

# South-South Cooperation Day focuses in on sustainable development, a 'new phase of cooperation'

As part of the 40th anniversary of the [International Day for South-South Cooperation](#), the United Nations drew together on Wednesday, more than 100 best-practices developed in the countries of the Global South, which embody the 17 Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) and [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

“Today, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation – in collaboration with Member States, UN agencies and other development partners – is launching a compilation of ‘[Good Practices](#),’ together with “Triangular Cooperation, for Sustainable Development,” said UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed on behalf of the Secretary-General at a commemorative event in New York.

She showcased works-in-progress, including an ecosystem-based approach for managing freshwater resources, in six small island developing States.

“The transfer of technologies and vast inter-regional infrastructure investments are facilitating access to international markets for medium and small-scale enterprises,” she stated. “However, we are all keenly aware that there is more to be done to fully leverage the potential of South-South collaboration and partnership.”

In the late 1970s, the Global South embarked on a knowledge-sharing collaboration featuring economic, political, environmental, social and technical know-how, that formally became the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (BAPA) – a blueprint for South-South cooperation.

According to Ms. Mohammed that “marked the beginning of a new [phase of cooperation](#).”

“Driven by a spirit of solidarity, respect for national sovereignty and equal partnership, BAPA embodied the developing world’s desire to promote the sharing of homegrown solutions as a complement to North-South cooperation in fostering international cooperation for development,” she elaborated.



## UNOSSC

Left to Right: H.E. Mr. Daniel Raimondi, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship, Government of Argentina; Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; H.E. Mr. Mohammad Fathi Ahmed Edrees, Permanent Representative of Egypt and Chair of the Group of 77; Mr. Jorge Chediek, UNOSSC Director and Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation at a high-level meeting at UN Headquarters in New York, on 12 September 2018.

Since that landmark agreement, there has been a surge in South-South and triangular cooperation, with developing countries becoming key actors in implementing the [2030 Agenda](#).

Furthermore, over the last decade, greater trade between developing countries has driven an increase in world trade and new multilateral institutions devoted to South-South cooperation.

The deputy UN chief pointed out that in a few months, Member States would meet again in Buenos Aires for the Second High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation, [BAPA+40](#), to review four decades of trends, and to launch an inclusive South-South and triangular strategy to implement the 2030 Agenda.

“I encourage us all to actively participate in the BAPA+40 preparatory process,” she said. “And I invite you to participate in the Global South-South Development Expo here in New York from 28 to 30 November.”

In concluding, she encouraged all to “reaffirm our commitment to this invaluable means of achieving sustainable development and improving the lives of billions of people in the Global South and beyond.”

## A cornerstone for sustainable development

At the same time, a commemorative event in Thailand called for deepening

cooperation to foster sustainable development in countries across Asia and the Pacific.

Jointly organized by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC), and Thailand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the high-level gathering highlighted that South-South and triangular cooperation must be a corner stone to collectively implement the 2030 Agenda in the region.

"Asia Pacific is now the world's largest trading region, sitting at the heart of [global value chains](#) and international investment, and at the forefront of technological innovation," said Kaveh Zahedi, ESCAP Deputy Executive Secretary. "Expertise which, deployed intelligently, could improve competitiveness, reduce inequality and make globalization fairer – more sustainable."

In a video message, Jorge Chediek, UNOSSC Director stressed that BAPA has provided a strong mandate to implement South-South Cooperation as a key instrument to achieve the globally agreed goals.

"The Asia-Pacific region has been a birthplace and model for South-South Cooperation," said Mr. Chediek. "We are confident that this region will continue to make contributions to the new global agenda with renewed commitment to South-South Cooperation."

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## [Artificial Intelligence: a danger to mankind, or the key to a better world?](#)

Siri, Alexa and Cortana are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Artificial Intelligence (or A.I.), which is playing an increasingly pervasive role in our lives.

In the background, AI is being used in a huge range of settings, from helping to land a plane, to getting a parcel to you more quickly, and deciding whether you get a job interview.

But there are growing concerns that these powerful technologies pose equally powerful dangers, even posing an existential threat to humanity itself.

Some legislators and technologists are worried that so-called "general AI" – or machine-based intelligence that resembles basic human intelligence – could develop superintelligence capabilities at an exponential rate, escaping human control, with untold consequences for mankind.

On 11 September, UNESCO, the UN's Educational, Scientific and Cultural

Organization, hosted a roundtable discussion entitled "[Artificial Intelligence: Reflection on its Complexity and Impact on Society](#)", featuring experts from academia and industry.

The talk was hosted by Peter-Paul Verbeek, [PRON FAIR-BAKE] a Philosophy Professor at Twente University in the Netherlands, and a member of UNESCO's World Commission on the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge and Technology ([COMEST](#)).

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## [Economy and living standards of Gaza 'eviscerated' by crippling blockade – UN trade and development report](#)

The Occupied Palestinian Territory now suffers the highest unemployment rate in the world, with incomes and agricultural production going down, the United Nations trade and development agency said on Wednesday, noting that women and young people were worst affected, as the Israeli occupation continues.

"With the blockade now in its eleventh year, the Gaza Strip has been reduced to a humanitarian case of profound suffering and aid dependency," said the [UN Conference on Trade and Development](#) (UNCTAD), in a [news release](#) announcing its findings.

"The productive capacity of Gaza has been eviscerated by three major military operations and a crippling air, sea and land blockade," it added.

In its [report](#) on [assistance](#) to the Palestinian people, the UN agency also warned of poor growth prospects due to lessening donor support; a freeze in the reconstruction of Gaza; and unsustainable, credit-financed public and private consumption.

It also noted that the longstanding electricity crisis in Gaza worsened with households receiving, on average, two hours of electricity a day in early 2018 and power shortages seriously impacting everyday life and interrupting the delivery of basic services.

"The enduring deprivation of basic economic, social and human rights inflicts a heavy toll on Gaza's psychological and social fabric, as manifested by the widespread incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder and high suicide rates," said UNCTAD, noting that in 2017, 225,000 children – more than 10 per cent of the total population – required psychosocial support.

The report also noted that construction of settlements accelerated in 2017 and early 2018 and highlighted evidence of "incremental annexation" of large

parts of the West Bank, which included the transfer of Israeli citizens into settlements, forcing out Palestinians.

It further noted that a customs union – established in 1967 and formalized in 1994 – under which free trade prevails between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, is inherently flawed because of the structural differences between the two economies and their vastly different levels of economic development.

According to the report, the outcomes are made worse due to a lack of cooperation and the fact that Israel sets the terms and conditions of how the union operates.

“Effectively, the Occupied Palestinian Territory is isolated from the more competitive global markets, which in turn fosters an extremely high level of a trade diversion towards Israel, the report says,” said UNCTAD.

To break the cycle of dispossession and backwards development, the report called for replacing the union with a new framework that guarantees the Palestinian National Authority full control over its customs territory, borders and trade and industrial policies.

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## **Strengthening peacekeeping requires collective action, UN official tells Security Council**

Highlighting complex and evolving challenges, the head of UN peacekeeping on Wednesday called for heightened vigilance and a more robust response to existential threats against both peacekeepers and those they strive to defend.

“Improving peacekeeping is, by its very essence, a collective endeavour,” Jean-Pierre Lacroix, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, told the Security Council on Wednesday.

“Ensuring that our missions are fit for purpose and perform well, requires action by all of us and all of us working together,” he added, noting the role of the UN Secretariat, Member States, countries which contribute personnel, host nations and regional organizations.

In his briefing, Mr. Lacroix outlined steps taken by the Organization and the results these have yielded. One of the key areas includes assessing peacekeepers’ performance.

“We are putting in place the policies and evaluation systems that will enable all of us, collectively, to better tailor our efforts to strengthen peacekeeping and better support all peacekeepers, whether uniformed or civilian,” he informed the 15-member Council.

The engagement and the mobilization of all stakeholders, and, especially Member States, is vital for achieving success, underscored the UN peacekeeping chief.

In particular, he called on all Member States “to assess the evolution of the performance of UN peacekeeping operations”, including through visiting them on the ground and sharing their findings with the Organization.



UN Photo/Manuel Elias

UN Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix briefs the Security Council.

## **Better training, equipment and logistics needed**

He also urged those countries with advanced military capability, to provide more troops and police to UN peace operations as well as vital equipment and logistics, including helicopters, counter-IED capacities, rapid reaction forces, and medical support.

He called for troop and police contributing countries to undergo better training, prior to being deployed.

Mr. Lacroix also spoke of improvement in [gender parity in peacekeeping](#) operations – both at Headquarters and in the field – where representation of women has slightly improved.

“Women officers now represent 18 per cent of all officers in the Office of Military Affairs, and we are committed to raising this proportion further. In

the field, women police officers represent 21 per cent of our Individual Police Officers, and 7 per cent of our Formed Police Units,” he said.

Concluding his briefing, he also highlighted the importance of strong partnership with civil society groups, particularly in the on-going effort to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by UN personnel, as well as ensuring accountability and victim support. In that context, he also urged troop contributing countries to complete investigations into allegations of wrongdoing within six-months, the timeframe for UN investigators to complete their work.

“Only by working together will the UN, Member States and civil society end this behaviour which irreparably harms victims and tarnishes the reputation of thousands of UN personnel who serve with honour,” he said.



UN Photo/Loey Felipe

Sarah Blakemore, CEO of NGO Keeping Children Safe, speaks at the Security Council meeting on UN peacekeeping operations.

## **Necessity for ‘robust’ safeguarding mechanisms**

Speaking alongside Mr. Lacroix, Sarah Blakemore, the CEO of the non-governmental organization Keeping Children Safe, called for strong protection systems to stop abuse from happening and, should it occur, to ensure that victims are protected and supported, and bring perpetrators to justice.

“Too often victims have no way of reporting the abuse, no medical or psychosocial care and no access to justice,” she said.

“We call on world leaders to champion the safety of children at the highest levels by requiring that all organizations involved in peacekeeping implement robust international child safeguarding standards, including having advocates for victims’ rights.”

## **‘Action for Peacekeeping’ initiative**

In March, [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) launched the [Action for Peacekeeping](#) (A4P), to strengthen global political commitment to peacekeeping operations. He also called on Member States to join him in developing a set of mutually-agreed principles and commitments to create peacekeeping operations fit for the future, with the goal of reaching a formal agreement by the end of the year.

Specific efforts include the [Declaration of Shared Commitments](#), which has been [endorsed by 55 nations](#) (as of 11 September) as well as thematic consultations on peacebuilding; performance; protection of civilians; partnerships; and political dimensions, such as peace operation mandate and resources, role of the Security Council.

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## **Cancer is a growing global threat and prevention is key, UN study shows**

More than 18 million new cases of cancer are expected this year and it's estimated that 9.6 million people will die from various forms of the disease in 2018, the UN's International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) said on Wednesday.

According to [IARC](#), a specialized cancer agency of the [World Health Organization](#), the disease is a growing global health threat.

One in five men and one in six women worldwide, develop cancer during their lifetime, and one in eight men and one in 11 women die from it, IARC's 's [Global Cancer Observatory](#) says, in its first report since 2012.

“These new figures highlight that much remains to be done to address the alarming rise in the cancer burden globally and that prevention has a key role to play,” said IARC Director, Dr. Christopher Wild.

“Efficient prevention and early detection policies must be implemented urgently to complement treatments in order to control this devastating disease across the world.”

Six years ago, there were an estimated 14.1 million new cancer cases and 8.2 million cancer-related deaths, compared with 12.7 million and 7.6 million, respectively, in 2008.

Globally, it's estimated that Asia will see nearly half of the new cases and more than half of the cancer deaths in 2018, partly because the region has nearly 60 per cent of the world's population.



Europe accounts for nearly a quarter of global cancer cases and one-fifth of cancer deaths, although it has only nine per cent of the global population.

The Americas have more than 13 per cent of the global population but account for 21 per cent of cancers and some 14 per cent of global mortality.

In Asia and in Africa, cancer deaths (57.3 per cent and 7.3 per cent respectively) are higher than the number identified (48.4 per cent and 5.8 per cent).

This is because these regions have a higher frequency of certain cancer types that are associated with poorer prognosis, and higher mortality rates, IARC says, in addition to limited access to diagnosis and treatment.

Lung cancer is a leading cause of death for both men and women and is the leading cause of cancer death in women in 28 countries, IARC says.

The highest incidence rates of this form of the disease in women are in North America, Northern and Western Europe – notably Denmark and the Netherlands – China, and Australia and New Zealand; with Hungary topping the list.

The findings suggest that many countries have much more to do to prevent smoking-related cancers, although a significant number have adopted measures to reduce smoking and exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke.

“Given that the tobacco epidemic is at different stages in different regions, and in men and women, the results highlight the need to continue to put in place targeted and effective tobacco control policies in every country of the world,” said Dr. Freddie Bray, IARC’s Head of the Section of Cancer Surveillance.

In addition to cancers of the lungs, those that target the female breast and colorectal areas, are the most common types.

They are also among the five most dangerous forms of cancer, representing one third of all cancer incidence and mortality worldwide, according to IARC’s GLOBOCAN 2018 database, which provides estimates of incidence and mortality in 185 countries for 36 types of cancer.

IARC says that the increasing prevalence of cancer is due to many factors, from population growth and ageing, while a change in the types of cancer diagnosed is linked to social and economic development.

This is particularly true in fast-growing economies, IARC says, noting a shift from cancers related to poverty and infection, to cancers associated with lifestyles more typical of industrialized countries.