

## Energy, natural resources and cartography

The conservation, development and use of energy and natural resources continued to be the focus of several UN bodies in 2009, including the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Commission continued to focus on the thematic cluster: agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa. In a resolution adopted in May, the Commission reaffirmed that protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development was an essential requirement for sustainable development.

Speaking before the General Assembly in November, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) outlined the main changes in the work of IAEA over the past 12 years, including improvement of safety standards, expanded assistance to the nuclear power programmes of developing countries, and wider transfer of multilateral nuclear technology in areas such as food and agriculture, health, water resources and the environment. He expressed concern about the possibility of extremist groups having access to nuclear or radioactive materials, and stated that in addressing nuclear programme issues, the international community should let diplomacy and thorough verification take their course.

Asserting that the growth of new and renewable energy was mostly a result of more favourable policies, the Secretary-General called on States to adopt policies stimulating public and private investment and encourage public-private partnerships and international cooperation.

The Fifth World Water Forum was held in March under the theme “Bridging Divides for Water”. The Forum adopted the Istanbul Declaration of Heads of States on Water, the Istanbul Ministerial Statement, the Istanbul Water Guide and the Istanbul Water Consensus. The issue of transboundary water cooperation was the focus of World Water Day (22 March) and one of the main subjects of the *UN-Water Annual Report 2009*.

The Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas adopted resolutions on mechanisms for building spatial data infrastructures, a virtual platform/forum for sharing spatial data infrastructure best practices, and support of spatial data infrastructure in the developing countries of the Americas. The Eighteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific adopted resolutions on regional geodesy, capacity-building in disaster management, and spatially enabled Government and society.

The twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names was held in May in Nairobi. In December, the Economic and Social Council endorsed its recommendations.

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### Energy and natural resources

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The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its seventeenth session (New York, 16 May 2008 and 4–15 May 2009) [E/2009/29], continued to focus on the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa for the 2008–2009 implementation cycle (see p. 799).

Documents before the Commission included the Secretary-General’s reports on policy options and actions for expediting progress in implementation of: agriculture [E/CN.17/2009/3]; rural development [E/CN.17/2009/4]; land [E/CN.17/2009/5]; drought [E/CN.17/2009/6]; desertification [E/CN.17/2009/7]; Africa [E/CN.17/2009/8]; and interlinkages and cross-cutting issues [E/CN.17/2009/9]. Such documents addressed issues related to energy and natural resources.

Noting the growing scarcities of many natural resources and the competing claims to their use, the Commission, in its resolution [E/2009/29 (res. 17/1)], reaffirmed that eradicating poverty, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and protecting and managing the natural resources base of economic and social development were the essential requirements for sustainable development. The Commission called for local, national, regional and global actions to enhance agricultural production, productivity and sustainability by promoting sound water management and saving in agriculture. It called for actions to manage sustainably competing uses of water and land resources by supporting the implementation of sustainable and efficient water resource development and management schemes; address the challenges and opportunities posed by biofuels in view of the world’s food security, energy and sustainable development needs; and promote research and development to enhance the sustainability of biofuels and other bioenergy sources, including through South-South, North-South, and triangular cooperation, and through technical cooperation and exchange of information. It further called for actions to invest in essential infrastructure and services for

rural communities by improving access to reliable and affordable energy services, including renewable and alternative sources of energy.

In preparation for the seventeenth session, intersessional meetings focused on improving agricultural productivity, water use efficiency and rural livelihoods (Bangkok, 28–30 January); African agriculture in the twenty-first century: meeting the challenges, making a sustainable green revolution (Windhoek, Namibia, 9–10 February); and the role of native and desert-adapted species in slowing desertification (Kibbutz Ketura, Israel, 22–30 March).

### Nuclear energy

In August [A/64/257], the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly the 2008 report of IAEA. Presenting the report [A/64/PV.33] and giving his last speech to the General Assembly as the Agency's Director General on 2 November, Mohamed ElBaradei said that since he first spoke to the Assembly in 1998, the Agency had moved from being a relatively unknown technical organization to becoming a major player at the centre of issues critical to international peace and security. The Agency had gained universal respect for its independence and objectivity in nuclear verification, safety and security. It had made considerable progress in bringing the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology to developing countries, improving their access to energy, health care, food and clean water. There had been an expansion in the use of nuclear power, with scores of countries, especially developing countries, expressing interest in introducing it as part of their energy mix for poverty alleviation. As a result, IAEA had adjusted its priorities to focus more on the nuclear power programmes of the "newcomers". Nuclear safety had improved since the shock of Chernobyl in 1986; IAEA safety standards had become the global benchmark and had been adopted by the European Union (EU).

However, the Director General reported, in the past 10 years the annual budget of IAEA's technical cooperation programme had increased only slightly—from \$80 million to \$96 million. A significant increase in funding was required for the Agency to do more. He urged donor States to recognize the link between security and development. By helping to address the root causes of instability and insecurity, including endemic conflicts, poor governance and poverty, countries would less likely be tempted to seek nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction.

The gravest threat the world faced, according to the Director General, was that extremists could get hold of nuclear or radioactive materials. In the wake of the 9/11 attacks, IAEA initiated a comprehensive programme to combat the risk of nuclear terrorism. The nuclear security programme established by IAEA had provided \$50 million in equipment, training and

other assistance to member States over the past three years. However, nuclear security continued to be funded almost entirely from voluntary contributions, which came with many conditions attached and were insufficient and unpredictable. The Director General warned that the number of incidents of illicit trafficking and other unauthorized activities reported to IAEA's Illicit Trafficking Database—over 200 in 2008—remained a cause of concern and might well be only the tip of the iceberg.

IAEA had moved beyond simple verification of declared nuclear material at declared facilities to assessing information on a State's entire nuclear programme and, most importantly, verifying the absence of undeclared activities. Within the limited resources and capabilities available, the Agency had made increasing use of the advanced technology critical to verification, such as remote monitoring, environmental sampling and satellite imagery. IAEA's ability to detect possible clandestine nuclear material and activities depended on the extent to which it was given the necessary legal authority, technology and resources. Regrettably, it faced continuing shortcomings in all three areas, which, if not addressed, could put the entire non-proliferation regime at risk. Additional funding was needed for state-of-the-art technology. The Agency also needed improved and consistent access to top-quality satellite imagery.

An important lesson to be learned from both Iraq and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Director General said, was that diplomacy and thorough verification must be allowed to take their course, however lengthy and tiresome the process might be. The Agency, for its part, must draw conclusions justified by the facts alone.

In the case of Iran, whose nuclear programme remained an issue before the Agency and the Security Council, the Director General reiterated that addressing the concerns of the international community was primarily a matter of confidence-building, which could only be achieved through dialogue. At the same time, Iran needed to clarify a number of questions about its nuclear programme through cooperation with the Agency.

Drawing the Assembly's attention to the growing number of States that had mastered uranium enrichment or plutonium reprocessing, the Director General warned that any of those States had the capacity to produce nuclear weapons in a short time. To address that challenge, the world needed to move from national to multinational control of the nuclear fuel cycle. He proposed to establish a low enriched uranium bank to assure States a guaranteed last-resort supply of nuclear fuel for their reactors so that they might not need their own enrichment or reprocessing capability, with the ultimate goal of the full multinationalization of uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 2 November [meeting 34], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 64/8** [draft: A/64/L.7 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 85].

**Report of the International  
Atomic Energy Agency**

*The General Assembly,*

*Having received* the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency for 2008,

*Taking note* of the statement by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, in which he provided additional information on the main developments in the activities of the Agency during 2009,

*Recognizing* the importance of the work of the Agency,

*Recognizing also* the cooperation between the United Nations and the Agency and the Agreement governing the relationship between the United Nations and the Agency as approved by the General Conference of the Agency on 23 October 1957 and by the General Assembly in the annex to its resolution 1145(XII) of 14 November 1957,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the International Atomic Energy Agency;

2. *Takes note* of resolutions GC(53)/RES/3 approving the appointment of Mr. Yukiya Amano as the next Director General; GC(53)/RES/4 paying tribute to Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei; GC(53)/RES/10 on measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety; GC(53)/RES/11 on nuclear security, including measures to protect against nuclear and radiological terrorism; GC(53)/RES/12 on strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities; GC(53)/RES/13 on strengthening the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications, comprising GC(53)/RES/13 A on non-power nuclear applications and GC(53)/RES/13 B on nuclear power applications; GC(53)/RES/14 on strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol; GC(53)/RES/15 on the implementation of the Agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for the application of safeguards in connection with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; GC(53)/RES/16 on the application of Agency safeguards in the Middle East; GC(53)/RES/17 on Israeli nuclear capabilities; GC(53)/RES/18 on personnel, comprising GC(53)/RES/18 A on staffing of the Agency's secretariat and GC(53)/RES/18 B on women in the secretariat; and decisions GC(53)/DEC/11 on the amendment to article XIV.A of the Statute, GC(53)/DEC/12 on the amendment to article VI of the Statute and GC(53)/DEC/13 on prohibition of armed attack or threat of attack against nuclear installations, during operation or under construction, adopted by the General Conference of the Agency at its fifty-third regular session, held from 14 to 18 September 2009;

3. *Expresses its appreciation* for the twelve years of distinguished service by Dr. ElBaradei as Director General of the Agency, during which, in 2005, the Agency and its Director General were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and extends its best wishes to Mr. Amano, the incoming Director General of the Agency;

4. *Reaffirms its strong support* for the indispensable role of the Agency in encouraging and assisting the development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful uses, in technology transfer to developing countries and in nuclear safety, verification and security;

5. *Appeals* to Member States to continue to support the activities of the Agency;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the Director General of the Agency the records of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly relating to the activities of the Agency.

**New and renewable sources of energy**

In response to Assembly resolution 62/197 [YUN 2007, p. 1041], the Secretary-General in August submitted a report [A/64/277] on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, which discussed the development, transfer and diffusion of renewable energy technologies; investment; policy options; and international cooperation.

The Secretary-General noted that world primary energy demand was projected to increase by 45 per cent from 2006 to 2030. Energy supply would continue to be based primarily on fossil fuels, with coal projected to account for more than a third of incremental global energy demand through 2030.

There had been remarkable growth of renewable energy in global markets in recent years, though the share in global energy supply remained low. Renewable energy from wind, solar, small hydro (excluding large hydro), modern biomass (including biofuels but excluding traditional biomass) and geothermal supplied 2.4 per cent of the world's final energy consumption. Wind had the largest share in renewable electric power capacity, followed by small hydro. In 2008, power capacity added from renewable energy surpassed for the first time power capacity added from conventional sources in the EU and the United States.

Besides informational, legal, regulatory, market, institutional, infrastructural, political and cultural barriers, financial barriers were the most critical constraint for the development, transfer and costs of renewable energy technologies, the Secretary-General said. Although the initial capital investment costs of renewable energy were often high, renewable technologies could offer prospects for a low-cost sustainable energy supply once they reached scale and gained operating experience, thereby lowering costs and prices.

Global investment in renewable energy generation projects reached \$117 billion in 2008—a growth rate of 13 per cent compared with 2007. In fact, 2008 marked the first year that investment in new power generation capacity from renewable energy technologies was greater than investment in fossil-fuelled technologies. Most of it was invested in the wind sector (with a total financial investment of \$51.8 billion), fol-

lowed by the solar sector (\$33.5 billion), especially in the markets of the EU, North America, China, Eastern Europe and Latin America. The price rise of crude oil in mid-July 2008 had at first positive impacts on renewable energy demand, but the roughly halving of oil prices afterwards, owing largely to the global recession, had reduced economic incentives for new investment. In the first quarter of 2009, new financial investment in the renewable energy sector decreased by 53 per cent compared with the first quarter of 2008 to \$13.3 billion.

Stating that recent significant growth of renewable energy was mostly a result of more favourable policies amid increasing concerns about climate change and energy security, the Secretary-General described a number of policy tools and measures that promoted renewable energy, including feed-in laws, renewable energy quotas and portfolio standards, public competitive bidding, direct public financing and investment to promote renewable energy. The feed-in laws—enacted in some 50 countries—obliged utilities to purchase power generated from renewables at a price set by the regulatory authority, and therefore, offered producers of electricity from renewables a guaranteed feed-in tariff. The Secretary-General indicated that a possible future international policy tool could be a global feed-in tariff programme—a global fund providing guaranteed purchase prices to producers in developing countries for a 20-year period.

International financing institutions continued to play a crucial role in mobilizing financial resources for the promotion of new and renewable energy. Thirty-five per cent of the World Bank Group's total energy lending commitments of \$2.7 billion in 2008 went to 95 renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in 54 countries—an 87 per cent increase compared with 2007. The UN system continued to support the promotion and expansion of new and renewable sources of energy in developing countries. UN-Energy, the inter-agency mechanism of the UN system, brought together 20 UN entities and the World Bank to promote system-wide collaboration. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to promote the use of new and renewable energy resources in developing countries. Renewable energy formed the core of the energy portfolio of the United Nations Development Programme, whose energy-related project financing had risen in 2007 to \$1.7 billion, about 80 per cent of which was for renewable energy project development, clean energy market creation and catalysing carbon financing.

The Secretary-General said that rising global energy demand required greater energy diversification and an increase in the share of new and renewable energy in the global energy supply. The current share of renewable energy in the global energy supply was

low mainly because of the high costs of many renewable energy technologies. The cost-competitiveness of renewable energy technologies should be increased through policies that ensured research, development, deployment and transfer of those technologies, especially to developing countries. Such policies could stimulate public and private investment and encourage public-private partnerships.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 21 December [meeting 66], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/64/420/Add.9], adopted **resolution 64/206** without vote [agenda item 53 (i)].

#### Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 53/7 of 16 October 1998, 54/215 of 22 December 1999 and 55/205 of 20 December 2000, and recalling also its resolutions 56/200 of 21 December 2001, 58/210 of 23 December 2003, 60/199 of 22 December 2005 and 62/197 of 19 December 2007 on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy,

*Recalling also* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

*Reiterating* the principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and of Agenda 21, and recalling the recommendations and conclusions contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”) concerning energy for sustainable development,

*Recalling with appreciation* the Interactive Thematic Dialogue of the General Assembly on “Energy efficiency, energy conservation and new and renewable sources of energy” held on 18 June 2009 and its contribution to the intergovernmental dialogue on energy issues,

*Welcoming* the political impetus recently given to the development of new and renewable sources of energy worldwide, including in particular in developing countries and in countries with economies in transition,

*Welcoming also* the offer of the Government of India to host the Delhi International Renewable Energy Conference from 27 to 29 October 2010,

*Welcoming further* initiatives that aim to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services for sustainable development in order to contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Recognizing* that the development of new and renewable sources of energy plays a significant role in the diversification of the energy mix, achieving greater energy efficiency, supporting and accelerating economic growth and social development, creating employment opportunities, ensuring energy access and availability, promoting energy cooperation and rendering environmental benefits, thus contributing to achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals,

*Emphasizing* that the increased use and promotion of new and renewable sources of energy for sustainable de-

velopment, including solar-thermal, photovoltaic, biomass, wind, hydro, tidal, ocean and geothermal forms, could make a significant contribution towards the achievement of sustainable development and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Acknowledging* that increased use of new and renewable sources of energy could offer increased access to modern energy services,

*Noting* that, in addition to increasing the efficiency of energy production and use, expanding the use of new and renewable sources of energy and advanced clean energy technology offers options that could improve global and local environmental conditions,

*Recognizing* that the current share of new and renewable sources of energy in the global energy supply is still low, which is due, among other factors, to the high costs of many renewable energy technologies, particularly in their development phase, and underlining the critical contribution that a rapid reduction in those costs could make to the promotion of such technologies,

*Recognizing also* the contributions of new and renewable sources of energy to the reduction of greenhouse gases and addressing climate change, which poses serious risks and challenges,

*Noting* that the global demand for energy continues to rise, while recognizing that the share of energy derived from new and renewable resources remains considerably below its significant potential despite a recent increase, and underlining in this regard the need to continue to tap new and renewable sources of energy,

*Emphasizing* the need to take further action to mobilize the provision of adequate financial resources, of sufficient quality and arriving in a timely manner, as well as the transfer of advanced technology to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for providing efficient and wider use of energy sources, in particular new and renewable sources of energy,

*Reaffirming* that each country must take primary responsibility for its own development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized in the achievement of sustainable development, and recognizing the need for the creation of an enabling environment at all levels for investment and sustained financing,

*Acknowledging* that the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council continue to play a pivotal role as forums for the discussion of new and renewable sources of energy and sustainable development,

*Welcoming* efforts by Governments and institutions that have embarked on policies and programmes that seek to expand the use of new and renewable sources of energy for sustainable development, and recognizing the contributions of regional initiatives, institutions and regional economic commissions in supporting the efforts of countries, in particular developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in this respect,

*Noting with appreciation* the establishment of the International Renewable Energy Agency, which aims at promoting the diffusion and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy,

*Noting also with appreciation* regional mechanisms and initiatives for energy cooperation and integration to encourage the use of new and renewable sources of energy such as, inter alia, the PetroCaribe Alternative Energy Source Financing Fund, the Mesoamerican integration and development project, the Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme, the energy initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the Mediterranean Solar Plan, the Africa-European Union Energy Partnership, the Baltic Sea Region Energy Cooperation, and the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate,

*Noting with concern* that millions of poor people are unable to afford to pay for modern energy services, even when those services are available, and emphasizing the need to address the challenge of access to and affordability of modern energy services for all, in particular the poor,

*Emphasizing* the need to promote an enabling environment for the promotion and use of new and renewable energy, including through the removal of obstacles at all levels,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Stresses* the urgent need to continue to increase the share of new and renewable sources of energy in the global energy mix;
3. *Reaffirms* the need for the full implementation of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, as the intergovernmental framework for sustainable development;
4. *Emphasizes* the need to improve access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services and resources for sustainable development, and takes into consideration the diversity of situations, national policies and specific needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
5. *Encourages* the development of viable market-oriented strategies that could result in the most rapid reduction of the cost of new and renewable sources of energy and increase the competitiveness of those technologies, including through the adoption, as appropriate, of public policies for research, development and market deployment;
6. *Emphasizes* the need to intensify research and development in support of energy for sustainable development, which will require increased commitment on the part of Governments and all other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, including the private sector, civil society and international organizations, to deploy financial and human resources for accelerating research efforts;
7. *Encourages* efforts by Governments aimed at creating and developing an enabling environment at all levels to ensure the promotion and use of new and renewable sources of energy;
8. *Calls upon* Governments, as well as relevant international and regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders, to combine, as appropriate, the increased use of new and renewable energy resources, more efficient use of energy, greater reliance on advanced energy technologies, including cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the sustainable use of traditional energy resources, which could meet the growing need for energy services in the longer term to achieve sustainable development;
9. *Encourages* global, regional and national initiatives on new and renewable energies to promote access to energy, including new and renewable sources of energy, for

the poorest and to improve energy efficiency and conservation by resorting to a mix of available technologies, taking fully into account the provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation concerning energy for sustainable development;

10. *Welcomes* the efforts of some Member States to establish national voluntary new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency targets, and encourages others to do the same;

11. *Encourages* Member States to make greater use of effective policy tools such as voluntary national, sub-national or regional goals, programmes and targets, as appropriate, to increase access to energy, energy efficiency and the share of renewable energies;

12. *Calls upon* Governments to take further action to mobilize the provision of financial resources, technology transfer, capacity-building and the diffusion of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, as set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

13. *Calls upon* the international community to support the efforts of the African countries in promoting the development, production and use of new and renewable sources of energy, recognizing the special needs of Africa for reliable and affordable energy supplies and services;

14. *Also calls upon* the international community to support the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States in their efforts to develop and utilize new and renewable energy, inter alia, through financial and technical assistance and capacity-building;

15. *Reiterates its call for* all relevant funding institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors, as well as regional funding institutions and non-governmental organizations, to continue to support, as appropriate, efforts aimed at the development of the energy sector in developing countries and countries with economies in transition on the basis of environment-friendly new and renewable sources of energy of demonstrated viability, while taking fully into account the development structure of energy-based economies of developing countries, and to assist in the attainment of the levels of investment necessary to expand energy supplies, including beyond urban areas;

16. *Notes and encourages* ongoing activities related to the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy within the United Nations system, and acknowledges the role of UN-Energy in promoting system-wide collaboration in the area of energy;

17. *Encourages* the United Nations system to continue to raise awareness of the importance of energy for sustainable development, including the need for the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy and the increased role they can play in the global energy supply, particularly in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication;

18. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to promote the mobilization of financial resources, in a stable and predictable manner, and technical assistance, and to enhance the effectiveness and the full utilization of existing international funds for the effective implementation of national and regional high-priority projects in the area of new and renewable sources of energy;

19. *Stresses* that the wider use and exploration of available and additional new and renewable sources of energy require technology transfer and diffusion on a global scale, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account, inter alia, the initiatives taken by Member States and international organizations to create an enabling environment at all levels for the promotion and use of new and renewable energy, including measures to improve access to such technologies;

21. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy".

## Natural resources

### Water resources

The Commission on Sustainable Development, in May [E/2009/29 (res. 17/1)], stressed the need to manage sustainably competing uses of water and land resources, called for policies that managed water and land resources in an integrated manner and called for action to strengthen the knowledge base and information-sharing on drought, water stress and drought risk management.

The Fifth World Water Forum (Istanbul, Turkey, 16–22 March), which coincided with the observance of World Water Day (22 March), brought together 33,058 attendees from 192 countries under the theme "Bridging Divides for Water". Discussions were held on six major themes: global changes and risk management; advancing human development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); managing and protecting water resources and their supply systems to meet human and environmental needs; governance and management; finance; and education, knowledge and capacity development. Outcomes of the Forum included the adoption of: the Istanbul Declaration of Heads of States on Water, focusing on promoting water solidarity and security in their countries, as well as the tools needed to face up to climate change; the Istanbul Ministerial Statement and the Istanbul Water Guide [A/63/852]—a list of 140 recommendations which provided guidance on how to improve water security and water management; and the Istanbul Water Consensus—a commitment to prepare and implement action plans and strategies for water-related challenges in cities around the world. The Forum also put forward proposals on water-related policies, including the establishment of a permanent international "Parliamentarians' Helpdesk" to aid political cooperation on water legislation and its implementation.

On 16 March, the third edition of the *United Nations World Water Development Report*, "Water

in a Changing World”, was launched at the Forum. The themes addressed by the report included climate change, the MDGs, groundwater, biodiversity, water and migration, water and infrastructure and biofuels. On 22 March, World Water Day was celebrated on the theme “Shared Water–Shared Opportunities”, focusing on transboundary waters. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization led the activities with the support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Expressing concern that approximately 884 million people lacked access to safe drinking water and that over 2.5 billion did not have access to basic sanitation, the Human Rights Council, in its resolution 12/8 of 1 October [A/HRC/12/50], reaffirmed that international human rights instruments entailed obligations for States and parties in relation to access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

UN-Water, an inter-agency mechanism [YUN 2004, p. 1034] working to strengthen coordination and coherence among all UN bodies dealing with water-related issues, continued to address issues related to the global water crisis. Over the course of 2009, UN-Water’s six operational task forces continued to focus on: sanitation; gender and water; indicators, monitoring and reporting; transboundary waters; country-level coordination; and water and climate change. The Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund—the UN mechanism tasked with monitoring progress towards the MDG drinking-water and sanitation target—worked to prepare its 2010 JMP report and the regional “snap shot” of drinking water and sanitation in Black Sea countries. The UN-Water Global Annual Assessment on Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS), the UN mechanism coordinated by WHO and tasked with analysing the institutional and financial capacity of countries to make progress towards the MDG water and sanitation target, established a task force to provide advice on methodology, content and style of its first comprehensive GLAAS report, to be presented in 2010.

UN-Water organized a seminar during the 2009 World Water Week (Stockholm, Sweden, 16–22 August), which focused on the theme “Managing Water in Times of Global Crises—How can the UN System Step up its Efforts?” A number of other seminars, workshops and side events were also held.

**Communication.** On 6 March [A/64/65], the Sudan transmitted to the Secretary-General the Muscat Declaration on Water, containing the conclusions and recommendations adopted by the first Ministerial Forum on Water of the Group of 77 (Muscat, Oman, 23–25 February).

## Water Decade midterm review

In December, the General Assembly, by resolution 64/198, called for a comprehensive midterm review of the International Decade for Action “Water for Life” (2005–2015) [YUN 2003, p. 1034] through two events in 2010: a high-level interactive dialogue in March and an international conference in June in Dushanbe, Tajikistan.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 21 December [meeting 66], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/64/420/Add.1], adopted **resolution 64/198** without vote [agenda item 53 (a)].

#### Midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005–2015

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 55/196 of 20 December 2000, by which it proclaimed 2003 the International Year of Freshwater, its resolution 58/217 of 23 December 2003, by which it proclaimed that the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005–2015, would commence on World Water Day, 22 March 2005, and its resolution 59/228 of 22 December 2004,

*Emphasizing* that water is critical for sustainable development, including environmental integrity and the eradication of poverty and hunger, and is indispensable for human health and well-being,

*Recalling* the provisions of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 adopted at its nineteenth special session, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (“Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”) and the decisions of the Economic and Social Council and of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its sixth session relating to freshwater,

*Reaffirming* the internationally agreed development goals on water and sanitation, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and determined to achieve the goal to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, and the goals set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation as well as to develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries,

*Recalling* Human Rights Council resolutions 7/22 of 28 March 2008 and 12/8 of 1 October 2009, on human rights and access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

*Taking note* of national, regional and international efforts to implement the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005–2015, and of numerous recommendations from international and regional water and water-related events, with a view to taking concrete actions to accelerate progress at all levels towards achieving the internationally

agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,

*Taking note also* of the holding of the Fifth World Water Forum in Istanbul, Turkey, from 16 to 22 March 2009, and noting that the Sixth World Water Forum will be held in Marseille, France, in March 2012,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General;
2. *Welcomes* the activities related to the implementation of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005–2015, undertaken by Member States, the Secretariat and the organizations of the United Nations system, inter alia, through inter-agency work, as well as contributions from major groups, and emphasizes the importance of country-level implementation of the Decade;
3. *Encourages* Member States, the Secretariat, organizations of the United Nations system through their coordination mechanism, and major groups to continue their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;
4. *Welcomes* the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development at its twelfth, thirteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth sessions on the issues of water and sanitation, and looks forward to any relevant activities of the Commission;
5. *Welcomes* the generous offer of the Government of Tajikistan to host, in June 2010, a high-level international conference on the midterm comprehensive review of the implementation of the Decade;
6. *Invites* the President of the General Assembly to convene a high-level interactive dialogue of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly in New York on 22 March 2010, World Water Day, on the implementation of the Decade;
7. *Stresses* the importance of the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous people and other local communities, in the implementation of the Decade at all levels, including its midterm comprehensive review;
8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a note on the organization of work of the conference;
9. *Invites* the relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system to actively engage in the preparations for the high-level conference;
10. *Invites* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with UN-Water, to take appropriate actions to support Member States in the implementation of the second half of the Decade;
11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution, as well as on the activities planned by the Secretary-General and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system for the Decade.

## Cartography

### UN Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas

The Ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas (New York, 10–14 August) [E/CONF.99/3] was held in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2005/231 [YUN 2005, p. 1131]. The Conference was attended by 81 representatives of 27 countries and 16 specialized agencies and international scientific organizations. The meeting aimed at providing a regional forum where Governmental officials, planners, scientists and experts from the Americas and other regions could meet to report on efforts to develop and implement national and regional spatial data infrastructures and to address the common needs, problems and experiences in the field of surveying and mapping, cartography, remote sensing, land and geographical information systems.

The work of the Conference centred around three technical committees on: strategy, policy, economic and institutional issues and spatial data infrastructure and their development in the Americas; geospatial data collection, management and dissemination; and best practices and applications.

The Conference adopted resolutions on: work-plan of the Permanent Committee on Spatial Data Infrastructure for the Americas and establishment of working groups; mechanisms for building spatial data infrastructures; new study on the status of mapping by country and region; forum for sharing spatial data infrastructure best practices; follow-up meeting on disaster risk management and spatial data infrastructure; funding issues; and support of spatial data infrastructure in the developing countries of the Americas, in particular in the Caribbean. The Conference recommended to the Council that the Tenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas be convened in 2013.

### UN Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific

The Eighteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, 26–29 October) [E/CONF.100/9] was held in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2007/275 [YUN 2007, p. 1044]. The theme of the Conference was “Spatial enablement and the response to climate change and the Millennium Development Goals”. The meeting was attended by 149 representatives of 37 countries and 12 specialized agencies and international scientific organizations. The primary objective of the event was to provide a regional forum

where Government officials, planners, scientists and experts from the Asia and Pacific region and from other regions could meet to report on efforts to develop and implement national and regional spatial data infrastructures and to address common needs, problems, experiences and best practices in the field of cartography and geographic information.

The work of the Conference centred around three technical committees on: Geographical Information System, remote sensing and geodesy for disaster management; spatial data infrastructure and spatially enabled Government; and geospatial data collection, management and dissemination.

The Conference adopted resolutions on regional geodesy; capacity-building in disaster management; data access; data integration; spatially enabled Government and society; the Annual Forum on Land Administration; and global geographic information management.

The Conference recommended to the Council that the Nineteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific be held in 2012.

### **Standardization of geographical names**

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2008/241 [YUN 2008, p. 1140], the twenty-fifth session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names was held in Nairobi from 5 to 12 May [E/2009/58]. The session focused on assisting Member States in the geographical information field and related cartographic areas and supporting the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, whose tenth session was scheduled for 2012. The Group of Experts considered reports from its 10 working groups and 14 linguistic/geographical divisions, as well as reports from the liaison officers and international organizations. The Group proposed that the twenty-sixth session be held in the second quarter of 2011 in either Geneva or Vienna.

The Council took note of the report of the session on 29 July (**decision 2009/243**) and endorsed the proposal relating to the next session on 15 December (**decision 2009/269**).