



Meet Mr. Liu Zhenmin – the new USG of UN DESA

For many a seasoned diplomat, Mr. Liu Zhenmin striding the UN halls is a familiar sight. After all, during his career spanning over 35 years, Mr. Liu has been deeply involved in finding multilateral solutions to global problems and even served as his country's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations. On 26 July this year, he entered the UN building in quite a different role.

Mr. Liu now heads the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) – the institution that holds up the development pillar of the UN Secretariat. His top priority is to support countries big and small in achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

“The 2030 Agenda is a truly transformative and global endeavour,” said Mr. Liu. “For the first time in history, all members of the United Nations have charted a common development path with targets and responsibilities for developed and developing countries alike. We all have our share to do towards this common goal.”

“As head of UN DESA, it is my job to ensure the Department does its utmost to support Member States in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.”

With many years of experience in multilateral climate change negotiations, including the conclusion of the Kyoto Protocol and the historic Paris Agreement, Mr. Liu has the skills

necessary to help countries with diverging positions work together to solve the planet's most pressing issues.

"Mr. Liu also widely participated in the international activities on the protection of our planet including Antarctica and the Oceans," said UN Secretary-General António Guterres in a statement. "Over the last several years, in various capacities, he has been consistently highlighting and advocating for sustainable development issues."

Mr. Liu takes the reins at the Department at a turbulent time for international cooperation. Economic globalization is increasingly coming under fire for failing to deliver decent jobs, and isolationist rhetoric is gaining traction in many countries.

"We have to realize that economic globalization has gone too far to turn back now," said Mr. Liu. "For better or for worse, we are all part of it and instead of isolating ourselves, we should look for ways to make globalization work for everyone and leave no one behind. Ultimately, this is what the 2030 Agenda is striving to accomplish."

Keeping the promise of leaving no one behind will require helping the furthest behind first. It means enhancing the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, youth and women in societies. In international relations, it means special consideration for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

During his tenure, Mr. Liu will place a special focus on these social groups and countries, including strengthening the capacity building offered by UN DESA.

"For the Least Developed Countries, the 2030 Agenda presents a tremendous opportunity to lift millions out of poverty and enter a path of sustained prosperity," he said. "But these countries often lack the capacity – be it institutions, knowledge or policy integration – to grasp this chance. UN DESA's experts are working with governments to help them fully take advantage of the historic Sustainable Development Goals and the change they bring."

For more information:

Biography of Mr. Liu Zhenmin



SDGs two years on – where are we and where do we need to be?

On 25 September 2015, all 193 Member States of the United Nations unanimously adopted a bold new global agenda to end poverty by 2030 and pursue a sustainable future. Two years on, are we on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)? How can we pursue such a long-term agenda in a world that is changing so rapidly? How to maintain the initial enthusiasm when the daily grind of implementation sets in?

Where we are

The [Sustainable Development Goals report](#), recently released by UN DESA's Statistics Division, offers some answers. The study finds that implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has begun in earnest, but it needs to accelerate to fulfill the SDGs' promise of eradicating poverty and building peaceful, inclusive societies for all on a clean planet by 2030.

The report notes considerable progress in many areas, but it also concludes that the benefits of development are not equally shared. For example, between 2010 and 2016 women spent, on average, almost triple the amount of time on unpaid domestic and care work as men. And despite the global unemployment rate falling from 6.1 per cent in 2010 to 5.7 per cent in 2016, youth were nearly three times more likely than adults to be without a job.

Reaching the most vulnerable groups – the furthest behind – first will therefore be crucial to delivering on the 2030 Agenda's promise to leave no one behind.

Encouraging progress

Uneven progress should not obscure the significant gains countries have made in addressing poverty, hunger, inequalities and climate change. Two years in, many countries are aligning their national development strategies and plans as well as their budgets, to prioritize an integrated delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

Even more countries are willing to show off their progress to the world and make it a subject of an open discussion with other countries, the civil society and other stakeholders. This unique learning process, called the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), which is helping countries benefit from each other's experiences, is gaining momentum.

The first High-level Political Forum to review SDGs progress, held in 2016, saw 22 countries present their VNRs. This year, it was already 43 and over 40 countries have volunteered to present in 2018, as of August, 2017. The willingness of countries to publicly display their efforts towards sustainable development and listen to other states' comments and suggestions is a very encouraging sign that they have, indeed, progress to be proud of.

Putting SDGs in the global spotlight

The acceleration required to meet the Goals by 2030 will not happen on its own. A resolute, sustained effort by political leaders, the private sector, civil society and ordinary citizens is indispensable to achieve the goals. But for that effort to materialize, the goals need to be recognized and embraced by all sectors of our societies.

That is where the [SDG Advocates](#) step in. These 17 eminent persons – from heads of state and government, to successful entrepreneurs to sport and show business stars – are assisting the UN Secretary-General in raising awareness of the SDGs.

This year, most of them will attend the 72nd Session of the General Assembly to continue making the case for accelerated SDGs action and to spread awareness to the people of the world.

They will also meet with the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General to plan for future advocacy opportunities, appear in the SDG Media Zone and participate in numerous side events throughout the week. Some Advocates, such as Richard Curtis, are also holding their own side events to promote the SDGs.

For more information:

[Sustainable Development Goals](#)

HIGHLIGHTS



Strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda

In the 40 years since the adoption of the landmark Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA), the world has experienced an unprecedented economic and political transformation. Nowhere has this change been deeper and more rapid than in the South. The time is ripe to reflect on how South-South and triangular cooperation have emerged as distinctive platforms for

international development cooperation.

The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) High-level Symposium, which will be held by UN DESA and the Argentine Government from 6 to 8 September in Buenos Aires, will look for ways to further boost the contribution of South-South cooperation and other novel partnerships to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A recent UN DESA survey found that more than 85 developing countries are already providing development assistance, including technical expertise or capacity building, to other developing countries. Many have a dedicated entity responsible for South-South and triangular cooperation.

The two-day Symposium in Argentina will bring together for frank and focused discussion 120 participants, including ministers, representatives of civil society, academia, think tanks, private sector, multilateral development banks and international organizations as well as parliamentarians and local authorities.

The participants will explore the challenges and opportunities faced by South-South and triangular cooperation as well as the many different strengths that may make these forms of collaboration particularly fit for advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They will also share their knowledge and experiences in implementing SDGs to learn from each other's successes and mistakes, and to generate concrete policy recommendations.

The Symposium will be the first preparatory meeting ahead of the 2018 Development Cooperation Forum and a key milestone in the run-up to the 40th anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (BAPA) for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

Established by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2007, the Development Cooperation Forum reviews trends and progress in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and financing. It promotes greater coherence among different development actors and activities.

For more information:

[DCF Argentina High-level Symposium](#)

GET INVOLVED



Working towards safe, orderly and regular migration

At a recent high-level meeting to address large movements of refugees and migrants, held by the General Assembly on 19 September 2016, Member States decided to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The compact is expected to be adopted at an intergovernmental conference at the United Nations in New York in September 2018. The participation of civil society groups and other stakeholders will be essential to

making the compact a success.

In preparation for negotiations in 2018 on the global compact, the General Assembly is convening six thematic meetings between April and November 2017 in Geneva, New York and Vienna to discuss the topic of international migration in all its dimensions.

In addition, the United Nations regional economic commissions, located in Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva and Santiago, are organizing discussions to examine regional and sub-regional aspects of international migration.

The President of the General Assembly is also convening several informal interactive hearings with the civil society, the private sector, diaspora groups and migrant organizations between June 2017 and July 2018. Civil society consultations will also be held at the regional level. Lastly, Member States have been invited to hold national multi-stakeholder consultations as part of the preparatory process.

Many civil society and other stakeholders are already actively participating in these and other preparatory activities for the migration compact. To get involved in these global and regional events, please go to refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact. For information on national consultations, please consult the relevant national government or United Nations entity in your country.

You can also show your support for refugees and migrants by joining the TOGETHER campaign, launched by the UN in September 2016. TOGETHER is a global initiative to change negative perceptions and attitudes towards refugees and migrants, and to strengthen the social contract between host countries and communities.

Whether you are a global citizen or a representative of a civil society organization, a government or a private company, there are many ways for you to get involved and #jointogether. For further details go to <http://together.un.org/>.

EXPERT VOICES



Tourism can play a major role in eradicating poverty

In 2017, we celebrate the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. Tourism industry is one of the largest in the world, contributing 10 per cent of the global GDP, creating one in every eleven jobs on the planet and employing almost twice as many women as other sectors. Daniela Bas, Director of UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, explains how inclusive, accessible tourism can help to end poverty while leaving no one behind.

Travelling for leisure is probably not on the minds of over 700 million people still living in extreme poverty worldwide. How can tourism help them?

Tourism is one of the biggest industries in the world today. It is a growing source of foreign and domestic revenue for both developing and developed countries and can contribute to poverty reduction through the creation of jobs and improved infrastructure.

It is true that people living in poverty may not think about traveling for leisure, but they still could have access to local tourist attractions or services if governments create a system that sees this segment of the population as potential clients. Some possibilities include granting free access to certain attractions or having lower fees for local communities. In this case, spaces for tourism are viewed beyond their economic value and are recognised for their impact on the wellbeing of the domestic population. This is invaluable.

The tourism industry should also provide services and products that are inclusive and accessible. There are millions of tourists with disabilities, older persons that may have specific needs, pregnant women and people suffering from allergies. They travel not only for leisure but also for business, medical or religious reasons. If the tourism industry makes accessibility and inclusiveness a priority, local communities living in poverty will also benefit from it.

How do we ensure that people living in poverty and exclusion benefit from tourism and are not further marginalized by new developments?

Social inclusion and empowerment of local communities through the tourism industry is crucial, especially for vulnerable groups such as youth, older persons or indigenous peoples. Often, people living in poverty find themselves in a cycle that it is difficult to break and that limits their access to education. This ultimately affects their economic and social status. Inclusive and accessible tourism industries can help to break this cycle.

Tourism can provide a great number of jobs to workers with little formal training who can then acquire and strengthen their professional skills and gain access to further opportunities for personal and professional development.

Tourism can also bring other benefits to people living in poverty. For example, better, more accessible and more useable physical infrastructure, such as roads or transportation, improve the living conditions of local communities. It is crucial for tourism developments to be inclusive and participatory. Local communities must be involved in the planning to make sure that whatever is developed benefits them as well.

This year we celebrate the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. What is UN DESA's role?

The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development is a great opportunity for UN DESA to keep working closely with civil society, the private sector, governments and UN agencies, promoting sustainable and inclusive development for all. The Department focuses on promoting sustainable, equitable and inclusive development, and this also applies to tourism.

Raising awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism is one of our goals and the Division for Social Policy and Development is organizing an event in October, in partnership with the World Tourism Organization to talk about accessible, inclusive, affordable, usable and sustainable tourism. This will provide tourism organizations and private sector stakeholders with a global platform to share their experiences.

Many countries are already offering more accessible and inclusive services, having realized how huge the tourism market is. We want to urge all stakeholders to consider not only the profits but also the positive impact of sustainable tourism on societies and communities. Our October event will discuss issues such as effective use of new technologies, access to transportation, and their positive impact on people and places.

For more information:

International Year on Sustainable Tourism for Development



Meet Marie Chatardová, the new President of UN Economic and Social Council

On 27 July, Ambassador Marie Chatardová became the seventy-third President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) – the body at the heart of UN’s work to advance sustainable development.

“I wish to announce that the key priority of my Presidency will be to develop initiatives towards fostering sustainable, resilient and

inclusive societies through participation of all,” said Ms. Chatardová, after her election by acclamation.

The Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the UN, Ms. Chatardová noted on her first day on the job the several positive developments towards reaching the 2030 targets. She said that despite unprecedented technological advancement and innovation, the world continued to experience rising inequalities in most countries.

“If multilateralism is to stay relevant in this evolving context, we need to take these challenges seriously, and work on devising solutions to address them. I believe that the ECOSOC system has a key role to play,” she said.

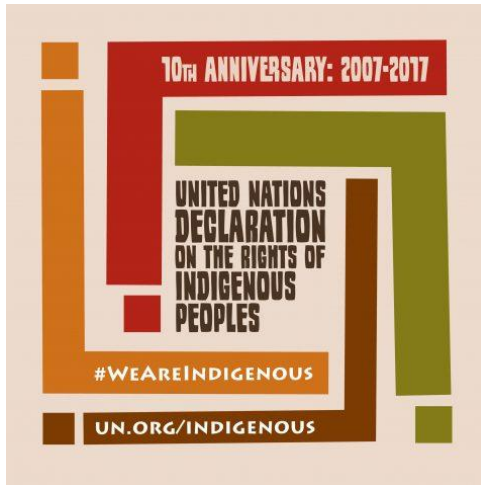
To explore further collective action on the issue, the new President announced her intention to convene an ECOSOC Special Meeting at UN Headquarters in May 2018.

“We must work together and make all efforts to achieve what we have set out: ‘to leave no-one behind.’ Truly no one!” she said.

Until her appointment as Permanent Representative to the UN in 2016, Ms. Chatardová was her country’s Ambassador to France and Monaco, and its Permanent Representative to the International Organization of la Francophonie. Between 2013 and 2016, she also served as Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Ms. Chatardová was awarded Commander of the National Order of the Legion of Honour of France in 2016, and Officer of the Order of Saint-Charles of Monaco in 2016. She holds a doctorate of law from Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic.

Biography of Ms. Marie Chatardová



Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

On 13 September 2007, the General Assembly adopted the landmark United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It was a major milestone for the cooperation and solidarity between indigenous peoples and Member States, who worked side by side over two decades to prepare the Declaration. As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of the

Declaration, UN DESA Voice takes a look at the achievements and challenges of the last decade.

The Declaration is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of indigenous peoples. It embodies a global consensus on the rights of indigenous peoples and establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for their survival, dignity and well-being.

A high-level event to mark the tenth anniversary of the Declaration was organised by the President of the UN General Assembly on 25 April 2017, during the 16th Session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Member States, indigenous peoples from the seven indigenous socio-cultural regions, United Nations entities all took part.

On 13 September, the University of Colorado Law School is holding another event, co-organized by the Secretariat of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, UN DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development. The event will mark the Declaration's anniversary with two days of dialogues, presentations and cultural celebrations.

The Declaration – ten years on

Despite major progress in implementing the Declaration over the last decade in several countries, a gap persists between formally recognizing indigenous peoples and implementing policies on the ground. As a result, indigenous peoples continue to face exclusion, marginalization and major challenges in enjoying their basic rights.

Constitutional reforms can be an essential step towards ensuring the recognition, inclusion and promotion of the rights of indigenous peoples. Since the adoption of the Declaration, several countries, particularly in the Latin American region, have taken steps to recognize the identity and rights of indigenous peoples. Regional and national courts have been invoking the Declaration to protect indigenous peoples' rights and policymakers are gradually including those rights into national laws and policies.

At the international level, the first World Conference on Indigenous Peoples was held in September 2014, and 2016 saw the launch of a United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Indigenous Peoples. Three specific indigenous mechanisms have been set up, namely the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; the UN Permanent Forum on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

With the 2030 Agenda's focus on placing people at the centre of sustainable development, the next decade can bring further advancements. Only when indigenous peoples, Member States and other partners work together, can we ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals are met and that no one is left behind.

For more information:

Tenth Anniversary of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

MORE FROM UNDESA



Focusing on People: UN General Assembly's 72nd session gets underway

"Making a difference in the lives of ordinary people." Such is the ambition of the 72nd session of the United Nations' main policymaking body – the General Assembly – which opens in New York on 12 September. The session's theme, "Focusing on People:

Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet," reflects the overarching priorities of the incoming President of the General Assembly, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák.

The Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee) of the General Assembly is where global consensus on development strategies and policies is built. It is here that countries reach common ground on some of the most debated issues in today's international relations, including the international financial system and global economic governance, globalization and interdependence, as well as international economic cooperation.

Sectoral policy issues, such as agriculture and industrialization, sustainable development, operational activities for development, follow-up to international conferences and summits are also high on the Committee's agenda. The Committee promotes international economic cooperation and delivers political guidance for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

This year, the Committee will hold its opening session on Monday, 2 October. It will discuss ways to overcome key challenges for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as structural constraints and imbalances. Past opening sessions featured keynote speeches by many Nobel Prize laureates in economics and other related fields.

On 11 October, it will hold a joint meeting with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), under the proposed theme "The Future of Everything – Sustainable Development in the Age of Rapid Technological Change". The meeting will focus on how technological advancements will impact the future of people and planet, and explore how innovation can contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

The Committee will also hold three side events: on the future of work (4 October), on science, technology and inclusive innovation for advancing sustainable development (12 October), and on innovative ways to explore data to understand the gender dimensions of poverty and advance the Sustainable Development Goals (18 October).

For more information:

72nd session of the UN General Assembly
Economic and Financial Committee (Second Committee)

UPCOMING EVENTS

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|--------------------------------|--|
| 6-8 September,
Buenos Aires | DCF Argentina High-level Symposium |
| 7-8 September, New
York | Expert Group meeting on “Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration” |
| 12 September, New
York | 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly |
| 13 September, New
York | 10th Anniversary of the Adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples |
| 21 September, New
York | 4th meeting of the High Level Panel on Water (HLPW) |

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