

This e-mail contains graphics, if you don't see them » [view it online](#).



Visit 'Striving for People, Planet and Peace'

Numbers 8 & 9 | 2017

(With articles published in November & December 2017)

Published by the [International Press Syndicate](#) Group
in cooperation with the [Global Cooperation Council](#)

UN Expert Reveals Shocking Facts about Poverty in the U.S.



By J C Suresh

TORONTO (IDN) – More than one in every eight Americans, numbering 40 million, equal to 12.7 % of the population, are living in poverty, and almost half of those – 18.5 million – in abysmal poverty, according to a new report.

Though the United States is one of the world's richest, most powerful and technologically innovative countries, "neither its wealth nor its power nor its technology is being harnessed to address the situation," stresses Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights in his statement on a two-week visit to the USA.

Alston, an international law scholar and human rights practitioner, is John Norton Pomeroy Professor of Law at New York University School of Law, and co-Chair of the law school's Center for Human Rights and Global Justice. (P39)

[JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [KOREAN TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SPANISH](#)

[Read More](#)

The Price of Forest Degradation and Biodiversity Loss for Livelihoods



By Fabíola Ortiz

BONN (IDN) – Forest degradation and biodiversity loss carry a very heavy price for climate and people's livelihoods. Restoring forests matters when it comes to growing resilience to climate variation and securing a healthy environment for future generations. This was the main message delivered by experts and community leaders

who met in Bonn (December 19-20, 2017) to discuss a more sustainable path to conservation.

“We should stop seeing indigenous peoples, natural resources and forests as a problem. We could see them as a solution,” said Robert Nasi, director general of the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) which hosted the [Global Landscapes Forum](#), a large science-based platform on sustainable land use. (P38) [CHINESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [ITALIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SPANISH](#)

[Read More](#)

U.S. Politics Increasingly Governed by Policy of Unilateralism



By Rodney Reynolds

NEW YORK (IDN) – The politics of the Trump administration are being increasingly governed by the twin policies of unilateralism and isolationism.

After Donald Trump was elected president in November 2016, he withdrew from a historic 2016 climate change agreement signed by 195 countries – and the only

signatory to do so.

And this year, he announced plans to dilute the 2015 Iranian nuclear deal signed by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (UNSC), namely the U.S., UK, France, China and Russia, plus Germany and the 28-member European Union (EU) – much against warnings by all the other signatories. (P37) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [KOREAN TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

[Read More](#)

Global Forum Underlines Need for Universal Health Coverage



By Jaya Ramachandran

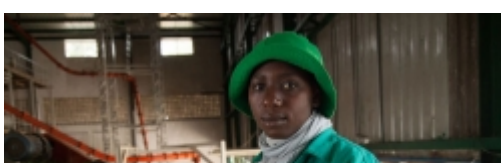
GENEVA | TOKYO (IDN) – Nearly half of the world's population of 7.6 billion lacks access to essential health services at present and for almost 100 million people health expenses are high enough to push them into extreme poverty.

Against this perturbing backdrop, revealed by a recent report, a global Forum in Tokyo has underlined the need to extend by 2023 the health services coverage to 1 billion additional people and halve to 50 million the number of people being pushed into extreme poverty by health expenses.

The year 2023 is the midpoint towards 2030, the target date for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), [says](#) the 'Tokyo Declaration on Universal Health Coverage' emerging from the global [Universal Health Coverage Forum 2017](#) from December 12-15.

[Read More](#)

Global Upturn Offers Prospects For Sustainable Growth



By J Nastranis

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) – Despite an upsurge in world economic growth, which has reached 3 per cent – the highest since



2011 – very few least developed countries (LDCs) are expected to reach the Sustainable Development Goal target for GDP growth of "at least 7 per cent" in the near term (SDG 8.1), says a new United

Nations report.

Goal 8 of the 17 [Sustainable Development Goals](#) – with 169 targets – adopted in September 2015 by the international community envisages promoting "inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all". Its target 1 stresses the need to "sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances and, in particular, at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in the least developed countries." (P36) [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [TURKISH](#)

[Read More](#)

One Planet Summit Spotlights Funding to Fight Climate Change



By A.D. McKenzie

PARIS (IDN) – Financing is key in the fight against climate change, said delegate after delegate at the [One Planet Summit](#) in Paris December 12, and this meeting was all about the money: where to invest it and where not.

[The World Bank Group](#) announced that it would not be financing upstream oil and gas

after 2019, except for certain projects in the "poorest countries", where there is a clear benefit in terms of energy access for those in need. "The policy will change and change dramatically," said World Bank president Jim Yong Kim.

The One Planet Summit – with many participants sporting "#make our planet great again" buttons – was held on the second anniversary of the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change, bringing together heads of states and representatives from more than 100 countries, businesses, civil society, youth and the world's media. (P35) [FRENCH](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) |

[Read More](#)

Village Buddhist Monks in Laos Initiate Environmentally-Aware Development



By Toung Eh Synuanchanh

This article is the 19th in a series of joint productions of [Lotus News Features](#) and [IDN-InDepthNews](#), flagship of the [International Press Syndicate](#).

BEUNGSANTHUENG, Laos (IDN) – A quiet revolution is taking shape in rural Laos,

where environmentally-conscious village Buddhist monks are teaching people morality and meditation to spearhead a movement mobilising the people to economically develop their communities for living in harmony with nature rather than destroying it in the name of development.

At the Ban Beungsanthueng community, in Nongbok District in Khammouane Province of Laos, about 400 km south of the capital Vientiane, monks educate the villagers in *Sila* (Buddhist morality) and the way to live a good life (Right Livelihood) while protecting the environment. In this nominally communist

environment, while protecting the environment. In the Horn of Africa country, the monks explain the linkage between humans and nature to villagers, and its importance to their livelihoods and well-being.

[Read More](#)

South-South Cooperation Holds the Key To Beating Global Development Challenges



By Jacques N. Couvas

ANKARA (IDN) – "Solutions for the South by the South" was the recurring theme that resounded throughout the duration of the Global South-South Development Expo 2017 ([GSSD Expo](#)) from November 27 to 30, 2017 in Antalya, the largest Turkish city on the Mediterranean coast.

This landmark event of the United Nations (UN) system solely for the global South was held in the lead up to the Second High-level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation to be convened in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in March 2019. The Conference will mark the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA+40) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. A High-Level Forum of National Directors-General for Development Cooperation discussed during the Expo insights and proposals for the preparatory process of the 2019 conference.

[Read More](#)

UNIDO Chief Has A 'Dream', Urgently Needs Funds



By Ramesh Jaura

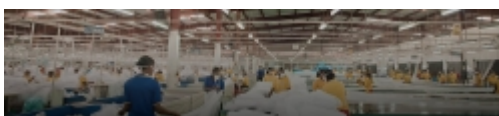
VIENNA (IDN) – Li Yong has a 'dream', the dream to give young people, living in similarly poor conditions as he experienced in China in his childhood, an opportunity to play a part in "the global fight against poverty".

Li was re-appointed head of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization ([UNIDO](#)) on November 27 for four years by the Organization's supreme policy-making organ, the General Conference (GC) where member states meet once every two years.

He was first elected in June 2013 as the UNIDO's Director General, becoming as [Xinhua noted](#), "the first United Nations (UN) agency chief from the Chinese mainland".

[Read More](#)

The Global Fund To Fight AIDS Asked to Change Criteria Discriminating Poor Countries



By J C Suresh

TORONTO (IDN) – As this year's [World AIDS Day campaign – My Health, My Right](#) – kicks into high gear, the AIDS Healthcare Foundation ([AHF](#)) has called on [The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria](#) to end the use of Gross National Income (GNI) per capita as part of the Fund's grant eligibility criteria, and thus stop discriminating poor countries.

The Los Angeles based AHF is the largest nonprofit HIV organization that provides HIV care to more than 833,000 patients in 39 countries globally, including in Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America & the Caribbean and the United States. (P34) [CHINESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [URDU](#)

[Read More](#)

COP23 Finally Provides a Platform for Indigenous People on Climate Talks



By Stella Paul

BONN (IDN) – Patricia Gualinga has been coming to the UN climate change conferences for several years. She usually receives 2-3 minutes on a panel of a side event on indigenous issues during which she tells about the struggles of her

community – the Kichwas of Ecuador.

The struggles are, typically, of surviving in an environment where water is fast depleting, air is polluted, land is taken away and tribe members are evicted from their homes – all in the name of development. Sarayaku – where Gualinga comes from – is an Amazonian province in which the degradation is often caused by large oil explorers. (P33) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [KOREAN TEXT VERSION PDF](#) |

[Read More](#)

Further, Faster, Together On Climate - From Bonn To Katowice



By Ramesh Jaura

BONN (IDN) – The two-week long intensive and multilevel talks concluded in Germany's former capital city in the early hours of November 18 tasking the negotiators to

focus on 'Where are we, where do we want to go and how do we get there?' before they meet in Poland in December 2018.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)) Secretariat said the Bonn Climate Conference – officially known as [COP23](#), the 23rd session of the Conference of Parties to the Convention – had become "launch-pad for higher ambition". (P32) [GERMAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

[Read More](#)

Traditional Silk Weavers in India Losing Out To New Comers



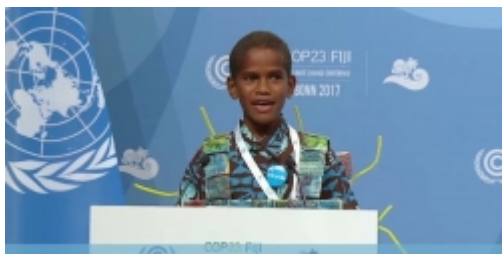
By Kalinga Seneviratne

SUALKUCHI, Assam, India (IDN) – Silk weaving is an intrinsic part of Assamese culture and the "weavers' village" of Sualkuchi is famous for its silk products, especially the Muga silk made from the golden thread of the assama caterpillar. Situated about 30 km from Gauhati, the state capital, tourist brochures describe this as a weavers' paradise. But this is far from reality for the local weavers.

"The cost of production is going up, especially with an increase in the price of thread. We cannot feed the family with our loom," said Ninola Boruah, a local weaver in her 40s. She was particularly critical of the entrepreneurs who have set up what the industry calls "cluster" operations. These consist of a virtual factory with 8 to 12 looms packed into a small hut employing weavers on daily wages.

[Read More](#)

Fijian Presidency Lends New Dimension to Climate Negotiations



By Ramesh Jaura

BONN (IDN) - Twenty-five years ago, governments came together at the Earth Summit in Rio driven by the idea that the world needed to change the way it was treating its environment.

From that idea, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted – "and a movement began. A movement that, two years ago, resulted in the [Paris Agreement](#)," said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa in her opening speech at [COP23](#), the 23rd annual UN Climate Conference.

[Read More](#)

Vatican Conference Underlines Nexus Between Sustainable Development and Nuclear Weapons Ban



By Ramesh Jaura

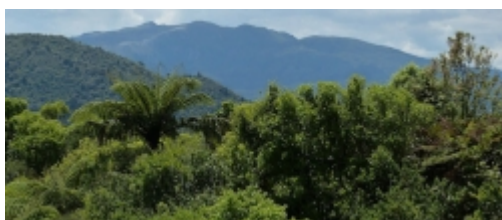
VATICAN CITY (IDN) – When world leaders approved '[Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)', as an outcome document of the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development two years ago, they designated it as "a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity" that "also seeks to

strengthen universal peace in larger freedom".

The document, which includes 17 [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) and 169 targets, is based on a consensus emerging from protracted discussions within the Open Working Group. It meticulously avoids words such as "a world free of nuclear weapons". (P31) [FRENCH](#) | [INDONESIAN](#) | [ITALIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [THAI](#)

[Read More](#)

Survival of Forests is Vital for Reaching Climate Change Goals



By Jutta Wolf*

BERLIN (IDN) – A key solution to saving tropical forests is to secure the land rights of the indigenous peoples and local communities, and to invest in them as an effective strategy for reducing deforestation

and slowing climate change, according to the new findings released in Berlin on November 1.

It was no surprise therefore when Mina Setra, Deputy Secretary General of [The](#)

it was no surprise therefore when Winda Sula, Deputy Secretary General of [The Indigenous Peoples' Alliance of the Archipelago \(AMAN\)](#), said: "We are a proven solution to the long-term protection of forests, whose survival is vital for reaching our climate change goals. Yet in return, we face human rights violations, violence to our communities, criminalization of our peoples and the murder of our leaders." The Alliance represents 17 million people in Indonesia.

[Read More](#)

Published by

The [International Press Syndicate](#) Group

as part of a [media project](#) with Soka Gakkai International

750 Third Avenue, 9th Floor, New York, NY 10017, USA

33 Lafferty Street, Toronto, ONT M9C5B5, CANADA

Marienstrasse 19/20, 10117 Berlin, GERMANY

Ichimura bldg. 4F, 3-2 Kanda Ogawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo JAPAN 101-0052

[Unsubscribe](#)