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SDGs for All - October 2018 In Retrospect

[Island Nation Seychelles Praised for Launching World's First Sovereign Blue Bond, World Religious Leaders' Astana Congress Pledges 'Unity in Diversity', Costa Rica Set to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2021](#)

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Island Nation Seychelles Praised for Launching World's First Sovereign Blue Bond



By Jaya Ramachandran

NEW YORK | BALI (IDN) – The Government of the Republic of Seychelles, an archipelago of 115 granite and coral islands in the Indian Ocean, off East Africa, has been acclaimed for showing "the leadership to create the world's first sustainable Blue Bond".

The pioneering financial instrument was launched within four weeks of the [High-Level Forum](#) the government of Seychelles organised together with the 79-member African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States at the United Nations headquarters in New York focusing on the emerging new "blue economy" underlining the protection and preservation of the world's heavily-exploited oceans.

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UN Cheers Sahle-Work Zewde's Election as First Female President of Ethiopia



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – "Congratulations Madam President! Women do make a difference. We are proud of you!" That was the excited message from María Fernanda Espinosa Garces, President of the United Nations General Assembly, to UN Under-Secretary-General Sahle-Work Zewde on her election as the first female president of

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UN Announces 'SDG Hubs' Connecting Universities with 2030 Global Agenda



By Ramesh Jaura

NEW YORK (IDN) – The critical role of academia in general and the [United Nations Academic Impact \(UNAI\)](#) in particular in advancing the goals of the [United Nations Charter](#) was underlined when the Organization celebrated the 73rd anniversary of its entry into force on October 24.

In view of the fact that universities play a vital role in achieving the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015, UNAI announced its new SDG Hubs around the world. These are UNAI members selected as models for their innovative engagement related to the SDGs.

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Women, Peace and Security is Germany's Priority in 2019-2020 Security Council Membership



By Santo D. Banerjee

NEW YORK (IDN) – When Germany joins the UN Security Council next January as a non-permanent member for 2019-2020, promoting the 'Women, Peace and Security Agenda' by ensuring a greater political participation of women and prevention of sexual violence in conflicts, will be one of its priorities. The Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in which women play a central role.

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Southern Africa Turns to Groundwater to Counter Climate Change



By Jeffrey Moyo

CHIMOIO, Mozambique (IDN) – As the blazing heat of the sun beats down on her, 25-year-old Maria Sinorita from Chimoio, a Mozambican town lying approximately 100 km east of the country's border with Zimbabwe, struggles to draw water from the well in her yard.

For Sinorita, even the water she is drawing from the well is running out and, because she has no option as climate change impacts hit her and many other Mozambicans, she has to dig deeper and deeper for the precious liquid.

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Too Few Women Peacekeepers Contrary to Commitments



By J. Nastranis



By U.N. News

NEW YORK (IDN) – UN Secretary-General António Guterres finds it "crippling to our credibility and protection capacity that women represent only four percent of our military peacekeepers and ten percent of police," though "over the past year, we have seen positive examples of progress".

Briefing the Security Council's annual high-level debate on women and peace and security on October 25, the UN Chief noted that women's organizations continue to make an impact – from keeping dialogue alive in Guinea Bissau, to rebuilding communities in Colombia.

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Lesotho and South Africa Among Winners of UN Awards



By Ronald Joshua

GENEVA (IDN) – Bahrain, India, Lesotho and South Africa have won 2018 United Nations Investment Promotion Awards for

excellence in boosting investment into sectors that will have social and economic benefits and help countries meet the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

Organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)), the awards honour investment promotion agencies (IPAs) and their governments for their achievements, but also showcase best practices in attracting investment into SDG-related projects that can inspire investment promotion practitioners in developing and developed countries.

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A Crisis Within a Crisis for the Rohingyas



By Naimul Haq

DHAKA, Bangladesh (IDN) – Despite a well-coordinated effort to address the Rohingya refugee crisis in Cox's Bazar, a coastal town bordering Myanmar, some major challenges still need attention.

The local administration admits that with over one million forcibly displaced Myanmar citizens arriving in such a short time, it is indeed difficult to manage the environmental damages and rising crime rates faced by the local people. (P16) [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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Africa Eyes Accelerated Investment in Nutrition



By Justus Wanzala

NAIROBI (IDN) – Incessant humming noise emanating from air conditioners welcomes one into an expansive warehouse at [Twiga Foods](#) pack house in Syokimau area of Kenya's capital. It is mid-morning and workers are busy sorting, cleaning and packing fresh produce ready for the market

Established in 2014, Twiga sources produce from Kenyan farmers for sale to vendors in urban areas. It handles 14 products among them onions, bananas, capsicums, carrots, tomatoes, pineapples, pawpaws, passion fruits and mangoes. It buys produce from 8,370 farmers and sells to an estimated 5,226 vendors.

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'To be the Voice of the Voiceless' is Michelle Bachelet's Top Priority



By J. Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – A top priority of the new UN Human Rights Commissioner Michelle Bachelet, who replaced Jordan's Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein on September 1, 2018, is "to do what my mandate tells me to do, to be the voice of the voiceless." In addition, it is "also to engage with governments so they respect human rights, protect people from rights violations, and promote human rights."

In an extensive [interview](#) with *UN News*, twice-elected President of Chile and the first head of [UN Women](#) describes advancing human rights, a "never ending process". [Watch video](#).

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Southern Africa Experiencing Energy Boom



By Jeffrey Moyo

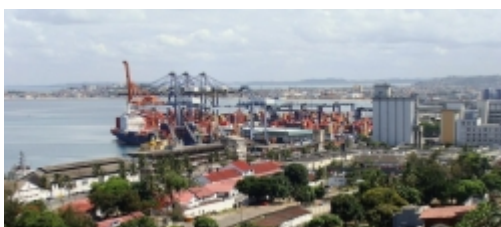
LUSAKA (IDN) – Letina Phiri waits at a bus terminus in Lusaka, the Zambian capital, as loaders carry her baggage of huge solar panels to pack on the bus.

"I will sell some of the panels as soon as I get home. Where I live, not far from Kabwe town, many people in rural communities there have started electrifying their homes with solar and I want to do the same," 51-year-old Phiri told IDN.

Even in Zimbabwe, solar energy has started to gain ground in remote areas like Seke in the country's Mashonaland East Province.

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Foreign Direct Investment on Decline, Leaves Developing Countries Unaffected



By Ronald Joshua

GENEVA (IDN) – Foreign direct investment is critical for developing and emerging market countries. Their companies need the multinationals' funding and expertise to expand their international sales. The countries need private investment in infrastructure, energy, and water to increase jobs and wages. In fact the UN Conference on Trade and Development

(UNCTAD) 2017 report warned that climate change would hit them the hardest.

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World Religious Leaders' Astana Congress Pledges 'Unity in Diversity'



By Ramesh Jaura

ASTANA (IDN) – At a critical point in time when religious tolerance is being consigned to oblivion, an international conference has appealed "to all people of faith and goodwill" to unite, and called for "ensuring peace and harmony on our planet".

The appeal emerged from the two-day *Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions* in Astana, the Kazakh city founded on the principle of "unity in diversity". The Congress concluded with a 'peace concert' in which 500 choir singers from five continents of the world took part. (P15) [ARABIC](#) | [INDONESIAN](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SPANISH](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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An Indian Woman Rises from the Downtrodden to a Socially Aware Multimillionaire



By Sudha Ramachandran

BANGALORE (IDN) – In 2013, Kalpana Saroj, Chairperson of the Mumbai-based Kamani Tubes Ltd. (KTL), was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest honour for civilians, for her achievements in the fields of Trade and Industry.

Saroj was successful in turning around the fortunes of KTL, a manufacturing company producing quality copper and copper alloy pipes and tubes. She succeeded where others, including well-networked, male corporate honchos, failed. (P14) [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [TURKISH](#)

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Creating A World Where We All Feel Secure



Viewpoint by Samir Somaiya

The author is President of the Institute on the study of Indology and inter-religious dialogue 'Somaiya Vidyavihar'. The following is the text of his remarks at the two-day Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions on October 10, 2018 in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan, with the key topic 'Religious Leaders for a

Secure World'.

ASTANA (IDN-INPS) – The word secure, is derived from Latin, and means 'se' - without, and 'cura', care. Meaning 'without care'. Without worry. Without fear. How do we help create a world where we all feel secure, free from fear and

threats, and one in which we reel free to dream, hope and pursue our dreams.

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Faith Communities Play A Vital Role in Ensuring Human Security



Viewpoint by Hirotsugu Terasaki

The author is Vice President, Director General of International Bureau, Peace and Global Issues, United Nations Liaison Offices, [Soka Gakkai](#). The following is the text of his remarks at the opening session of the two-day Congress of the Leaders of

World and Traditional Religions on October 10, 2018 in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan.

ASTANA (IDN-INPS) – First of all, I would like to thank the Republic of Kazakhstan for giving me this opportunity to speak on behalf of the members of Soka Gakkai, as well as for organizing this truly meaningful meeting dedicated to interfaith dialogue.

[Watch video](#)

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Kazakh President Urges Religious Leaders to Help Resolve 'Civilizational' Problems



Viewpoint by Nursultan Nazarbayev

The author is the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. Following are extensive excerpts from his opening address to the two-day Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions on October 10, 2018 in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. He shared with religious leaders "a vision of the areas that we can focus on together" in

the interest of global peace and security. – The Editor

ASTANA (IDN-INPS) – Fifteen years have passed since the first historic Congress was held here. Today we are gathering for the sixth time.

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Leaders of World and Traditional Religions Gather in Astana for Inclusive Dialogue



Viewpoint by Kassym-Jomart Tokayev

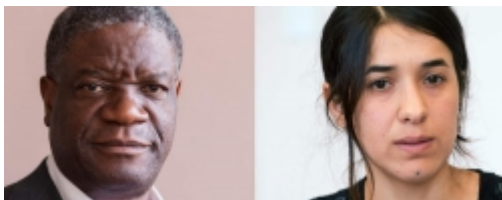
The author, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, is Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan and Head of the Secretariat of the Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions. This opinion article first appeared on [The Astana Times](#) on October 5, 2018, and is being reproduced courtesy the prestigious Kazakh newspaper.

IDN-INPS are providing a special coverage of the conference, including videos interviews and features. – The Editor.

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UN Hails Nobel Peace Prize Seeking to End Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War



By J Nastranis

NEW YORK (IDN) – The United Nations has extended an enthusiastic welcome to [The Norwegian Nobel Committee's](#) announcement that it has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2018 to Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict.

The Nobel Peace Prize 2017 was awarded to [ICAN](#), the International Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons "for its work to draw attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and for its ground-breaking efforts to achieve a treaty-based prohibition on such weapons."

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Sri Lanka Chaired UN Forum Focuses on Sport to Promote Human Rights



By Jamshed Baruah

GENEVA (IDN) – The Social Forum of the [UN Human Rights Council](#) serves since 2008 as a unique space for open and interactive dialogue between civil society actors, representatives of Member States, and intergovernmental organizations, on a theme chosen by the Council each year. The 2018 Social Forum, with Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative Ambassador A.L.A. Azeez as the Chairperson-Rapporteur, distinguished itself in more than one way.

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Bribery Rampant in Over Half of Global Trade



By Sean Buchanan

LONDON (IDN) – There are many losers and few winners when companies bribe foreign public officials to win lucrative overseas contracts. In prioritising profits over principles, governments in most major exporting countries fail to prosecute companies flouting laws criminalising foreign bribery.

What is missing, according to [Transparency International](#) – the global coalition against corruption – is active enforcement. In its recently-released 2018 Progress Report on [Exporting Corruption](#), the coalition finds that only 11 major exporting countries – accounting for about one-third of world exports – have active or moderate law enforcement against companies bribing abroad in order to gain mining rights, contracts for major construction projects, purchases of planes and other deals.

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Costa Rica Set to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2021



By Fabiola Ortiz

SAN JOSE, Costa Rica (IDN) – It has been twenty two years since Costa Rica embarked on its national program of payment for environmental services (PES), the first in the world to start a nationwide scheme for compensating landowners for

keeping the forests standing for people and the planet.

Now that the world struggles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and limit the global temperature rise by the end of the century, this Central American nation of five million people has served as an example of public policies addressing the taxation of fossil fuels in favour of the protection of nature. The country pledges to become carbon neutral by 2021. (P13) [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [PORTUGUESE](#) | [SPANISH](#)

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[Africa Gets Ready for Biodiversity and Climate Change Summits](#)



By Justus Wanzala

NAIROBI (IDN) – African governments have been availing of two conferences at the UN Environment Headquarters in the Kenyan capital in September to gear up for the Biological Diversity Summit in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt, and the [Climate](#) Summit in Katowice, Poland.

The [African Ministerial Conference on the Environment \(AMCEN\)](#) from September 17 to 19 provided an opportunity to prepare for the 14th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity ([CBD-COP14](#)) from November 17 to 29, 2018 in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt.

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[Blue Economy Key to Small Islands' Survival & Prosperity](#)



By Shanta Roy

NEW YORK (ACP-IDN) – When the 79-member African, Caribbean and Pacific ([ACP](#)) Group of States – along with the government of Seychelles – sponsored a high-level forum at the United Nations on September 26, the primary focus was the

emerging new "blue economy" underlining the protection and preservation of the world's heavily-exploited oceans.

The world's Small Island Developing States (SIDS), who comprise some of the most environmentally-vulnerable countries, are being increasingly threatened not only by climate change, resulting in rising seas and shrinking lakes, but also suffering the negative after-effects of pollution, sea-bed mining, illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing and the unauthorized extraction of marine resources in the high seas.

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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

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