reaffirming Commitment to Non-Violence



By Joan Erakit

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) - During a country



music festival outside of the Mandalay Bay hotel and casino in Las Vegas, a gunman opened fire on concertgoers killing 50 and wounding over 200. Hours later, some 2230

miles away, the United Nations commemorated the *International Day of Non-Violence* at its headquarters on October 2, remembering Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence, born 148 years ago.

According to General Assembly resolution [A/RES/61/271](#) of June 15, 2007, which established the commemoration, the International Day is an occasion to "disseminate the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness". The resolution reaffirms "the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence" and the desire "to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence".

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Orphans of Conflict in DR Congo Learning a Brazilian Martial Art to Overcome Pain



By Fabíola Ortiz

GOMA (IDN) - Since February this year, 16-year old Melvin* lives in a shelter for former child soldiers in the suburbs of Goma, the capital city of North Kivu province in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). He belongs to a small community.

His story resembles that of many Congolese boys living in the faraway communities in

eastern DRC. He was abducted from his home village to forcibly join the Nyatura rebels – a Mayi-Mayi ethnic community-led armed group founded in 2010 mainly by the Congolese Hutus. Among the human rights violations they have been accused of is the recruitment of child soldiers – one of the most heinous crimes they have committed.

It is two years now that the introverted Melvin, who has lost track of his family, has not been able to return to his community. He is likely to be one among thousands of orphans from the conflict. (P25) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [SPANISH](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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