

# Weekly News



ESCWA

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

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## AARHUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT ESCWA EXPLORE ECONOMIC CHALLENGES IN THE REGION

On 17 October 2012, a group of students from the Danish University of Aarhus visited ESCWA headquarters and learned about its objectives and programmes. The students were briefed on the role of ESCWA, as one of the UN Regional Commissions, and the opportunities and challenges facing the region.

The students were received by ESCWA Chief Economist and Director of the Economic Development and Globalization Division (EDGD) Abdallah Al Dardari, who spoke about regional economic growth; the creation of job opportunities; the role of governments in pushing the investments further, as well as the necessity of developing gender sensitive economic and social strategies. In response to questions raised by the visiting students, Al Dardari also tackled important issues like corruption in the region; inflation; money power alliances; and labour migration.

## ESCWA SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR POLLUTION REDUCTION IN LEBANON



ESCWA Supports the «National Campaign for Air Pollution Reduction in Lebanon through Efficient Energy Use in Land Transportation». This Campaign is led by IPT Energy Centre (IPTEC) with the support of the Lebanese Ministry of Environment (MoE), and the UN Development Program (UNDP). For this purpose, a press conference was held at the MoE on 11 October 2012 under the auspices of Lebanese Minister of Environment Nazem El Khoury and in the presence of IPTEC President Toni Issa, ESCWA Director of the Sustainable Development and Productivity Division Roula Majdalani, Chief of Lebanese Gas Stations Syndicate Sami Brax, in addition to representatives from UNDP and ESCWA.

In her statement, Majdalani said that 28 per cent is the ratio of the transport sector consumption of fuel oil, which causes an annual emission of more than 4 million tons of carbon dioxiderated second after the electricity generation sector. She added that these rates will increase in the absence of integrated policies, which take into account the environmental and socio-economic dimensions in development plans; focus on raising energy efficiency; rely on the use of clean fuel in this sector; encourage the use of public transport; and improve traffic management.

Majdalani added that ESCWA gives special attention to sustainable development issues through providing a framework for sectoral policies formulation and coordination

## STATISTICS AT THE SERVICE OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES



Given the important role played by statisticians in producing statistics that meet policies needs of national priority, ESCWA held the first regional workshop on «Effective Use of Statistics for Policy» in Jordan's capital, Amman, on 26-28 September 2012. Participants included 16 representatives of heads of statistical offices and experts in policy making.

The workshop aimed at discussing the draft Conceptual Framework on the Effective Use of Statistics in Policy and reaching a common understanding of its scope, content and objectives; and developing a knowledge information base on effective areas where statistics were used in policy making formulation and implementation in the Arab region, to encourage

## ESCWA SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR POLLUTION REDUCTION IN LEBANON (Cont.)

among member countries; a forum for expertise and knowledge and an information observatory; as well as through providing technical specialized studies and reports; and organizing capacity building programs, communication and discussion roundtables for knowledge exchange among specialists in Member countries. On the Campaign, she said that its content conveyed a message both at the internal level on the importance of concerting joint national efforts, and at the external level as Lebanon was a part of this world and the international community, and committed to international resolutions in this field, especially to the outcomes of Rio and Rio+20 Summits.

### Issa

For his part, Issa thanked the Minister of Environment for adopting IPTEC, which is a research and scientific centre established by IPT Gas Company, as a first of its kind in Lebanon and the Arab region. He added that this campaign led by IPTEC with the support of the Ministry of Environment, ESCWA and UNDP, was mainly based on ESCWA's 2011 report on "Policies and Measures to Promote Sustainable Use of Energy in the Transport Sector in the ESCWA Region," with the aim of achieving a sustainable transport through the harmonization between the transport sector needs and the obsession to reduce pollution resulting from gases, dioxide carbon emissions and pollutants.

### Khoury

Minister Khoury delivered a statement in which he pointed out that the "air quality" is one of the main axes of interest for the ministry. He added in this context the Lebanese Government joined Montreal Protocol, by which Lebanon was held internationally responsible through participating with the international community in exerting efforts towards protecting the ozone layer and reducing its depletion, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and Kyoto Protocol in 2006, after which the MoE issued in 2011 the Second National Report that presented a survey on the greenhouse gases in Lebanon.

## STATISTICS AT THE SERVICE OF DEVELOPMENT POLICIES (Cont.)

self-learning from successful and good practices in addition to sharing the knowledge and documenting it.

In the meeting, ESCWA presented its Conceptual Framework on the Effective Use of Statistics in Policy during the meeting, which included guidelines that help experts in identifying and documenting success stories in the field of the effective use of statistics in policy making and implementation. Moreover, seven national working papers were also submitted on good practices prepared in joint cooperation between statistics and policy experts in each of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, Oman and Palestine.

The workshop concluded with a set of recommendations and an action plan to follow up on its results, most important of which was the periodic development and maintenance of the Framework to document good practices through convening workshops with the participation of statisticians, policy makers and researchers; and the organization trainings to raise the competency of users and producers of statistics to effectively use statistics in public policy. The Conceptual Framework and the outcome of this workshop will be further discussed during the Tenth Session of the ESCWA Statistical Committee, to be held in Cairo during

December 2012.

## AARHUS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT ESCWA (Cont.)



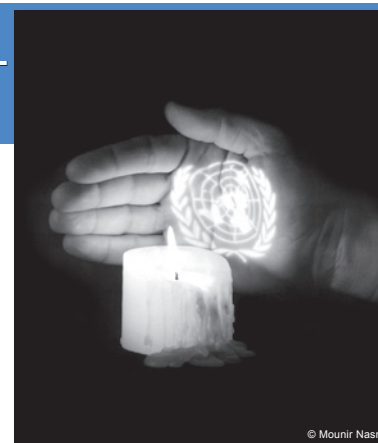
The students then visited ESCWA Library, where they were briefed by Chief Librarian Mohammad Bakleh on the wealth of reference and resource materials that ESCWA maintains for the benefit of students and scholars interested in the works of the UN and the field of international affairs and relations.



## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS:

### UN DAY

On 24 October 1945, the United Nations was formally established after its founding members committed to launching an international system concerned about preserving international



peace and security. In 1971, the UN General Assembly recommended that the day be observed by Member States as a public holiday. Traditionally, this day is characterized by meetings, discussions and exhibits on the goals and achievements of the organization.

At the General Assembly Hall, this day is usually marked by organizing an international music concert, and sometimes arrangements are made to plan other special occasions. This day also features two statements to be delivered by the UN Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly.

In addition, special meetings are organized to brief non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on UN related topics. Sometimes, schools and civil society institutions organize "peace marches" and other celebrations.