

NEWSLETTER

April 2015

I. MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF CoNGO

HONOURING THE UN ON ITS 70th ANNIVERSARY

Shared Ideals, Shared Values, Shared Futures.....

Latest news on CoNGO's plans

To mark the UN's 70th Anniversary in 2015, I recall that CoNGO is organizing three commemorative and analytical Events: May 7 in New York; June 22 in Geneva; October 5 in Vienna.

The first of these, on May 7 in New York, is now taking final shape, and a programme will be issued shortly. The Event is being held from 10.00 to 12.30 in Conference Room 11 of the United Nations Headquarters. All interested persons from NGO and UN circles are welcome.

We are honoured that the Keynote Speaker will be Ambassador Martin Sajdik, President of UN.ECOSOC.

A Panel of three top UN officials and three leading civil society personalities will explore the triptyque of Shared NGO-UN Ideals, Values and Futures from their different backgrounds and experiences, followed by inputs from participants.

The Event will move to drawing some conclusions and pointers for the future. The outcome sought would be to foster augmented UN/Civil Society cooperation in relation to major opportunities of this year and next: Financing for Development, Sustainable Development Goals, Post-2015 Agenda, Climate Change, HABITAT III, World Humanitarian Summit, 2nd United Nations Environment Assembly..... Parallel opportunities for enhancing UN/Civil Society relationships exist in areas of ongoing cooperation such as gender equality, human rights, migration and refugees, health, the information society, the protection of children, science and technology, capacity building, and many more.

If you will be in the New York region on May 7, mark the date in your calendars, and stand by for further details.

This Event has received support from the Global Fund for Democracy and Development (GFDD). Other support will be warmly received.

Both the March and April CoNGO NEWSLETTERS owe much of their preparation to CoNGO's current Intern in Geneva, Sinmyung Park from Kyung Hee University, Seoul. I thank him for his serious and devoted commitment and competence.

Cyril Ritchie, President of CoNGO

II. CIVIL SOCIETY NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

New Guidelines on Freedom of Association

The guidelines were developed jointly by the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) and the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe. They offer advice and expertise on how to legislate on freedom of association-related matters in a manner consistent with international human rights standards and OSCE commitments. They also reflect evolving good state practices, and are intended to support advocacy and enhance awareness of the right to freedom of association in general.

A Russian version of the Guidelines will be available in May/June (in addition to a French and Arabic translation).

The new joint Guidelines on Freedom of Association are available at <http://www.osce.org/odihr/132371> and www.legislationline.org

NGOs are invited to disseminate them as widely as possible: <http://www.osce.org/odihr/132371>

Wangari Maathai Day Celebrations 2015

The Government of Kenya, led by President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, on March 3 2015 hosted the celebration of the annual Wangari Maathai Day, Africa Environment Day & World Wildlife Day.

The tri-celebration was held at the Nairobi National Park. The Chair of the Green Belt Movement (GBM), and daughter of Professor Wangari Maathai, Ms. Wanjira Mathai, announced a new legacy project currently being designed and developed by the family of Wangari Maathai in partnership with the Green Belt Movement.

Mathai said "The Wangari Muta Maathai House (WMM House) will be a living memorial center celebrating the life of Professor Wangari Muta Maathai. The House will exhibit for the Kenyan, African and global public, Maathai's speeches, international recognitions and awards, including the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize.

The House will also offer innovative programs to especially inspire young people to live lives of purpose, appreciate the natural environment in all its wonder, and explore ways of taking action to make their communities better. In addition to educational programs, the House will also host

conferences, retreats and seminars. The public will have the opportunity to both enjoy the beautiful facilities at the House and also be inspired by Wangari Maathai's ideas and ideals through interactive exhibits".

The official launch of the Wangari Maathai House Project is planned for September 25, 2015; at a gala event to mark the Fourth Anniversary of Professor Wangari Maathai's passing.

View Wanjira Mathai's full speech here:

<https://files.ctctcdn.com/18ef2499301/c61c4e3f-a62b-4b59-a86b-57f77b676c02.pdf>

The Green Belt Movement, P.O. Box 67545-00200 | Nairobi | Kenya

World Resources Forum, Davos, Switzerland, October 11 - 14, 2015

WRF has issued a Call for Papers for World Resources Forum 2015

http://www.wrforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Call4paper2015_finalweb.pdf

The four key WRF 2015 themes are:

1. Circular economy and decoupling
2. Technological innovation, business and finance
3. Targets, indicators, and benchmarks for resource use
4. Lifestyles and education

Please submit an abstract until May 1 at the following link:

<https://www.conftool.com/wrf2015/>

2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

The NPT is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament. The NPT represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States.

Conferences to review the operation of the Treaty have been held at five-year intervals since the Treaty went into effect in 1970. Each conference has sought to find agreement on a final declaration that would assess the implementation of the Treaty's provisions and make recommendations on measures to further strengthen it.

<http://csonet.org/index.php?page=view&nr=283&type=13&menu=14>

27 April-22 May: 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

III. UN NEWS & UPCOMING UN EVENTS

NEW UN WEB PORTAL FOR UN 70th ANNIVERSARY

(Le texte français suit)

The UN Department of Public Information has launched www.un.org/un70, a web portal on the occasion of the United Nations' 70th anniversary, available in all six official languages.

This new platform allows specialist or members of the general public to easily find information, activities and products related to the 70th anniversary of the United Nations. A range of multimedia content is also available including videos, photo galleries, classic audio spots, and classic digital tools. There are also UN70 related activities and events taking place globally such as concerts, commemorative events, panels and screenings.

Le Département de l'information de l'ONU lance un nouveau portail web, www.un.org/un70, à l'occasion du 70ème anniversaire des Nations Unies, disponible dans les six langues officielles.

Cette nouvelle plateforme permet aux spécialistes et au grand public de trouver facilement l'ensemble des informations, activités et produits concernant le 70ème anniversaire des Nations Unies. Une gamme de supports multimédia est également disponible incluant des vidéos, galeries photos, bandes sonores et outils numériques. Le site comprend les activités et les événements consacrés au 70ème anniversaire ainsi que des concerts, des événements commémoratifs, des panels et des projections.

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCTAD) NEW DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF UNCTAD

Former Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Mr. Joakim Reiter joined the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as Deputy Secretary-General on 1 April 2015.

From 2011 to 2014, he held the position of Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sweden to the World Trade Organization, Switzerland, where he also served as chair for the WTO bodies on services, goods and trade policy reviews respectively. From 2008 to 2011, Mr. Reiter was Minister Counsellor and Head of Trade Section at the Representation of Sweden to the European Union.

Mr. Reiter replaces Mr. Petko Draganov of Bulgaria, who served in this role since 2009.

UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL: BEIJING + 20

ADOPTION OF PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT, March 2015

In a statement by the President of the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/28/L.35) on the TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND ADOPTION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION, adopted without a vote, the Council calls upon States to take concrete steps towards promoting and protecting all human rights of women and girls; reaffirms that Governments bear the primary responsibility for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and that international cooperation has an essential role to play in assisting developing countries in progressing towards the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and endorses the pledge made by States in the political declaration on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women adopted at the fifty-ninth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women on 9 March 2015, and looks forward to the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment on 26 September 2015.

NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY "versus" HUMAN RIGHTS

Statement by the UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, to the UN Security Council in an event commemorating the UN's 70th Anniversary

"A major obstacle to United Nations human rights action has been a concern among Member States that such action may harm national sovereignty. In reality, it is serious violations of human rights that weaken sovereignty.

The less sovereignty is viewed as a wall or a shield, the better our prospects will be for protecting people and solving our shared problems."

Bravo!

CR

UNITED NATIONS MINE ACTION SERVICE (UNMAS)

UNMAS - MORE THAN MINES

UNMAS was established by the UN General Assembly in 1997 to be the focal point for United Nations mine action. Mine action comprises five areas of work: clearance, risk education, victim assistance, advocacy and stockpile destruction.

The United Nations applies mine action expertise to an increasingly wide range of explosive hazards, from unexploded missiles, artillery shells, rockets, grenades and mortars, to unsafe and unsecured weapons and ammunition, improvised explosive devices and cluster bombs. UNMAS leads, coordinates and carries out efforts to mitigate these threats when mandated by the United Nations Security Council or when requested by the Secretary-General or an affected

country, often in response to a humanitarian emergency.

The International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action was celebrated on April 1, 2015, with the theme "More than mines".

Further information: MS. JULIA KNITTEL | United Nations Mine Action Service | Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions | knittel@un.org | www.unmas.org

PLURAL+ 2015 Youth Video Festival on Migration, Diversity and Social Inclusion Call for Entries

The United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC (<http://www.unaoc.org/>) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (<http://www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home.html>) invite the submission of original and creative videos focusing on PLURAL+ themes: Migration, Diversity and Social inclusion.

Recognizing youth as powerful agents of social change in a world often characterized by intolerance, and cultural and religious divisions, PLURAL+ invites youth to address key challenges and opportunities related to social inclusion and cohesion, migrant integration, respect for identity, diversity, and human rights, both at local and global levels. Young people aged 9-25 are invited to submit short videos of five minutes maximum in length for consideration in the PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival.

International Jury Award winners will be invited to New York, all travel expenses paid, to present their work at the PLURAL + 2015 Awards Ceremony at the Paley Center for Media in December 2015. PLURAL+ partner organizations (<http://pluralplus.unaoc.org/partners/>) will also award other prizes and professional opportunities to over 20 of the best videos submitted, such as winning participants presenting their work at film and video festivals, conferences and events around the world.

PLURAL+ supports Young people's expression by providing them with a variety of media platforms and distribution networks, including broadcasts, video festivals, conferences and events around the world.

Further information, including guidelines, regulations, awards, and the entry form can be found at the PLURAL+ website at: <http://pluralplus.unaoc.org/>

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: 15 June 2015

RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

A. DISABILITY-INCLUSIVE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DiDRR)

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (3WCDDRR) was held from 14-18 March 2015 in Sendai, Japan. During the Conference Governments adopted a post-2015 disaster risk reduction strategy, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. A multi-stakeholder disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction (DiDRR) network worked to ensure that this outcome document was inclusive of the perspectives and needs of persons with disabilities. The 3WCDDRR marks another important milestone in mainstreaming disability in development. Disability was highly visible in both the official and other programmes, as well as its outcome document. (<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1619>)

B. Inclusion saves lives: Global campaign to promote DiDRR

DESA and UNDP along with the DiDRR network developed an advocacy campaign entitled "Inclusion saves lives". The campaign will work to raise awareness of the urgency of disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and resilience in society and development, as well as advance action at all levels to include persons with disabilities, their perspectives, knowledge and experience in DiDRR. Call for personal stories to highlight DiDRR: Please send us your personal stories about how disability is included in planning for and in emergency situations in your region, country, city or community. Share your personal experience in a disaster situation and how successful inclusion and planning worked to save lives and we will showcase the idea on our website to inform and inspire others to do the same. More information is available at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1630>.

C. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (ILO) Guidelines on achieving equal employment for persons with disabilities

ILO has released its update to the 2007 guidelines on "Achieving equal employment opportunities for people with disabilities through legislation". Available in English, French and Spanish, the Guidelines were developed for policy-makers and drafters of legislation, with a view to support the revision of existing laws and development of new laws of relevance to women and men with disabilities, and the development of regulations and policies to give effect to these laws. (http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/skills-knowledge-and-employability/disability-and-work/WCMS_322685/lang--en/index.htm)

**UN PROGRAMME OF ACTION ON SMALL ARMS
OPTIONS FOR THE 2ND OPEN-ENDED MEETING OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS – 18.03.15**

Note by Sinmyung Park, CoNGO Intern

Presentation

The presentation was prepared by Small Arms Survey, which is a NGO that focuses on generating evidence-based, impartial, and policy-relevant knowledge on all aspects of small arms and armed violence. The presentation was about the danger of proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and recent trends in weapon manufacturing, technology and design.

Discussion

The discussion was particularly focused on recent developments in technology applications for weapon marking, record-keeping and tracing. Several technologies were discussed: Laser technology, Micro-stamping, Technologies for stockpile management (barcodes and radio frequency identification), and biometric technologies. Additionally, all the panelists agreed that the increasing use of 3D printing may pose even greater challenges for the marking and identification of weapons since there is a great potential for illicit manufacture of weapons using such technologies that already exist.

Remarks

The danger of 3D printing is underestimated. Yes, it is currently still very expensive technology as the home 3D printers cost usually more than \$10,000, and the industrial 3D printers cost much more than that; however, it is merely a question of time before every household could own one. While the world is fascinated with the merits of 3D printing, it is inevitable that terrorist groups would also have access to such technology and start producing weapons in their basements with their own 3D printers. The scariest part is that their guns are likely to be printed with plastic materials rather than metals, which would make it much easier for the terrorists to undertake acts of terrorism without being detected by metal detectors. As this new emerging technology is gradually making its way into the mainstream, the international community must pay greater attention to its potential threats and dangers since this new printing technology may merely become a weapons machine for the terrorists.

IV. CALENDAR

NOTICE:

1. The CoNGO Calendar is a service to the NGO constituency to enable each individual organization to determine, in good time, its possible or desired involvement in the event mentioned, in accordance with the organization's own statutory or programmatic focus.
2. The conferences and meetings listed in the CoNGO Calendar are not under the convening or invitational or access responsibility of CoNGO. They are listed for the information of readers, and any queries about any event should be addressed solely to the organizer of the event, not to CoNGO.

Cyril Ritchie, President of CoNGO

2015

70th Anniversary of the United Nations Organization (1945-2015)

http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48149#.U9oWsvl_vTo

150th Anniversary of the International Telecommunications Union (1865-2015)

<http://www.itu.int/en/council/150committee/Pages/default.aspx>

World Summit on Social Development – Copenhagen+20

<http://undesadspd.org/CalendarofEvents.aspx>

UN International Year of Soils

<http://www.fao.org/soils-2015/en/>

Serbian Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

<http://www.osce.org/pc/121276>

April

April 12-17: World Water Forum: 7th World Water Forum – "Water for Our Future" (Daegu and Gyeongbuk, South Korea)

<http://worldwaterforum7.org/en>

April 12-19: UNODC: 13th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice – "Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider UN agenda ..." (Doha, Qatar)

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/crime-congress/13-crime-congress.html>

April 13: Global Day of Action on Military Spending

<http://demilitarize.org/global-day-action-military-spending/>

April 18: Kota Center: Conference on the Kota World Center for Women (New York)

www.kotaproject.org

April 23: International Girls in ICT Day – Expand horizons, change attitudes
<http://www.girlsinict.org>

April 27-29: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: WILPF 2015 Conference –
"Women's Power to Stop War" (The Hague, Netherlands)
<https://wilpfact.wordpress.com/category/wilpf-history/>

May

May 1: World Information Transfer 24th International Conference on 'Health and Environment: Global Partners for Global Solutions' (United Nations Headquarters, New York)
E-mail: wit@worldinfo.org
Website: <http://www.worldinfo.org/about-wit/contact-us/www.worldinfo.org>

May 19-22: World Education Forum 2015 (WEF) (Incheon, South Korea)
<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/world-education-forum-2015/>

May 25-29: ITU, UNESCO, UNCTAD and UNDP: WSIS Forum 2015 – “Innovating Together: Enabling ICTs for Sustainable Development” (Geneva)
<http://www.itu.int/wsis/implementation/2015/forum/ocp/>

June

June 7-9: Organization of American States (OAS): General Assembly (Haiti)
<http://www.oas.org/en/default.asp>

June 9-11: UN enable: 8th Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Headquarters, New York)
<http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=1535>

June 22-24: Deutsche Welle (DW): Global Media Forum – "Media and foreign policy in the digital age" (Bonn, Germany)
www.dw-gmf.de

July

July 13-16: UN: 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)
<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/third-conference-ffd/index.htm>

July 27-30: Asian Population Association: 3rd International Conference (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
www.asianpa.org

July 28-31: TRANSED: 14th International Conference on Mobility and Transport for Elderly and Disabled Persons (Lisbon, Portugal)
<http://www.transed2015.com>

September

September 7-11: 14th World Forestry Conference (Durban, South Africa)
WFC XIV – Info@fao.org

October

October 12-16: Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) - Istanbul, Turkey
12 - 13: GFMD Civil Society Days
14: GFMD Common Space between Governments and Civil Society
15 - 16: GFMD Government Days

November

November 1-4: WORLD MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRACY (world@ned.org)
Eighth Global Assembly (Seoul, Korea)
Theme: "Empowering Civil Society for Democracy and Its Renewal"
http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001ytfSPSgyYKEJ96FI15QAPS9ATsL0xhJla06yXcFjTwtXUItGonDMFAohz6J19VcAfmHcjlCp86FWS1TRfu5W2LxkBWJVVoVtL7KkTvXqVTKZP_6QcAoCXLD3Xicl_jvVIQx-DVy-AQhZaxTGKIRUmGcJnSISj_OFhcaiAjvAB_kD07UKrJxZJZwluWaG95MpCYD3pYXiO3jZLDX3ImHBVkpRBwRDcD7Rtj7SJF8Atg4dIRsncR6GpHAeqXodmE0U9LIMesO1hnWWwhYClzh_9vULaC4SNT28_XhSHWhh6uWRi3APeb50g==&c=4xVhMG-sb3PKpNvxIAkohBINFBzRm_XkBASvhla-OCS1hXCPL7TtGA==&ch=xcztJbpd7ftMyfw-n3fi_CxtjBdCtMKnQnKc6bB6CdkG6_2gkT9I9g==

November 16-18: OHCHR: Fourth annual United Nations Forum on Business and Human Rights
Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland
<http://www.ohchr.org/2015ForumBHR>

2016

German Chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

May

May 11-12: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs: UN World Humanitarian Summit (Istanbul, Turkey)
<http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/>

May 23-27: UN Environment Assembly: Second Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly (Nairobi, Kenya)
<http://uncsd.iisd.org/events/second-meeting-of-the-un-environment-assembly/>

August

August 20-26: International Federation of University Women (IFUW): 32nd Triennial Conference
"Empowering women and girls through lifelong, quality education and training up to the highest levels."

September

September 23-25: Global Campaign on Military Spending: World Congress – “War, Money, Transformation: Disarmament for Development!” (Berlin, Germany)
<http://demilitarize.org/get-involved/conference-2016/>

October

UN Commission on Human Settlements: HABITAT III (Quito, Ecuador)
<http://unhabitat.org/habitat-iii/>

UNODC: Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the World Drug Problem – “Achieving the 2019 Goals – A better Tomorrow for the World’s Youth”
www.ungass2016.org

2018

UN General Assembly: UN High-Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament
<http://www.2020visioncampaign.org/en/action-alerts/high-level-nuclear-disarmament-conference.html>

UN-Habitat: 9th World Urban Forum (WUF9)(Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)
<http://unhabitat.org/kuala-lumpur-to-host-world-urban-forum-in-2018/>

2019

100th Anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO)
<http://www.ilo.org/century/lang--ja/index.htm>