



World Union for Peace Human Rights and the Rights of People

NGO associated to the Un Department of Public Information

# NEWSLETTER

## From Un to Citizen International News



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# THE GLOBAL REVOLUTION FOR A NEW HUMANISM PROJECT

**On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015** will be held in Rome–**European Parliament Via IV Novembre** the global project drawn by Unipax founder Orazio Parisotto, through the essay "**The Global Revolution for a New Humanism - The way out of the global emergencies**".

Organizations of all continents participating to the project (see World Directory [www.unipax.org](http://www.unipax.org) ). Unipax has worked in voluntary and social utility activities mainly in favour of peace, civil coexistence, fundamental Human and Peoples rights and their implementation.

UNIPAX, thanks to its social and cultural commitment, has always been active in European Union, globalization and peace education. We believe that the great mankind problems should be faced with continental and global democratic supranational institutions able to address them.

The activities were carried out in constant support to the UN and in particular through active cooperation with the UN DPI and with its Regional Offices.

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## UN Observatory

### Food security and the migration crisis

The millions of people who are being forced to flee from war, poverty and other hardships are a tragic reminder of the urgent need for peaceful solutions based on social justice and improved economic opportunities for all. Key to achieving this is the protection of and investment in rural livelihoods, FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva said today. "Rural development and food security are central to the global response to the refugee crisis. War causes hunger and hunger too, kills and forces people from their homes," he said.

"Whether living in camps or finding themselves on the move, people are in a particularly vulnerable situation. The world needs to give a comprehensive response that offers hope and concrete solutions to refugees, and this response must consider their present and future food security, and the rehabilitation of their rural livelihoods." "Supporting agricultural based livelihoods can contribute to both helping people stay on their land when they feel safe to do so and to create the conditions for the return of refugees, migrants and displaced people," added Graziano da Silva. "Most of the displaced hope to return to their lands as soon as the conflict is over, but the impacts of conflict on food security often last long after the violence has subsided," he said.

Agriculture continues to be the backbone of livelihoods for the majority of people in conflict and post-conflict situations. In this context, FAO focuses its work on providing relief to protect agriculture-based livelihoods during the conflict while creating the conditions for rehabilitation and long-term resilience of agriculture as a crucial strategy for peacebuilding, poverty alleviation and overall development in countries facing protracted crisis situation.

In Syria, for example, the conflict is having a devastating impact on agriculture, with food markets and supply chains dysfunctional, much of the irrigation and other infrastructure destroyed and farmers and livestock keepers left with no other option than to abandon their fields and animals. The ones who remain cannot access markets or afford seeds, fertilizers and other inputs. Meanwhile the influx of Syrian refugees is also impacting agriculture in neighbouring host countries FAO is working with partners to strengthen food security and build the resilience of households and communities in Syria and in neighbouring countries. Such efforts aim to save livelihoods while helping communities lay the foundations for their own long-term recovery. At a practical level FAO is prioritizing help for the most vulnerable families to improve their access to food, nutrition and income.

**This involves seed assistance to enable Syrian farmers to harvest sufficient cereals to feed their families; cash-for-work programmes to create income opportunities while repairing critical on-farm infrastructure; veterinary support and vaccination campaigns in Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria to preserve livestock health and vital sources of nutrition; and distribution of backyard production kits that give displaced and host families the means to produce nutrient-rich foods, such as eggs, milk and vegetables.**

## World Forestry Congress sets out vision for future of forests

### **Forests vital for achievement of Sustainable Development Goals**

The world's forests must be recognized as "more than trees", the XIV World Forestry Congress meeting in Durban, South Africa, concluded today. Instead, forests hold vast potential to play a decisive role in ending hunger, improving livelihoods and combating climate change. The largest gathering on forests this decade set out its vision of how forests and forestry should look in 2050, adopting the Durban Declaration after a week of debate. The vision calls for the forests of the future to be "fundamental" for food security and improved livelihoods. Forests and trees must also be integrated with other land uses such as agriculture in order to address the causes of deforestation and conflict over land, according to the declaration. Finally, sustainably managed forests must be an "essential solution" to combating climate change, optimizing their ability to absorb and store carbon while also providing other environmental services.

### **Investment and partnerships critical**

The declaration outlines a series of actions needed to realize the vision, including further investment in forest education, communication, research and the creation of jobs, especially for young people. It also stresses the need for new partnerships among the forest, agriculture, finance, energy, water and other sectors, and strong engagement with indigenous peoples and local communities.

"The declaration reflects the extremely rich and diverse set of viewpoints and experiences of all participants in the Congress, who recommended ways to make the vision a reality," said Tiina Vähänen, Deputy Director of FAO's Forest Assessment, Management and Conservation Division. Almost 4,000 delegates from 142 countries attended the congress, including representatives from civil society, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities and the private sector as well as around 30 ministers and deputy ministers.

### **Message on Sustainable Development Goals**

The Congress underlined that forests are critical to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a message to the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, which will meet later this month in New York to adopt the 2030 development agenda. While SDG 15 addresses the need to sustainably manage forests, trees and forests are also a key to achieving several of the other 16 goals, including those related to ending poverty, achieving food security, promoting sustainable agriculture and ensuring sustainable energy for all, the message says.

### **Message on climate change**

The Congress also issued a message to the Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, set to meet in Paris in December 2015 to hash out a new global climate change agreement. Climate change poses a serious threat to the planet, forests and forest-dependent people. However, at the same time countries' responses to climate change can present new opportunities for forests, such as additional sources of financing and greater political support for forest governance. Congress participants recommended a set of actions that include increasing understanding among governments and other stakeholders of both the challenges and opportunities that climate change presents.

### **Forests and water action plan**

The Congress also saw the launch of an international five-year forests and water action plan to recognize the role of trees and forests in maintaining the water cycle, and to ensure appropriate management of one of the world's largest sources of freshwater.

**The World Forestry Congress is held every six years. Under the theme *Forests and People: Investing in a sustainable future*, this year's event was hosted by the Republic of South Africa with technical support from FAO and marked the first time the Congress was held on African soil since its inception in 1926.**

## **Eight countries to sharpen long-term climate change adaptation strategies**

A new UN programme funded by Germany will help eight developing countries revamp and strengthen their adaptation responses to climate change. Through the *Integrating Agriculture in National Adaptation Plans programme*, FAO and UNDP will work with ministries of agriculture in Nepal, Kenya, the Philippines, Thailand, Uganda, Uruguay, Viet Nam and Zambia to incorporate agricultural sectors into National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) in order to safeguard livelihoods, raise agricultural production and boost food security. In particular, the initiative aims to help countries make improvements in medium- to long-term planning and budgeting processes. Under the four-year initiative, countries will receive various types of support. FAO will offer policy advice and technical support to ensure that climate change adaptation priorities in the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries sectors are incorporated in this planning process. UNDP will engage with countries in managing climate risk, in planning and budgeting,

and help them strengthen information systems, project formulation, and coordination between government institutions. The initiative has immediate potential to link with and amplify existing programmes in the target countries and improve their prospects for accessing global funds for climate finance, such as the Global Environment Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

Funding for the \$12 million effort is being provided by Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). "Our food security in the decades to come depends on our collective ability to innovate and adapt to climate change. The agriculture sector is critical to every nation and is a lifeline for livelihoods. Therefore, FAO and UNDP have joined forces to support partner countries to integrate agriculture into National Adaptation Planning (NAP) processes," said Adriana Dinu, Executive Coordinator UNDP Global Environment Finance Unit. "Ministries of agriculture, fisheries and forestry need to be at the table when countries develop and implement domestic policies to address climate change," added Martin Frick, Director of FAO's Climate, Energy and Tenure Division.

### **Solutions tailored to country needs**

The new programme builds on existing FAO and UNDP country activities, by assisting them to develop tailored responses to their needs. For instance:

- In Nepal, there is a need to increase conservation of drought-resistant crop varieties by adopting water-conserving farming practices and promoting crop diversification. The consequences of last year's earthquakes highlight the importance of reducing risks for farmers due to climate and disasters.
- In Uganda, UNDP is helping set up a much-needed early-warning system for climate risks. The program will link to FAO projects that include educating farmers in the use of drought-tolerant seeds, plants and trees, as well as expand eucalyptus plantations for charcoal.
- FAO and UNDP will also expand their efforts in the Philippines to map vulnerability to food insecurity due to climate change, and explore ways to scale up risk-transfer mechanisms for farming communities.
- In Uruguay, efforts to restore degraded pasture lands and at-risk coastal ecosystems will be central to the new programme.

FAO and UNDP plan to roll out this work in other countries as the programme expands.

### **Developing countries most at risk in a hotter world**

Three-fourths of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for their livelihoods. Their climate change adaptation needs range from improving crop varieties to cope with drought, salinity and changing weather conditions to new methods of cultivation and modernized water and irrigation systems. Many developing countries are expected to bear the brunt climate change impacts on agriculture. National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) must envision how to preemptively minimize the impact of potentially declining yields and irregular harvests.

# Ancient crops preserved for future generations in Arctic seed vault

## **Potato varieties once thought lost to the Andean people who introduced them to the world will now be safeguarded for future generations**

Varieties of one of the world's most important staple crops will be stored for perpetuity deep in the Arctic ice today. José Graziano da Silva, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is joining scientific experts and delegations from Peru, Costa Rica and Norway to witness a ceremony here this afternoon that will help to preserve these vital crops for future generations. The deposit is being made at the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, a back-up facility in the permafrost far north of the Arctic Circle that currently holds over 860,000 food crop seeds from all over the world. Its operation is co-funded by the Global Crop Diversity Trust, whose mission is to conserve the planet's crop diversity for the food security of current and future generations, and the government of Norway.

Representatives of indigenous Andean communities who worked together to establish the *Parque de la Papa*, in Cusco, Peru, will deposit 750 potato seeds. The seeds are the result of benefit-sharing projects supported by FAO's International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The farmers will be joined by scientists from the Center for Agricultural Research at the University of Costa Rica, who will also be adding wild potato relatives to the largest agro-biodiversity collection in the world.

### **The potato: A humble giant**

The potato originated in the Andes of South America. Over the centuries, Andean farmers have bred over 2,000 varieties in all shapes, colours and sizes. In addition, there are dozens of wild relatives of the potato stretching from Uruguay to Arizona. The potato is now the world's third-most consumed food, feeding more than a billion people every day. This remarkable tuber, which is low in fat but high in protein, calcium and vitamin C, is grown on every continent where people live. However, changing climate and diseases such as potato blight – which causes \$8.5 billion worth of potato losses every year in the developing world alone – pose a significant challenge to this priceless natural resource, as do the modernization of agriculture and changes in land-use. Many potato varieties have been lost in recent decades, both to the Andean communities from which they originated, and to the global community as a whole.

In response, a coalition of local, regional and international partners joined forces to reintroduce potato varieties in the field, and to preserve these vital plant genetic resources in genebanks. The Peru-based International Potato Centre (CIP), home to the world's largest potato crop collection, is working to preserve and reintroduce the diversity of potatoes in partnership with local and regional initiatives across the globe. Working with Asociación ANDES-IIED and *Parque de la Papa*, CIP has, since 2002, returned over 400 potato accessions to indigenous communities.

### **International treaty supports sharing of knowledge**

The sharing of such plant genetic resources across national boundaries is facilitated by the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Treaty, which is hosted at FAO, works through a multilateral system of access and benefit-sharing that helps ensure that farmers and researchers have access to a large diversity of seeds and other plant genetic material - and a fair share of the benefits resulting from any new varieties. The genetic information held in many crop varieties and wild plants supports the development of new fast-growing, high-yielding crops - as well as varieties that are more resistant to heat, drought, salinity, pests and diseases, all critical traits in a warming world.

For example, with funding from the Treaty's Benefit Sharing Fund, and further support from the Crop Trust, farmers involved in the *Parque de la Papa* learned how to pollinate their potatoes and collect seeds for storage. Some of the seeds were used to develop new varieties to feed their communities, while others were prepared and shipped to Svalbard for today's deposit. FAO Director-General José Graziano da Silva and the depositors from Peru and Costa Rica will be greeted by Marie Haga, Executive Director of the Crop Trust, Hanne Maren Blaafjelldal, State Secretary at the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture and Food at 17:50 local time and escorted deep into the subterranean storage vault for the deposit.

### **A shared effort, a common good**

Founded ten years ago by FAO and the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the Crop Trust is the international organization devoted solely to safeguarding the world's crop diversity. To this end, it is seeking to raise a total of USD 500 million, which will guarantee the maintenance and availability of key international plant collections of critical importance to our food supply, including that of CIP.

Norway is one of the biggest supporters of the Crop Trust's work. It currently funds a 10-year global project that seeks to safeguard the wild relatives of the important food crops. And it is thanks to the generous support of the Norwegian people and government that the Seed Vault has become a reality. From 2006-11, while heading FAO's Regional Office for Latin America, Graziano da Silva actively supported crop conservation initiatives, including the *Parque de la Papa*. Today, four years later, and many miles from the Andes, he will oversee the seed deposit that assures potato diversity will be safeguarded for the future.

The combination of *in situ* conservation in the field, including community seed banks, with *ex situ* preservation in international genebanks - combining centuries-old tradition with cutting edge science - is now coming full circle. Local farmers growing varieties that were previously feared lost are sharing the diverse collection of potatoes - this global common good - with the world, and making sure back-up copies are safely secured in the Arctic tundra of Svalbard so that they will never lose them again.

## Open-access database will help water-scarce countries

### **Satellite data can provide new insights into how agricultural water use can be made more efficient and productive**

A new open-access data portal to be developed by FAO will use satellite imagery to help water-scarce countries in the Near East and North Africa better manage this precious resource. Currently all countries in North Africa and the Near East suffer from severe water scarcity, with significant consequences for irrigated agriculture, the region's largest water user. This situation is expected to further intensify as climate change leads to more frequent and longer droughts, with severe impacts on food production. The aim of the new data portal is to collect and analyze satellite information that can be used to improve land and water productivity and boost the sustainability of agricultural systems. All information will be openly available for countries and users who need it. "Reporting on water productivity is lacking at country level in water scarce regions and this data will be key to creating sustainable agricultural systems in areas with scarce resources," said Jippe Hoogeveen, project coordinator and technical officer in FAO's Land and Water Division. Remote sensing satellite images offer governments near real-time information regarding the use of natural resources for food growth and production, making assessments and improvements to existing agricultural practices more efficient and cost effective, he added." FAO presented the new project at the start of the annual World Water Week conference in Stockholm, Sweden (23-28 August).

## **Assessing productivity gaps, recipient countries**

Remote sensing technologies have revolutionized the possibilities for assessing land and water productivity through greater coverage and data capture, however many countries lack the capacity and resources to analyze and work with this data. The new database will be developed at three spatial scales: the continental level over the whole of Africa and Near East, country and river basin level and, irrigation scheme level. This will allow experts to cross check results at the various levels ensuring appropriate recommendations for improvements in different settings. FAO technical support will include assisting countries in monitoring land and water productivity, identifying productivity gaps, proposing solutions to reduce these gaps and contributing to a sustainable increase in agricultural production. "Advanced information and communication technology will play a crucial role in all of this work," said Hoogeveen. "This information will empower those who need it, from SMS messaging for farmers working in water scarce areas to country experts using more sophisticated applications to assess information on water basin levels." The four-year project is being financed by the Government of the Netherlands and implemented by FAO in collaboration with the UNESCO-IHE Institute for Water Education and other partners. The development of the database is expected to begin in October 2015.

## **Growing global water use**

Globally, water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of population increase for most of the last century, and an increasing number of regions are reaching the limit at which reliable water services can be delivered. Today, agriculture uses 70 percent of all freshwater withdrawals worldwide and up to 95 percent in several developing countries. Growing scarcity and competition for water stand as major threats to future food security and poverty alleviation, especially in rural areas. In semi-arid regions, increasing numbers of the rural poor see entitlement and access to water for food production, livestock and domestic purposes to be just as critical as access to primary health care and education. By 2025, 1.8 billion people are expected to be living in countries or regions with "absolute" water scarcity, and two thirds of the world population could be under "stress" conditions.

## **Strategy, Awareness and Sustainable Development Goals**

During World Water Week FAO is also making presentations on its various regional water scarcity initiatives. The Organization is currently leading two projects related to monitoring progresses for the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including SDG 6 which concerns the world's water resources. "Monitoring water productivity will ultimately enable countries to report on an SDG target, which is of paramount importance in water scarce areas, but also globally," noted Jean-Marc Faurès, FAO Senior Land and Water Officer.

## **Syria: Better rains improve wheat production, but food security situation remains bleak**

Syria's food production has increased this year mainly due to favourable rains, but it remains way below its pre-crisis levels as the ongoing conflict continues to push more people into hunger and poverty, according to a report published today by two UN agencies. The 2015 wheat crop is expected to be better than the 2014 drought stricken harvest, but will not lead to significant improvements in the overall household food security situation, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) said in their report. In total, some 9.8 million people in Syria are estimated to be food insecure, with 6.8 million of these severely food insecure - a level of need that requires external food assistance. Since January this year alone, more than half a million people have been displaced.

The conflict continues to seriously disrupt agricultural activities and food markets, according to the FAO-WFP report. "Although Syria's current harvest is better than expected due to abundant rains, the country's agriculture sector remains decimated by the conflict. Urgent donor support is needed to ensure farmers can meet the upcoming cereal planting season, beginning in October," said Dominique Burgeon, Director of FAO's Emergency and Rehabilitation Division.

Agricultural production continues to be impeded by shortages of fuel, farm labour and agricultural inputs, including seeds and fertilizers; high input costs and unreliable quality; as well as damages to irrigation systems and farming equipment. These factors are compounding the food insecurity situation in the country. "The evidence is clear: almost five years of conflict have destroyed the Syrian economy and the people's ability to buy essentials like the food they need to survive," said Arif Husain, WFP's Chief Economist. "We worry about the continued displacement and its impact particularly on women and children. The risk of irreversible damage to the children is real, with tragic future consequences if this conflict lasts much longer." He added: "We urge the international community to continue supporting the vital peace and relief efforts until peace is found."

Wheat production in 2015, estimated at 2.445 million tonnes, is expected to be better than the very poor harvest of 2014 and slightly better than that of 2013. Yet, it is still 40 percent lower than pre-conflict production levels. The country faces a wheat deficit of about 800 000 tonnes out of its yearly requirement of nearly 5 million tonnes, the report said. The area planted to cereals was constrained by insecurity and the estimated harvested wheat area is the smallest since the 1960s, the reports notes. Livestock production is also gravely affected by the conflict. The sector, once a major contributor to Syria's domestic economy and to its external trade, has seen reductions of 30 per cent in cattle and 40 per cent in sheep and goats, while poultry, usually the most affordable source of protein in people's diets has shrunk by 50 per cent. The report also noted that the country's veterinary service is rapidly running out of vaccines and routine drugs.

### **Price of bread has skyrocketed**

After being relatively stable in 2014, food prices began increasing sharply in early 2015 in the wake of lower government subsidies and exchange rate depreciation. Critically, the price of bread has spiraled in the past year, increasing by up to 87 per cent in public bakeries. The share of household expenditure on food has increased tremendously since the beginning of the crisis, at the expense of meeting other critical needs. Families were found to be spending more than half of their incomes on food and in some places such as Sweida, Aleppo and Hama this share is higher and has jumped to almost 80 percent in Dara'a, one of the areas which have witnessed some of the most intensive fighting. A majority of people were found consuming a "poor" or "borderline" diet. Dietary diversity is somewhat better in the north-western governorates of Idlib, Tartous and Latakia, where households seem to have some access to high quality and vitamin rich proteins and vegetables. People in the conflict-affected governorates of DeirEzzor, Hassakeh, Aleppo and Hama have the worse food consumption indicators.

### **Market fragmentation**

Syria's producers, transporters and traders are facing extremely high transaction costs and risks due to further increased insecurity in arterial highways. As a result, movement of agricultural produce from production areas to main markets face multiple bottlenecks, leading to increased wastage of fruit and vegetables and hampering transfers of wheat surpluses from the north east to the food deficit areas of the west of the country

## Recommendations

While an end to the conflict remains the main precondition for ensuring that people in Syria have adequate access to food, the FAO-WFP report provides a set of recommendations aimed at improving the current food security situation, stressing the need for food assistance to the besieged and violence afflicted areas of the country. It recommends assistance to boost wheat and other cereal production through the provision of good quality seeds, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs.

**In order to strengthen the resilience of affected communities, it further recommends supporting the establishment of village-based private seed production and distribution centres, promoting backyard vegetable and poultry production through distribution of improved seeds and chicks, as well as providing livestock vaccines and veterinary drugs.**

## Momentum gathers for international agreement to combat rogue fishing

Growing numbers of countries are ratifying an international agreement to combat illegal fishing, fueling interest in how best to implement the instrument. Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is estimated to strip between \$10 billion and \$23 billion from the global economy, and its impacts undermines the way fish stocks are managed to make it a double concern around the world. To help tackle the problem, FAO brokered the adoption in 2009 by its Member countries of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing.

The agreement comes into force when 25 countries have deposited their instrument of ratification, known as acceptance of accession; so far, 12 countries have done so, the latest being Iceland in June. Two more states will soon join them. "Port state measures" generally refer to actions taken to detect illegal fishing when ships come to port. The Agreement promotes collaboration between fishermen, port authorities, coast guards and navies to strengthen inspections and control procedures at ports and on vessels. Importantly, it also allows states to prevent the landings of catches derived from IUU fishing by vessels regardless of the flag they fly.

"The Agreement aims to harmonize port controls in order to prevent illegally caught fish from ever entering international markets through ports," said Blaise Kuemlanguan, Chief of FAO's Development Law Service. "The ability to turn away vessels taking part in IUU fishing will greatly reduce opportunities for selling their catch, decreasing IUU fishing worldwide," he added. The Agreement will enable better compliance with the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which seeks to promote the long-term sustainability of the sector.

Illicit fishing, which includes operating without authorization, harvesting protected species, using outlawed fishing gear and violating quota limits, may account for up to 26 million tonnes of seafood a year, more than 15 percent of the total global output. Besides economic damage, it poses risks to local biodiversity and food security in many countries.

### Workshop for coastal African countries

To assist countries in building their capacity to implement the Agreement, FAO has convened a series of workshops in all world regions. The sixth in the series, funded by the Government of Norway and covering West Africa, ran this month in Praia, Cabo Verde. Fifty participants from 16 African coastal countries took part, along with experts from the European Union, the

International Maritime Organization, the North East Atlantic Fisheries Commission, the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the COMHAFAT Ministerial Conference on Fisheries Cooperation Among African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean, the Pew Charitable Trust and the WWF. "Fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing is a key priority along the Atlantic coast of Africa, where IUU fishing contributes to overfishing, creating negative effects for the economies of these countries," said RemiNonoWomdim, FAO Representative in Cabo Verde.

Gabon is the only local country to have ratified the Agreement, but several others are close to completing the process. "Many countries in the region have the will to address IUU fishing, but require the most cost-effective tools and an understanding about how these can be implemented at the legal, policy and institutional level," said Womdim. Ratification of the treaty requires countries to designate ports that foreign vessels can use and to block entry to ships known or believed to have been involved in IUU, as well as share information with other governments of vessels discovered to be carrying an IUU catch. In addition to Gabon, signatories that have completed the ratification process are Chile, the European Union, Iceland, Mozambique, Myanmar, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, the Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Uruguay.

## 2030 development agenda: Major breakthrough for world of work

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has welcomed the new sustainable development agenda agreed this Sunday by the United Nations' 193-member States as a major breakthrough for the world of work. The 2030 sustainable development agenda – which contains 17 sustainable development goals and 169 indicators – formally adopted by world leaders gathering at a United Nations special summit on 25-27 September 2015.

"Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" is due to replace the Millennium Development Goals starting next year. The vision of decent work for all runs across the entire agenda with a specific goal to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all." There are also targets on youth employment, child and forced labour, skills enhancement, empowerment of women and increases in productivity and productive employment. The 2030 agenda also reaffirms the need to respect, protect and promote fundamental freedoms for all and recognizes the relevance of social protection, as well as the positive contribution of migrants to inclusive growth and sustainable development.

"The ILO has been working extremely hard in recent years with governments, employers' and workers' organizations, multilateral organizations and civil society to put Decent Work for all at the centre of inclusive growth and sustainable development," said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder. "The fact that it is now an integral part of the new universal agenda for sustainable development is excellent news. The unanimous endorsement from UN member states gives the international community the impetus we need to work together to tackle the formidable challenges confronting humanity and our planet, particularly those we face in the world of work." "The ILO stands ready to work with our constituents and in partnership with all actors in the development field so that we may achieve these ambitious targets that are so critical to the advancement of social justice," he added.

According to the *ILO World Employment and Social Outlook*, an estimated 201 million persons were unemployed in 2014, representing an increase of 30 million persons since the economic and financial crisis began in 2008. Youth are affected disproportionately, with almost 74 million young persons (aged 15 to 24 years) unemployed as of last year. The agenda sets out to achieve by 2030 full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men,

youth and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. In particular, in five years' time, it aims to reduce substantially the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training through the development and implementation of a global strategy for youth employment. Amongst the targets on the promotion of inclusive growth and decent work is support for entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and the encouragement of the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises. It also calls for labour rights to be protected and for safe and secure working environments for all workers, including migrants, particularly women migrants and those in precarious employment.

Immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking are to be taken. Twenty-one million persons are working in forced labour currently. UN member States will also commit to securing the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, and ending child labour in all its forms by 2025. The ILO estimates that 169 million children are involved in child labour.

# Unione Europea

## INSTITUTIONS

### Refugee crisis must be first priority, says Juncker in 2015 State of the Union debate

**"The first priority today is and must be tackling the refugee crisis," said European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker during the 2015 State of the Union debate at the European Parliament on Wednesday 9 September. "The EU is facing migration, the economic crisis and wars in its neighbourhood. We have to contribute to a solution to these challenges," said EP President Martin Schulz, EP's President in his opening remarks.**

"I give you the floor to present proposals for the European Union, here in the European Parliament, house of European democracy," **Schulz** told Juncker.

"The first priority today is and must be tackling the refugee crisis," said **Juncker**. "It's a matter of humanity and human dignity and for Europe a matter of historical fairness. We are fighting against the Islamic state, why are we not ready to accept people who run away from that conflict?". Turning to the crisis, Juncker said: "It was absolutely necessary for us to say that Grexit was not an option, if we hadn't said that loudly and clearly, Grexit could have happened. It was a possibility, but not an option." Speaking about the European Union, Juncker said: "the crisis is of course not finished," adding that the crisis "will only be over where there is full employment in Europe". "I know how weak the European continent would be if the EU didn't exist." Juncker also added: "I would like to pay tribute to other countries such as Ireland, Portugal, Spain which have proven that if good reforms are implemented, they bring about the right results".

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### MEPs call for free, gender-equal public education for all children

**Gender equality measures must apply at all levels of the education system, including the curriculum and teacher training, so as to end gender stereotyping and help close the gap between women's education and their professional development, say MEPs in a non-legislative resolution voted on Wednesday. MEPs also call for more investment to ensure that everyone can benefit from high-quality public education.**

#### **Closing the gap between women's education and professional development**

Even though women now make up the majority (60%) of higher education graduates in the EU, they are still less paid for their qualifications than men and are underrepresented in management positions, science and engineering. To encourage more women to take up science, technology, engineering and mathematics, MEPs call for equal access measures and the use of information and communication technologies from pre-school education onwards.

### **Abolishing gender stereotypes and boosting self-confidence**

Stereotyping and sexism remain the greatest obstacles to achieving gender equality, says the text. Parliament reiterates its call to combat gender stereotypes, which can affect self-image and the decisions made by girls and boys through formal and informal education at all educational levels.

Members call on EU member states to encourage girls and boys to take an equal interest in all subjects beyond gendered stereotypes, stressing the role of positive female role models in schools, universities and science.

### **Foster relationships based on respect and reciprocity**

Gender education should be a part of the curriculum and school programmes and teaching materials should not contain discriminatory content, stereotypes or sexism say MEPs. To promote stereotype-free education, teachers should receive training on equality and curricula and educational materials should be critically reviewed, they add.

Furthermore, Member states could consider making age-appropriate sex and relationship education compulsory in all primary and secondary school curricula, to teach girls and boys about relationships based on consent, respect and reciprocity, MEPs suggest.

To combat discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, MEPs urge the Commission to support the inclusion of objective information on LGBTI issues in school curricula. To fight gender-based violence, discrimination, harassment, homophobia and transphobia, in all their forms, including cyber-bullying or online harassment, says the text.

## ENVIRONMENT

### MEPs toughen EU ban on the sale of seal products

**Fewer seals could be hunted for their fur thanks to a stronger EU ban on the trade in seal product, approved in plenary on Tuesday (631 MEPs in favour, 31 against, 33 abstentions). The new rules will extend the ban to products resulting from hunts to protect fishing stocks, although Inuit and other indigenous communities will continue to be exempt from the ban. These changes, already agreed with EU governments, are needed to bring EU regulation in line with World Trade Organization rules.**

In response to animal welfare concerns, the EU banned in 2009 the trade in seal products, such as sealskin coats, mitts, bags or seal meat. This ban entered into force in 2010. However, it allowed two exceptions, one for products resulting from indigenous hunts and the other for small-scale hunts to ensure sustainable "marine resource management".

The ban was challenged by Canada and Norway in the World Trade Organisation (WTO). In June 2014, it delivered a ruling which noted that the ban could be justified on moral grounds regarding the welfare of seals but required more clarification of the exceptions applied. To address the WTO concerns, the European Commission proposed an amendment to the current EU rules in February 2015.

#### **What will change**

Under the changes, which have already been agreed with EU governments, Inuits will be allowed to sell seal products in the EU only if their hunting methods have due regard to animal welfare, are a part of their tradition and contribute to its subsistence.

Meanwhile, an exception regarding seal products originating from hunts to protect fish stocks has been removed.

#### **Proper information and impact assessment**

At the insistence of MEPs, the Commission will be tasked with informing the public and customs officials about the new rules and the Inuit exception. They believe that this could help

to counter the widespread negative portrayals and misunderstandings of seal hunts conducted by Inuits and other indigenous peoples.

Also, the Commission will have to report by the end of 2019 on the implementation of the new rules, paying particular attention to their impact on the Inuit community.

### **Next steps**

The new rules will have to be approved by both the Parliament and the Council before they can enter into force.

## **IMMIGRATION**

### **MEPs give go-ahead to relocate an additional 120,000 asylum seekers in the EU**

**An emergency proposal to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers from Italy, Greece and Hungary among EU member states was backed by Parliament on Thursday. The first temporary emergency rules for relocating an initial 40,000 over two years from Italy and Greece only were approved by Parliament on 9 September.**

Parliament's backing in record time of the European Commission's 9 September proposal to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers sends a clear signal to EU home affairs ministers, who meet again on Tuesday 22 September, that it is high time to act and finally agree on this second emergency scheme.

Under the Commission proposal, additional 120,000 asylum seekers would be relocated from Italy (15,600), Greece (50,400) and Hungary (54,000). This number comes on top of the initial scheme to relocate 40,000 asylum seekers, approved by Parliament on 9 September and endorsed by the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 14 September. The total number of people to be relocated is thus 160,000.

Parliament backed the Commission's proposal (without amending it) by 370 votes to 134, with 52 abstentions. It then approved a legislative resolution by 372 votes to 124, with 54 abstentions, informing the Council that this approval is without prejudice to the position it will subsequently take on the proposal establishing a permanent crisis relocation mechanism, on which Parliament will co-decide on an equal footing with the member states.

### **Hungary opposing relocation**

In the plenary debate on Wednesday, Luxembourg's Minister for Immigration and Asylum, Jean Asselborn, speaking on behalf of the Council's presidency, informed Parliament that "there will be an important change to the initial proposal: Hungary does not consider itself to be a frontline country and it does not want to benefit from the relocation scheme. The European Parliament needs to take this into account when giving its opinion", he said.

### **Parliament backs mandatory distribution**

The proposed mandatory scheme would allocate asylum seekers to member states according to their capacity to absorb them, to be calculated using the following weightings: population size 40%, GDP 40%, average number of past asylum applications 10% and unemployment rate 10% (see proposed allocation per member state).

Member states participating in the scheme would get €6,000 per relocated person, including a 50% pre-financing rate to enable national authorities to act very swiftly. The countries from whose territory the asylum seekers would be transferred from would receive €500 for each person relocated, to cover transport costs.

### **Temporary solidarity clause**

The proposal foresees that if – for justified and objective reasons, such as a natural disaster – a member state is temporarily unable to participate, it would have to make a financial

contribution to the EU budget of up to 0.002% of its GDP. It would be up to the Commission to assess the reasons notified by the country and decide on whether they would justify its non-participation in the scheme for a maximum of up to 12 months.

**Debate: MEPs deplore member states' failure to act and call for solidarity**

The failure so far of EU home affairs ministers to agree on how to relocate 120,000 asylum seekers was severely criticised by a large majority of MEPs during Wednesday's plenary debate on the outcome of Monday's Council meeting. Most called on member states to stand together, take urgent action to tackle the current crisis, and build a European asylum and migration system that will work in the long term.

Before the vote, President Schulz announced that he would send a letter to the current Council President Xavier Bettel asking on behalf of Parliament for EU funds to be released immediately to help countries hosting the lion's share of the Syrian refugees, Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan.

# Unipax

## Global revolution

### **Multimedia Project to set up a New Humanism**

The Author of this project is Orazio Parisotto (Past President and Founder member of UNIPAX), thanks also to the essential contribute of the Master Silvio Amelio, weighty sculptor and humanist responsible of the "Artists for the Peace" Department of the Unipax and also its Ambassador at UN.

Orazio Parisotto and Silvio Amelio launch an important social-cultural and ethical initiative, with the cooperation of the UNIPAX, that involves more than 100.000 associations, institutions, famous bloggers and opinion leaders from all the Countries.

This social-cultural initiative draws attention to the problems and the emergencies of the humanity, also thanks to the young people, worried about them future, who ideally address their requests to the Head of Government of all world.

The main work of this project consists in a interactive book named "The Global Revolution for a New Humanism".

The book is also available in e-book size. Unipax backs the promotion of the book, trough the collection of the adhesions, sharing and participations to the proposals and initiatives launched towards the Book. The aim of the book is to provide incentives in order that a peaceful revolution (Gandhi style) could be launched trough a general project that prefigures a "New Democratic Institutional Architecture", a "New International Ethical Economy" and a "Worldwide Regulation for the Civil Cohabitation" at the international level, specifying the "Ways Out" from the global crisis.

The general project aims to involve about 100.000 NGO and other organisms committed in the safeguard of the human rights and of the peace at international level, the project will be presented to the Head of the Government with a maxi petition (developed in 10 points).

The aim of the maxi petition is to ask concrete answers to cope with the problems that trouble the humanity and in particular the problems connected with the environmental safeguard, the social justice, the crazy arms race, the dangers produced by the use of the new technologies, the promotion of the culture.

The achievement of the "Artistic Cultural Current of the New Humanism" is part integrant of this project. The artists, the men of culture and the leaders of the associations of the social utility (that with their commitment are already contributing, as peacemakers, for change) will arrange this Document. Together with the young people, they can define a "Artistic cultural Decalogue of the New Humanism" that if properly widespread may launch the creative imagination of the men of good will from all over the World and from every culture.

It's a multimedia global project which aims to provide to the citizens and specially to the young people, the "ways out" from the current difficulties and new hopes for a better future demanding also their direct cooperation.

The entire project will be promoted with a multimedia advertisement during 3 minutes and will be backed by a Documentary-movie during about 30 minutes.

All will be carried out in two languages (Italian and English).

### **THE GLOBAL REVOLUTION FOR A NEW HUMANISM**

The author, starting from the idea of the undergoing ongoing transition from the dying industrial society to the new but still undefined society, explains in the first part of the text the severe international crisis by highlighting the consequences of unregulated globalization. He then introduces the mechanisms of great speculation, the dominance of the "Finance-capitalism", the political responsibilities. He also emphasizes the need to create real democratic and functional supranational European and global bodies able to deal with the huge global emergencies which affect mankind: from the unfair distribution of wealth to the super power of the financial elites, from the expected ecosystem collapse to the "demographic bomb", from the absurd , dangerous and expensive arms race to the new technologies, up to

the constant violations of fundamental rights. He therefore introduces the requests of the honest and outraged citizens, who are asked to mobilize themselves for a GLOBAL PEACEFUL GHANDIAN REVOLUTION in order to reach a more human and fair society. In the second part of the text, the author introduces a courageous project that includes a series of concrete initiatives for building the NEW HUMANISM, and invites everyone to take part in the SHOCKWAVE that will lead to the INTERNATIONAL RENAISSANCE. This target cannot be delayed anymore! The scientists' alarm cry is in fact unanimous: the planet is on the brink and we must act before the middle of this century to avoid its collapse. What can we do? Some possible "WAYS OUT TO THE EMERGENCIES" are proposed: but we must act, all and from now, together with the civil society, to build a new human-centric and bio-centric civilization based on a "New Democratic Institutional Architecture " and on a "New International Ethical Economy ."