# New UN websites & publications

## UN in General

### 74ʳᵈ session of the General Assembly
*English:* https://www.un.org/en/ga/
*French:* https://www.un.org/fr/ga/
*Spanish:* https://www.un.org/es/ga/

### General Debate
English: https://gadebate.un.org/generaldebate74/en/
French: https://gadebate.un.org/generaldebate74/fr/
Spanish: https://gadebate.un.org/generaldebate74/es/

The 74th regular session of the General Assembly opened on 17 September 2019.
The General Debate opens on 24 September and closes on 30 September 2019.

### High-level meetings of the 74rd session
*English:* https://www.un.org/en/ga/74/meetings/
*French:* https://www.un.org/fr/ga/74/meetings/
*Spanish:* https://www.un.org/es/ga/74/meetings/

### Delegates Handbook:
### Seventy-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly
*English:* https://un4.me/2knlWcJ
*French:* https://un4.me/2kiHMOm

### UNEP during the High-level week of the General Assembly in NYC
https://www.unenvironment.org/events/summit/unep-during-high-level-week-general-assembly-nyc
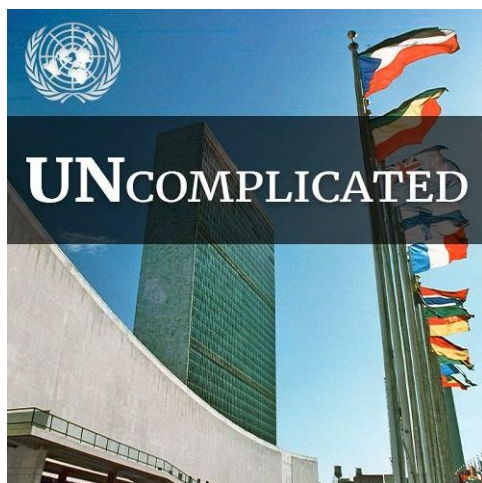
### UNcomplicating the UN:
### A new UN News podcast series
https://news.un.org/en/audio-product/podcasts
UN insider Sinduja Srinivasan and UN outsider Jason DeWall, host this new podcast from the UN News team, which aims to explain, engage and inspire. The first episode travels with them as they go inside United Nations headquarters stepping into the General Assembly hall where the whole world meets, to collectively solve problems and promote a brighter future for all. The insider-outsider duo will continue to delve into UN issues, and unmask the often-complex processes, and global issues, dealt with by the international community.
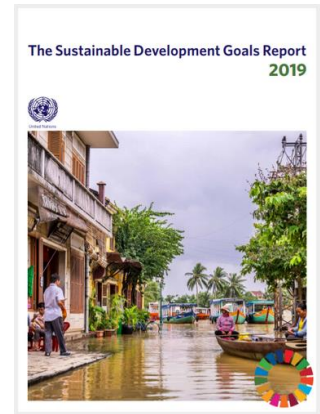
## The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019

*English:* https://un4.me/33OkYrJ
*French:* https://un4.me/2Z7Lu0p
*Spanish:* https://un4.me/2NhecoG
*German:* https://un4.me/2ZioNWM

The report reviews progress in the fourth year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report uses the latest available data to track global progress of the 17 goals with infographics, and presents an in-depth analysis of selected indicators for each goal. It highlights challenges and identifies many areas that need urgent collective attention to realize the 2030 Agenda's far reaching vision. Regional and/or subregional analyses are presented to the extent possible. The information presented in this report is based on the latest available data (as of May 2019) on selected indicators in the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, which was developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017 (see resolution 71/313, annex).

## Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now - Science for Achieving Sustainable Development

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/2019

Achieving human well-being and eradicating poverty for all of the Earth's people—expected to number eight and a half billion by 2030—is still possible, but only if there is a fundamental—and urgent—change in the relationship between people and nature, and a significant reduction in social and gender inequalities between and inside countries, according to a new United Nations report by an independent group of scientists to be launched at the 2019 SDG Summit, but made available on 11 September 2019. The Report, requested by all countries to evaluate progress on the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, is the first of its kind since the landmark Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted four years ago. Entitled "The Future is Now: Science for Achieving Sustainable Development," the report finds that the current development model is not sustainable, and the progress made in the last two decades is in danger of being reversed through worsening social inequalities and potentially irreversible declines in the natural environment that sustains us. The scientists concluded that a far more optimistic future is still attainable, but only by drastically changing development policies, incentives and actions. The report argues that understanding the interconnections between the individual SDGs and the concrete systems that define society today will be essential to devise policies that manage difficult trade-offs.

## Dag Hammarskjöld Library Digitization Blog - Convention on Climate Change

https://un4.me/2khNCzy

In February 1991 the "Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change" launched negotiations for an international treaty on climate change in Washington D.C. Over a period of two years, the working group laid the groundwork for what would become the "United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change" (UNFCCC). Their work culminated in 1992 when the Convention was opened for signature at the Earth's Summit in Rio de Janeiro; by June 1993 the Convention had already received 166 signatures. To offer an inclusive picture of the work of the Negotiating Committee during those formative years, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library has digitized official and unofficial foundation papers from its archives. Published between 1991 and 1993, these historical documents include meeting records, provisional agendas, annotations, monetary contributions, and a list of participants. As of this month 150 new digital copies including fragile print documents are freely available on the UN Digital Library.

**The Next Page, the podcast of the United Nations Library Geneva**
https://unitednationslibrarygeneva.podbean.com/
The UN Library Geneva is an evolving house of knowledge, specializing in multilateralism and in the work of the United Nations. This podcast aims to share this knowledge through conversations with experts, recordings of events at the Library, and insights shared by its staff.

## Economic Growth and Sustainable Development

**Commodities and Development Report 2019: Commodity Dependence, Climate Change and the Paris Agreement (UNCTAD)**
https://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditccom2019d3_en.pdf
Economic and export diversification is the best response to the challenges posed by climate change in developing countries that depend on commodities, according to UNCTAD's Commodities and Development Report 2019. The diversification could be horizontal, which entails venturing into new goods and sectors to reduce dependence on a narrow range of commodities, or vertical, which involves moving the value chain of a commodity up to increase its worth. According to the report, a successful diversification strategy will likely include a combination of horizontal policies, such as strengthening human capital through investments in education and health, and targeted measures to promote individual sectors.

**Digital Economy Report 2019: Who owns what in the Digital Space? (UNCTAD)**
*Report in English, Overview in English, French & Spanish:*
https://unctad.org/en/pages/PublicationWebflyer.aspx?publicationid=2466
Concerted global efforts are required to spread the rapidly expanding digital economy's gains to the many people who currently reap little benefit from it, says a new United Nations report, released on 4 September 2019. The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has released its first-ever *Digital Economy Report 2019* that maps the flow, data and funds in the world's digital economy. It outlines the enormous potential gains and possible development costs as more of the world moves, connects and buys online. Wealth creation in the digital economy is highly concentrated in the United States and China, with the rest of the world, especially countries in Africa and Latin America, trailing considerably far behind, according to the report.

**Healthy, prosperous lives for all: the European Health Equity Status Report (WHO)**
http://www.euro.who.int/en/publications/abstracts/health-equity-status-report-2019
Progress on equal access to a healthy life for all, is at a standstill across Europe, a new report by the World Health Organization (WHO) revealed on 10 September 2019, despite their being a clear path to close gaps in national care. In the first-ever report of its kind, The Health Equity Status Report, authors share that in many of the 53 countries in the WHO European Region, the status of health equity has either gone unchanged, or worsened, despite government efforts to address avoidable disparities.

## International Migrant Stock 2019 (DESA)
http://bit.ly/Migration2019

The growing number of international migrants has now reached 272 million, outpacing the growth rate of the world's population, according to new data from the UN's Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), released on 17 September 2019. The figures reflect a jump from 2010, when the global number was at 221 million, and currently international migrants – defined as anyone who changes their "country of usual residence" – make up 3.5 per cent of the global population, compared to 2.8 per cent in the year 2000, according to the latest figures. Estimates are based on official national statistics of foreign populations gathered from censuses. These numbers reflect any person who is moving or has moved across an international border, regardless of citizenship status or motive - meaning the data encompass people who have moved either intentionally or involuntarily. Europe hosts the largest number of international migrants, at 82 million; followed by North America, at 59 million; with 51 million in the United States alone - the largest number in a single nation. Finally, North Africa and Western Asia host around 49 million migrants, and along with sub-Saharan Africa, are seeing the most significant influx in foreign populations.

## The Heat Is On - Taking Stock of Global Climate Ambition (UNDP / UNFCCC)
https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/NDC%20Outlook.pdf

The Paris Agreement faces its first major test in 2020 against the backdrop of a worrying growth in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions since the adoption of the landmark agreement in 2015. Promising signs of ambition are emerging from all corners of the globe, but far more is needed to limit emissions and adapt to the worsening impacts of climate change. Most governments are currently prioritizing one of two complementary approaches for addressing climate change in the lead-up to 2020. This is according to a joint analysis by UNDP and UNFCCC, released on 19 September 2019, which takes the world's pulse on ambition and provides the most comprehensive review to date of intentions for 2020. Some are revising climate plans previously submitted under the Paris Agreement that stretch until 2025 or 2030, while others are preparing longer-term strategies to decarbonize their economies.

## The Trade Cost of a No-Deal Brexit to the United Kingdom (UNCTAD)
https://unctad.org/en/pages/newsdetails.aspx?OriginalVersionID=2176

Considering its impending departure from the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom (UK) needs to reach its own bilateral agreements with countries that grant preferences to the EU countries in order to maintain preferential market access. Although roll-over trade deals have been agreed with several countries, about 20 percent of UK non-EU exports are at risk of facing higher tariffs from countries such as Turkey, South Africa, Canada and Mexico. A new UNCTAD research shows that if these agreements are not concluded by exit day, it would cost the UK economy almost $2 billion in exports. Sectors such as apparel, textiles, motor vehicles and processed food products would face higher tariffs, with losses as high as $750 million in the motor vehicles sector. This comes at a time when the EU is concluding several agreements with various important partners, like Viet Nam and MERCOSUR countries. These agreements, if not matched by equivalent agreements by the UK, will result in additional losses for UK exporters.

## Microplastics in drinking-water (WHO)
https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/microplastics-in-drinking-water/en/
The World Health Organization (WHO) called on 21 August 2019 for a further assessment of microplastics in the environment and their potential impacts on human health, following the release of an analysis of current research related to microplastics in drinking-water. The Organization also calls for a reduction in plastic pollution to benefit the environment and reduce human exposure. According to the analysis, which summarizes the latest knowledge on microplastics in drinking-water, microplastics larger than 150 micrometres are not likely to be absorbed in the human body and uptake of smaller particles is expected to be limited. Absorption and distribution of very small microplastic particles including in the nano size range may, however, be higher, although the data is extremely limited. Further research is needed to obtain a more accurate assessment of exposure to microplastics and their potential impacts on human health. These include developing standard methods for measuring microplastic particles in water; more studies on the sources and occurrence of microplastics in fresh water; and the efficacy of different treatment processes.
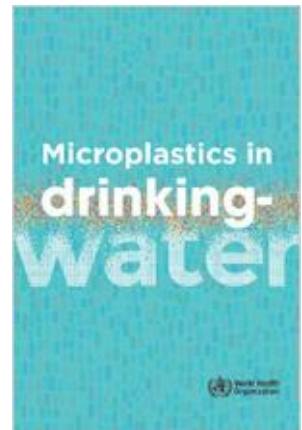
## International Peace and Security

**Concept note for the Security Council debate on the theme "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security: the role of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in combatting terrorist threats"**
*English, French & Spanish:* http://undocs.org/S/2019/742
The Security Council will hold on 25 September 2019 a ministerial debate on the theme "United Nations cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in maintaining peace and security: the contribution of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in countering terrorist threats". The Russian Federation, Security Council President for September, has prepared this concept note.

**Concept note for the Security Council ministerial briefing on the topic "Peace and security in Africa: partnership to strengthen regional peace and security"**
*English, French & Spanish:* http://undocs.org/S/2019/743
The Russian presidency of the Security Council, together with African members of the Council – Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea and South Africa – intend to hold, on 26 September 2019, a ministerial briefing on the topic "Peace and security in Africa: partnership to strengthen regional peace and security". A concept note on the event was jointly prepared by the delegations.

## Report of the Security Council for 2018 (A/73/2)
*English, French & Spanish:* https://undocs.org/A/73/2
Mindful of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council continued to engage on a wide-reaching agenda in accordance with the principles and objectives set forth in the Charter of the United Nations. During the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018, the Council held 288 formal meetings, of which 275 were public. The Council adopted 54 resolutions and 21 presidential statements and issued 87 statements to the press. During the reporting period, the Council conducted three missions. In 2018, the Council continued to focus on a number of serious unresolved conflicts, in particular in the

Middle East and Africa. The impact of these conflicts on civilians was severe. Large-scale humanitarian crises persisted and in some cases worsened, and large flows of displaced people within and across borders continued as a result of conflict. Divisions in the Council prevented it from taking effective action on some key conflicts.

**The United Nations Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites: In Unity and Solidarity for Safe and Peaceful Worship (UNAOC)**
https://un4.me/2kmU6xh
Amidst a global call by Secretary-General António Guterres to "reaffirm the sanctity" of religious sites and keep worshippers safe, the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) on 12 September 2019  launched a new plan of action to "counter hate and violence around the globe".
The plan outlines a wide array of recommendations, such as for the UN to develop a global communications campaign to foster mutual respect and understanding; for States to create multi-disciplinary national plans anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to prevent violent extremism; and for religious leaders to regularly engage in interfaith dialogue.

UN News Centre Story:
- English - https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/09/1046182
- French - https://news.un.org/fr/story/2019/09/1051482
- Spanish - https://news.un.org/es/story/2019/09/1461972
- Portuguese - https://news.un.org/pt/story/2019/09/1686612

## Human Rights

### E-Learning tool on the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms
*English & French:* https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/TrustFund/Pages/Tool.aspx

Interactive, accessible and gender-aware, the e-Learning tool is designed for government officials from LDCs and SIDS as per the mandate of the Trust Fund. However, any government official in charge of human rights issues can use it. The e-Learning Tool can also be useful for UN staff members who are based in the field and headquarters, staff members of regional and international organizations/groups, representatives of NGOs and civil society organizations, members of national human rights institutions and interns who would like to familiarize themselves with the work of the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms.
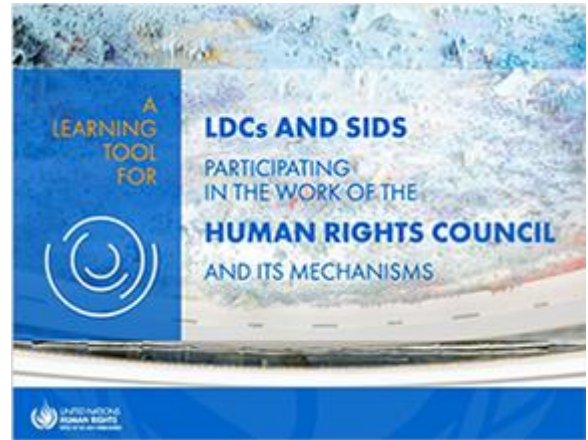
The e-Learning Tool is available in English and French and "offline". Its overall content provides an introduction to the HRC and its work. It includes information on the international human rights system and law. It focuses on the familiarization with the entry points, rules and modalities for State participation in the regular sessions of the Council.

### Preliminary findings of Country Visit to Sri Lanka by the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief
https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=24918&LangID=E

Simmering ethno-religious tensions in Sri Lanka require urgent action by the authorities to strengthen respect for freedom of religion or belief in Sri Lanka, says UN Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief Ahmed Shaheed on 26 August 2019. "There is a serious deficit of trust among ethno-religious communities in Sri Lanka following the deadly Easter Sunday bomb blasts and subsequent mob violence this year, and these tensions must not be ignored," Shaheed said, presenting a report at the end of a 12-day mission to the country.

### Report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic (A/HRC/42/51, 15 August 2019)
*English, French & Spanish:* https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/42/51

Having entered its ninth year, the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic, characterized by intensifying levels of violence, continues to torment civilians who bear the brunt of hostilities, the UN Commission of Inquiry notes in its latest report. In a 21-page report issued on 11 September 2019, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic highlights how on-going hostilities have impacted the lives of Syrians and spawned further mass displacement raising the number of displaced Syrians to approximately 13 million.

## Humanitarian Affairs

**Stepping Up: Refugee Education in Crisis (UNHCR)**
*English:* https://www.unhcr.org/steppingup/
*French:* https://www.unhcr.org/steppingup/fr/
*pdf version of the report in English:* https://un4.me/2kEAJ2W

Refugee children in their millions are missing out on an education, the UN said on Friday, in an appeal to host countries to back more inclusive policies to prevent them from "languishing" in camps for years and losing hope. According to the new UN refugee agency (UNHCR) report, Stepping Up, of 7.1 million refugee youngsters of school age, more than half do not attend lessons. The barriers that prevent them from accessing learning become harder to overcome as they get older, the report shows. Only six in 10 refugee children attend primary school – compared to nine in 10 globally – and only around two in 10 refugees get a secondary education, compared to the world average of more than eight in 10. The trend is even clearer in higher education, where only three in every 100 refugee children are able to pursue their learning, compared with the world average of 37 in 100.

## Justice and International Law

**Treaty Event 2019: Treaties in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (24 - 27 September 2019, United Nations Headquarters)**
English: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/TreatyEvents.aspx?path=Treaty/Focus/Page1_en.xml
French: https://treaties.un.org/Pages/TreatyEvents.aspx?path=Treaty/Focus/Page1_fr.xml

The concept and practice of the annual Treaty Events take root in the Secretary-General's Millennium report (A/54/2000) to the General Assembly where he stated the need to provide "special facilities for the Heads of States or Government to add their signatures to any treaty or convention of which the Secretary-General is the depositary". Ever since, all necessary facilities have been provided for the purpose during the General Debate of each session of the General Assembly, and the Heads of State or Government or Foreign Ministers or other duly authorised state representatives have made use of this unique opportunity to express support for the multilateral treaty framework and the rule of law. As envisioned years ago, the successive treaty events inspired a renewed enthusiasm for participation in these treaties by a growing majority of States. By signing multilateral conventions or depositing their instruments of ratification, accession or through other instruments establishing the consent to be bound, the Member States contribute significantly to the advancement of the rule of law in international relations and the cause of peace.

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Back issues of this newsletter are available at the UNRIC Info Point & Library website:
http://www.unric.org/en/unric-library-newsletter