

# United Nations Environment Programme

## *Introduction*

The governing body of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), known as the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), has not met since September 2013. The first meeting of the UNEA is to be held in Nairobi during June 2014, and meetings will be held biennially.<sup>1</sup> While there has not been a meeting of the governing body, Regional Consultative Meetings were held in September and November 2013.<sup>2</sup> The Second Committee of the General Assembly held discussions about the first universal meeting of the governing body and provided suggestions for actions to be taken at the first meeting of the UNEA.<sup>3</sup> This update will examine decisions and discussions that occurred from September 2013 through January 2014.

## *Recent Activities*

The most recent session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of the United Nations Environment Programme was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 18 to 22 February 2013. Discussions from this meeting were presented to the Second Committee of the General Assembly in December 2013.<sup>4</sup> The February 2013 meeting was the first occasion of universal attendance by Member States at the Governing Council, leading to substantive discussion and debate both at the Nairobi meeting and later in the Second Committee on solidifying funding mechanisms for the UNEP, as well as laying the framework for the first meeting of the UNEA in 2014.

The Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21-25 October 2013.<sup>5</sup> The Committee of Permanent representatives convened during late September and December 2013.<sup>6</sup> One of the key topics discussed during the 124<sup>th</sup> meeting was preparation for the UNEA, highlighting the need for the meeting to be substantively different than previous meetings of the UNEP due to its expanded membership.<sup>7</sup> The UNEP Finance Initiative Global Roundtable (UNEPFI-GRT) was held in Beijing, China in November 2013<sup>8</sup>. The UNEPFI-GRT was created in 1992 to link the UNEP and the global financial sector; the Global Roundtable is a biennial event that provides a forum for Member States and representatives from the financial sector to discuss sustainable development and the role of sustainable finance in sustainable development.<sup>9</sup>

The Warsaw Climate Change Conference was held from 11-23 November 2013 in Warsaw, Poland. This conference included the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the ninth session of the parties to the Kyoto Protocol.<sup>10</sup> Topics discussed at the Warsaw Conference included: initiating dialogue on the Durban process, to be discussed in Peru, with the purpose of finalizing it in Paris during the 2015 Conference of the Parties; the “Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage” was established, a mechanism to compensate the most

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<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session: Report of the Second Committee (A/68/438/Add.7)*, 2013.

<sup>2</sup> UNEP, *Upcoming Events List* [Website], 2013.

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session: Report of the Second Committee (A/68/438/Add.7)*, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> UNEP, *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/9)*, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> European Union, General Secretariat, *Notice of Meeting and Provisional Agenda for 124<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) to the UNEP (125311/EU XXIV.GP)*, 2013.

<sup>7</sup> UNEP, Addis Ababa Liaison Office, *Addis Ababa Highlights, A Newsletter by UNEP Addis Ababa Liaison Office, A Subsidiary of UNEP Africa*, 2013.

<sup>8</sup> UNEP Finance Initiative, *UNEP FI: About UNEP FI* [Website], 2013.

<sup>9</sup> UNEP Finance Initiative, *About 2013 UNEP GI Global Roundtable – UNEP FI 2013 Global Roundtable* [Website], 2013.

<sup>10</sup> UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Thirty-Ninth Session, *Report of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation on its thirty-ninth session, held in Warsaw from 11 to 18 November 2013 (FCCC/SBI/2013/20)*, 2013; UN Climate Change Secretariat, *UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw keeps governments on track towards 2015 climate change agreement*, 2013.

vulnerable countries for loss and damages due to extreme weather events caused by climate change; and further discussion and financial commitment for REDD.<sup>11</sup>

### ***Recent Policy Outcomes***

Discussions on topics such as the “Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage” have led to commitments from Member States to develop and hold meaningful discussions to protect developing countries that are vulnerable to the effects of ongoing climate change.<sup>12</sup> Further actions such as the reaffirmation of commitments to previous agenda items such as Agenda 21, and the strengthening of the UNEP, were discussed in the Second Committee of the General Assembly.<sup>13</sup> The Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer resulted in a number of proposed amendments to the Montreal Protocol, including an exigent request from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) that urges Member States to take further action on the reduction in use of Hydrofluorocarbons.<sup>14</sup>

While each meeting focused on a different primary topic, common themes observed across all meetings include: securing and ensuring appropriate funding for UNEP programs in the future, encouraging open and substantive discussion during the first biennial session of the UNEA to be held in June 2014, and the need for the UNEP to continue providing up-to-date and relevant technical support to Member States on key policy issues.<sup>15</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

The UNEP provides valuable support to Member States and will continue to do so, particularly with the creation of the UNEA. Through further meetings of subsidiary bodies and the UNEA, the UNEP is in a position to expand its reach with the input of all Member States. While challenges such as continued funding exist, actions taken in recent sessions provide confirmation of Member States commitments to UNEP. This committee has a key role in ensuring that benchmarks are met within various subcommittees over the next two years, and should utilize the expanded membership to facilitate substantive discussion on these topics.

### ***The United Nations Environment Programme at NMUN•NY 2014***

NMUN-NY 2014 will simulate the United Nations Environment Assembly of UNEP, which will be one of the first simulations of the newly mandated governing body of UNEP. For the purposes of NMUN-NY 2014, and in line with the educational mission of the conference, the committee has the ability to make programmatic and policy decisions on issues and topics within the mandate of UNEP in line with the overall function of the organization.

**Format:** UNEP is a resolution writing committee

**Voting:** Each Member State present may vote once on procedural and substantive matters. Matters are decided by a majority vote.

**Membership:** UNEP is comprised of all 193 Member States of the United Nations.

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<sup>11</sup> UN Climate Change Secretariat, *UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw keeps governments on track towards 2015 climate change agreement*, 2013; UN-REDD Programme, *UN-REDD Programme* [Website], 2013.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid; UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*. (FCCC/INFORMAL/84), 1992.

<sup>13</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session: Report of the Second Committee (A/68/438/Add.7)*, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> UNEP, *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/9)*, 2013.

<sup>15</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session: Report of the Second Committee (A/68/438/Add.7)*, 2013; UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Thirty-Ninth Session, *Report of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation on its thirty-ninth session, held in Warsaw from 11 to 18 November 2013 (FCCC/SBI/2013/20)*, 2013; UNEP, *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/9)*, 2013.

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United Nations, Climate Change Secretariat, (2013, 23 November). *UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw keeps governments on track towards 2015 climate change agreement* [Press Release]. Retrieved 6 January 2014 from:

[http://unfccc.int/files/press/news\\_room/press\\_releases\\_and\\_advisories/application/pdf/131123\\_pr\\_closing\\_cop19.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/131123_pr_closing_cop19.pdf)

*This press release provides a comprehensive overview of the discussion and actions taken during the Warsaw Climate Change Conference. This conference provides a venue for Member States to update the body on actions taken towards the 2015 climate change goals. Delegates should be familiar with actions taken at this conference and utilize the press release as a base for further research into decisions made including REDD+ and the “Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage”.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-Eighth Session. (2013, 12 December). *Operational activities for development: South-South cooperation, Report of the Second Committee*. (A/68/443/Add.2). Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/443](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/443)

*South-South cooperation has been a key topic discussed within the UNEP and other UN bodies. This document, containing two draft resolutions, including one adopted as a resolution, provides an overview of discussions that occurred in the Second Committee of the General Assembly on South-South cooperation. Delegates should be familiar with the recommendations made in this draft resolution, particularly in relation to activities taken by the UNEP.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-Eighth Session. (2013, 9 December). *Sustainable development: report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session, Report of the Second Committee*. (A/68/438/Add.7). Retrieved 5 January 2014 from:

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/438/Add.7](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/438/Add.7)

*This draft resolution provides an overview of the first universal session of the Governing Council of the UNEP. The resolution discussed in the report highlights actions that have been taken in the past while also recommending actions for the coming session of the UNEA and other bodies. Delegates should be familiar with decisions from this session and conduct further research into their Member State’s position on the key topics highlighted.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2013, 23 September). *Report by the Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives on the 2013 annual meeting of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme*. (UNEP/CPR/SC2013/L.1). Retrieved 6 January 2014 from:

<http://share.pdfonline.com/c6921c93067d4109bbd95272e0f00de5/Draft%20report%20other%20Subcommittee%20meetings%20up%20to%20day%203.htm>

*This report provides a summary of the main issues being discussed by the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the UNEP. These meetings are held more frequently than the Governing Council and the future UNEA and provide an overview of the activities conducted by key Member States. This report breaks down the information of the committee by topic providing delegates with an easy to reference source with detailed and relevant information.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2013, 13 November). *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*. (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/9). Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: <http://conf.montreal-protocol.org/meeting/mop/mop-25/report/Draft%20Reports/MOP-25-9E.pdf>

*This document, while technical in nature, provides an overview of actions being taken to ensure the Protocol is being updated to address the most pressing issues. This document also provides delegates with examples of cooperation between Member States on complex issues. Delegates should be familiar with the general ideas present in this document, and utilize it as a resource for further research into specific topics.*

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United Nations Environment Programme. (2013, 13 November). *Report of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*. (UNEP/OzL.Pro.25/9). Retrieved 5 January 2014 from: <http://conf.montreal-protocol.org/meeting/mop/mop-25/report/Draft%20Reports/MOP-25-9E.pdf>

United Nations-REDD Programme. (2013). UN-REDD Programme [Web Site]. Retrieved 7 January 2014 from: <http://www.un-redd.org/AboutREDD/tabid/102614/Default.aspx>

## I. Transformation to a Green Economy: Challenges for Transportation Worldwide

### Introduction

With the rapidly expanding rate of economic growth on Earth, citizens and Member States of the United Nations (UN) must strive to transform towards a Green Economy. In the latter half of 2013 and the early days of 2014, the UN reaffirmed that addressing transportation can reduce the environmental concerns for future generations, through productive initiatives such as yielding energy efficient goals and introducing low carbon projects. One remarkable achievement has been the “concerted effort” of international agencies and governments towards funding transport-related energy services.<sup>16</sup>

This topic was addressed during the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly (GA), which adopted resolution 68/210 on “Sustainable Development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.”<sup>17</sup> The General Assembly introduced a report on the “protection of global climate and future generations of humankind” and a “report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session.”<sup>18</sup> A further report was adopted by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (FCCC/SBSTA/2013/5), which emphasized the latest innovations on technology in relation to sustainable growth.<sup>19</sup>

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has been working with numerous organizations over recent months to produce many updates and initiatives on the topic. On 6 January 2014, the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals was held at the UN Headquarters in New York.<sup>20</sup> This conference addressed “Sustainable Transport,” offering new recommendations and goals for the future of transport.<sup>21</sup> The UNFCCC initiated sustainable, low-carbon transport developments at the Warsaw Climate Change Conference, held in November 2013.<sup>22</sup>

Many international organizations have been active in addressing transport issues involved in the transformation to a Green Economy, including the International Energy Agency (IEA), Global Fuel Economy Initiative (GFEI), and the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile Foundation for the Automobile and Society (FIA Foundation).<sup>23</sup> UNEP is collaborating with these organizations on projects such as “Share the Road,” a joint initiative between UNEP and the FIA foundation to encourage investment in infrastructure for transport systems with low environmental impact.<sup>24</sup> On 29 November 2013, the UN held a “Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals Conference” in New York, involving

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<sup>16</sup> World Bank, News, *UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim Outline Plans to Mobilize Financing for Sustainable Energy for All*, 2013.

<sup>17</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable Development: implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/RES/68/210)* [Resolution], 2013.

<sup>18</sup> UN General Assembly, *Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind (A/RES/68/212)*, 2013; UN General Assembly, *Sustainable Development: report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its first universal session (A/RES/68/215)*, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, *Report of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice on its thirty-ninth session, held in Warsaw from 11 to 17 November 2013 (FCCC/SBSTA/2013/5)*, 2013.

<sup>20</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, *7<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly Open Working Group on SDGs* [Website], 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> UNFCCC, *Warsaw Climate Change Conference- November 2013* [Website], 2013; UNFCCC, *Report of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice on its thirty-ninth session, held in Warsaw from 11 to 17 November 2013 (FCCC/SBSTA/2013/5)*, 2013.

<sup>23</sup> International Energy Agency, *Transport* [Website], 2013; FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, *Global Fuel Economy Initiative: 50by50* [Website], 2013; FIA Foundation for the Automobile and Society, *Safe, Clean, Fair & Green- the FIA Foundation's agenda for the post-2015 development debate* [Website], 2013.

<sup>24</sup> International Energy Agency, *Light tight oil does not diminish the importance of Middle East supply, IEA says in latest World Energy Outlook*, 2013; FIA Foundation, *Safe, Clean, Fair and Greener: Our Post-2015 Mobility Agenda*, 2013.

the Sustainable Energy For All Initiative (SE4ALL) and the GFEI.<sup>25</sup> Future trends and development of energy have been assessed in the IEA's 2013 *World Energy Outlook* and the 2013 *Energy Policy Highlights* report.<sup>26</sup>

## Recent Developments

### *Post-2015 Development Agenda*

UNEP continues to play a major role in refining the post-2015 development agenda, which is to establish sustainable development commitments for beyond the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) when they expire in 2015. The GFEI and the SE4ALL have committed to doubling energy efficiency rates globally as part of the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>27</sup> The GFEI reflected on some of these aims in the UN Open Working Group session on energy at the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals Conference, held at the UN headquarters in New York on 27 November 2013.<sup>28</sup> UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim called for governments, international agencies, the private sector, and civil society to come together to finance energy projects and promote universal access to modern energy services.<sup>29</sup>

### *Reducing Carbon Fuel Emissions*

"Sustainable Transport" was addressed at the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals on 7 January 2014, where the FIA Foundation presented its post-2015 sustainable transport agenda, "Safe, Clean, Fair & Green."<sup>30</sup> UNEP has shown interest in the "Safe, Clean, Fair & Green" initiative as a framework for sustainable and accessible transport; by targeting vehicle emissions and fuel efficiency, this project also represents a step towards reducing global consumption of non-renewable resources.<sup>31</sup>

UNEP has been working in cooperation with the Institute of Urban Transport and India's Ministry of Urban Development to release a new revision of the *Toolkits for Urban Development: Comprehensive Mobility Plans*.<sup>32</sup> Some of the plans include reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, improving air quality, and achieving desirable indicators and benchmarks.<sup>33</sup> This project is the beginning of a solution towards reducing harmful fuel emissions while combating challenges faced with air, land, and marine transportation.<sup>34</sup>

## Conclusion

The UN has identified lack of universal cooperation, unsustainable energy trends, and limited amounts of natural resources as the largest inhibitors of the transition to a Green Economy. The recent Sustainable Development Goals conference in January 2014 produced new suggestions for the Post-2015 development goals. Member States are beginning to realise the urgency in resolving the transportation issue and are becoming more active in resolving these issues.

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Global Fuel Economic Initiative. (2014, January 9). *Safe, Clean, Fair and Green agenda leads UN Post-2015 Hearing* [Website]. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from: <http://www.globalfueleconomy.org/updates/2014/Pages/SafeCleanFairandGreenagendaleadsUNPost-2015Hearing.aspx>

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<sup>25</sup> Global Fuel Economic Initiative, *GFEI contributes to UN post-2015 high level debate* [Website], 2013.

<sup>26</sup> International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2013* [Website], 2013; International Energy Agency, *Energy Policy Highlights 2013* [Website], 2013.

<sup>27</sup> Global Fuel Economic Initiative, *GFEI contributes to UN post-2015 high level debate* [Website], 2013.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Global Fuel Economic Initiative, *Safe, Clean, Fair and Green agenda leads UN Post-2015 Hearing* [Website], 2014.

<sup>31</sup> Global Fuel Economic Initiative, *GFEI contributes to UN post-2015 high level debate* [Website], 2013.

<sup>32</sup> UNEP News Centre, *India's Urban Mobility Plans Pathway to Sustainability* [Website], 2013.

<sup>33</sup> UNEP News Centre, *India's Urban Mobility Plans Pathway to Sustainability* [Website], 2013.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

*This update on the Website is an excellent resource on the "Safe, Clean, Fair and Green" agenda. Not only does it provide a thorough update of the event, but it also contains further references and links to the UN Post-2015 Hearing, including the presentations and videos of the event. Delegates should be familiar with the proceedings of this conference as it poses ideas for future development goals, once the Millennium Development Goals expire in 2015.*

FIA Foundation. (2013). *Safe, Clean, Fair & Green: Our Post-2015 Mobility Agenda*. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from: <http://www.fiafoundation.org/publications/Documents/safe-clean-fair-green.pdf>

*This report highlights the goals and objectives of the FIA Foundation in the post-2015 development agenda. The report addresses the issues of road safety, air quality, transport, and fuel economy in promoting a transition towards a Green Economy. This is a useful guide for delegates with many suggestions for future solutions to the transportation and energy problem we face today.*

International Energy Agency. (2013). *Energy Policy Highlights*. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from: [http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/Energy\\_Policy\\_Highlights\\_2013.pdf](http://www.iea.org/publications/freepublications/publication/Energy_Policy_Highlights_2013.pdf)

*Offering a breakdown of energy policies for all 28 IEA member countries, this report is an excellent resource for shaping future predictions. For each country, the report offers policy objectives, policy characteristics, challenges faced during implementation, why it is considered a success, and lessons to be learned. This report is fundamental for delegates who are IEA member countries in order to predict future trends and shape their energy for transportation.*

United Nations Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. (2014). *Seventh session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals*. [Website]. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index.php?menu=1679>

*This Website provides all the information and links on the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly Open Working Group on Sustainable Development, where sustainable transport goals were discussed. The Sustainable Development Goals, which were a result of the Rio +20 Conference, are useful for delegates to consider in order to remain up-to-date with the latest information on sustainable development, including energy and the transport system. This reference provides extensive resources from this event, providing an update on the challenges of transport.*

United Nations Environment Programme. (2014). *The Future of Low Carbon Transport in India*. [Website]. Retrieved 12 January 2014 from: <http://www.unep.org/transport/lowcarbon/>

*This Website contains comprehensive information on the low carbon initiative transport initiative in India. This is an important source as it offers new alternatives to decreasing fuel emissions and can serve as a model for future developments of a low carbon transport system. The cooperation of the International Climate Initiative of the German government, UNEP, and India is a perfect reflection on how cooperation can be used to promote environmental interests and tackle the challenges for transportation towards a green economy.*

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## II. Management of Harmful Substances and Hazardous Waste

### *Introduction*

Sound management of harmful substances and hazardous wastes continues to present a significant challenge to the international community. The pervasiveness of harmful substances across multiple industries and environments necessitates ongoing diligence and progress. As one of the foremost programme areas for the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the topic is central to the successful realization of key initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) on the environment, development, and health. Accordingly, several entities within and beyond the UN system prioritized this topic in recent months.

The General Assembly addressed the management of hazardous waste during its 68<sup>th</sup> regular plenary session, which opened on 17 September 2013.<sup>35</sup> In December 2013, the General Assembly adopted resolutions 68/208 on “Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea” and 68/53 on “Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes.”<sup>36</sup> Resolution 68/208 was adopted in response to a July 2013 report from the Secretary-General.<sup>37</sup> The General Assembly also considered report A/68/498 of the Secretary-General on “Optimizing the international effort to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster” which highlighted UNEP’s engagement in evaluating environmental risks caused by radioactive wastes.<sup>38</sup> Other major actors on this topic in recent months have included UNEP’s Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste (Project REN), the International Criminal Police Organization’s (INTERPOL) Environmental Crime Programme, and the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lead Paint (GAELP), a joint initiative of UNEP and the World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>39</sup>

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) remains the foremost international framework for this topic.<sup>40</sup> International instruments relevant to this topic continue to include the *Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal*, the *Rotterdam Convention*, and the *Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants*.<sup>41</sup> On 19 January 2013, the intergovernmental negotiating committee to prepare a global legally binding instrument on mercury agreed to the final text of the *Minamata Convention on Mercury*.<sup>42</sup> The Executive Director of UNEP carries out secretariat functions for the Minamata Convention.<sup>43</sup>

Several UN System entities conducted awareness campaigns for this topic over recent months. Chief among these was GAELP’s International Lead Poisoning Awareness Week from 20-26 October 2013, a realization of UNEP’s priorities for action in connection with lead and cadmium.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, representatives of the Latin American and Caribbean States introduced a new chemical waste awareness campaign at the annual joint meeting of Regional

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<sup>35</sup> UN General Assembly, 68th Session, *68th Session* [Website], 2013.

<sup>36</sup> UN General Assembly, 68<sup>th</sup> Session, *Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea (A/RES/68/208)*, 2013; UN General Assembly, 68<sup>th</sup> Session, *Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes (A/RES/68/53)*, 2013.

<sup>37</sup> UN General Assembly, 68<sup>th</sup> Session, *Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea (A/68/258)* [Report], 2013.

<sup>38</sup> UN General Assembly, 68<sup>th</sup> Session, *Optimizing the international effort to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster (A/68/498)* [Report], 2013, p. 13.

<sup>39</sup> Basel Convention, *Activities* [Website], 2014; Rotterdam Convention, *Rotterdam Convention News* [Website], 2014; UN Environment Programme, Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste, *The Second Network Workshop of the Regional Enforcement Network for Chemicals and Waste took place in Bangkok*, 2013; International Criminal Police Organization, *Environmental Crime Programme* [Website], 2014; UNEP, Hazardous Substances Sub-Programme, *International Lead Poisoning Awareness Week (20 – 26 October 2013)* [Website], 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, *Introducing SAICM*, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> Basel Convention, *Overview* [Website], 2011; Rotterdam Convention, *Overview* [Website], 2010; Stockholm Convention, *About the Convention* [Website], 2008.

<sup>42</sup> UNEP, *Diplomatic Conference for the Minamata Convention on Mercury* [Website], 2013.

<sup>43</sup> Minamata Convention on Mercury, *Article 24*, 2013, p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> UNEP, *Hazardous Substances Sub-Programme, International Lead Poisoning Awareness Week (20 – 26 October 2013)* [Website], 2013; UNEP, Hazardous Substances Sub-Programme, *Lead & Cadmium Home Page* [Website].

Centres of the Basel and Rotterdam conventions from 27-29 November 2013. The campaign, titled “Scoring a Goal against Chemical Contamination,” seeks to raise awareness of chemical waste contamination in conjunction with the 2014 FIFA World Football Cup in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.<sup>45</sup>

The SAICM African Regional Centre held its fifth African annual meeting in Pretoria from 18-22 November 2013, where Member States highlighted the dangers of endocrine disrupting pesticides.<sup>46</sup> In March 2014, the fourth Asia-Pacific regional meeting on the SAICM in Bangkok will focus on advancing the ratification and implementation of the *Minamata Convention on Mercury*, the first international instrument to comprehensively target the production, use, and disposal of mercury.<sup>47</sup> The European Union, Japan, United States of America, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, Norway, New Zealand regional group (EU-JUSSCANNZ) will hosts its fifth annual meeting on the SAICM with emphasis on financing the implementation of SAICM and adopting long-term strategies for chemicals and waste management in conjunction with sustainable development goals.<sup>48</sup>

### **Recent Developments**

#### *Hazardous Waste Trafficking*

Hazardous waste trafficking played a significant role in recent discussions on the management of harmful substances and hazardous waste. During the tenth meeting of the *Basel Convention* Implementation and Compliance Committee, Parties to the Convention drafted a document to provide guidance on the *Basel Convention* provisions pertaining to illegal traffic with the aim of “harmonizing the way Parties undertake the take back of shipments of hazardous wastes.”<sup>49</sup> INTERPOL and UNEP jointly hosted the first annual conference on International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi from 4-8 November to discuss illegal trafficking of hazardous waste in the context of international crime.<sup>50</sup> Action items included the promotion of National Environmental Security Task Forces (NESTs) at the country level, a complementary international task force, and the operationalization of capacity-building and intelligence sharing platforms.<sup>51</sup> Since INTERPOL launched the initiative in September 2012, four Member States (China, Mozambique, Mexico, and Costa Rica) have hosted National Environmental Security Seminars which serve as the first step towards establishing a NEST.<sup>52</sup>

#### *Electronic Waste Management*

In addition to highlighting illicit waste trafficking, UNEP representatives to the First International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Conference drew special attention to the growing problem of electronic waste, or “e-waste.”<sup>53</sup> UNEP reported that the global community generates up to 50 million tons of electrical and electronic waste every year, with illicit shipments contravening the *Basel Convention*.<sup>54</sup> In response to this growing problem, the *Basel Convention* Secretariat hosted the first meeting of the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE) in November 2013. ENFORCE was initialized during eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the *Basel Convention* in July 2013.<sup>55</sup> Comprising representatives from several

<sup>45</sup> Joint Secretariats of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions, News Features, *Regional Centres aim to score a goal against chemical contamination*, 2013.

<sup>46</sup> SAICM, *5<sup>th</sup> African regional meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) and related workshops, Pretoria, 18 to 22 November 2013* [Website], 2013.

<sup>47</sup> SAICM, *4<sup>th</sup> Asia-Pacific regional meeting on the SAICM, Bangkok* [Website], 2014; *Minamata Convention on Mercury, Convention Text*, 2013.

<sup>48</sup> SAICM, *5<sup>th</sup> EU-JUSSCANNZ countries meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management, Paris, 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014* [Website], 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Basel Convention, Implementation and Compliance Committee Tenth Meeting, *Illegal traffic: guidance on the take-back provision (UNEP/CHW/CC.10/9)*, 2013, p. 6.

<sup>50</sup> UNEP, News Centre, *UNEP and INTERPOL Assess Impacts of Environmental Crime on Security and Development*, 2013.

<sup>51</sup> INTERPOL-UNEP, *Outcome Document for the 1<sup>st</sup> International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Conference*, 2013.

<sup>52</sup> INTERPOL, Environmental Crime Programme, *Task Forces* [Website]

<sup>53</sup> UNEP, News Centre, *UNEP and INTERPOL Assess Impacts of Environmental Crime on Security and Development*, 2013.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Basel Convention Secretariat, *1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE)* [Website], 2013; UNEP, Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, *Report of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal on the work of its eleventh meeting (UNEP/CHW.11/24)*, 2013, p. 16.

Basel Convention Regional Centres, UNEP, the Asian Network for Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes, the European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law (IMPEL), and the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE) as well as observers from INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization (WCO), ENFORCE is poised to serve as the foremost international network for regulating illegal traffic of electronic waste.<sup>56</sup>

### *Harmful Substances*

The *Minamata Convention on Mercury*, finalized in January 2013, is the newest international instrument governing the topic of harmful substances and hazardous waste management.<sup>57</sup> The Minamata Convention, the product of years of intense international negotiation, represents the first binding treaty on the management of mercury.<sup>58</sup> With its emphasis on protecting vulnerable ecosystems from mercury pollution and its foundation upon the principles of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the Minamata Convention has particular significance for UNEP.<sup>59</sup> The Convention was presented for adoption and opened for signature at the Conference of Plenipotentiaries-Diplomatic Conference in Kumamoto and Minamata, Japan from 9 to 11 October 2013.<sup>60</sup> In an effort to promote ratification, UNEP released a report titled *Mercury: Acting Now!*<sup>61</sup> In addition to documenting the work of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership since 2005, the report highlights existing international efforts which support the principles of the Convention.<sup>62</sup> As of January 2014, 94 Member States have signed the Convention and one country, the United States of America, has ratified the Convention.<sup>63</sup>

In December 2013, UNEP hosted a consultation meeting in Boston, Massachusetts, to draft recommendations towards the development of a program for “Chemicals in Products (CiP),” to be formally introduced at the fourth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM4).<sup>64</sup> After four years of research and consultation, the CiP programme has the potential to facilitate major progress towards the regulation of harmful substances in building materials, electronics, textiles, and toys.<sup>65</sup>

### *Conclusion*

With the introduction of a historic international instrument regulating mercury, the creation of new intergovernmental task forces to monitor illicit trafficking of electronic wastes and hazardous substances, and strong participation towards awareness and implementation by regional organizations, the year 2013 has seen significant progress on this topic. However, the reports published on this topic across the UN system in 2013 unanimously indicate that far more progress is needed to realize the ambitions of UNEP and its partners. Most significantly, the Minamata Convention requires a minimum of 50 instruments of ratification to enter into force; only a single instrument of approval has been deposited as of January 2014.<sup>66</sup> Additionally, further action is needed on other hazardous substance themes such as Chemicals in Products and lead. Finally, comprehensive action towards preventing hazardous waste trafficking is still in the formative stages. Nonetheless, with such a strong foundation in 2013, the international community should have many opportunities to move this topic forward in substantial and consequential directions.

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<sup>56</sup> Basel Convention Secretariat, *Report of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal on the work of its eleventh meeting (UNEP/CHW.11/24)*, 2013, p.17; Basel Convention Secretariat, *Environmental Network for Optimizing Regulatory Compliance on Illegal Traffic (ENFORCE) First Meeting (UNEP/CHW/ENFORCE.1/3)*, 2013.

<sup>57</sup> UNEP, Harmful Substances Sub-Programme, *Diplomatic Conference for the Minamata Convention on Mercury* [Website], 2013.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Minamata Convention on Mercury, *Preambular Clauses*, 2013, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> UNEP, Harmful Substances Sub-Programme, *Diplomatic Conference for the Minamata Convention on Mercury* [Website], 2013.

<sup>61</sup> UNEP, *Chemicals Branch, Mercury: Acting Now*, 2013.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Minamata Convention on Mercury, *Countries* [Website], 2014.

<sup>64</sup> UNEP, Hazardous Substances Sub-Programme, *Information Note on the Consultation Meeting for the draft Chemicals in Products programme*, 2013.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Minamata Convention on Mercury, *Article 31*, 2013, p. 20; Minamata Convention on Mercury, *Countries* [Website], 2014.



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*This document summarizes the outcomes of the first International Environmental Compliance and Enforcement Conference, a joint initiative of INTERPOL and UNEP. Although it is brief, it includes a useful review of current and forthcoming initiatives on environmental crime. Trafficking of hazardous wastes is a focal point of the outcome document. This should serve merely as an introduction to INTERPOL and UNEP's efforts to combat illicit waste trafficking.*

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*This technical report prepared by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology on behalf of the StEP initiative provides key insights on patterns of electronic waste production and export. One key finding highlighted in this report is that the global volume of electronic waste is expected to increase more than 30% by 2017. This report also defines several terms used in the regulation and monitoring of electronic waste.*

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*Prepared for the Fifth EU-JUSSCANNZ Countries Meeting on the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management in 2014, this report summarizes the outcomes of three regional meetings held since the third session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM3). It presents a brief but useful overview of SAICM regional meetings in 2013, including a review of action items, Member State participation, and areas of progress. This report offers an excellent introduction to the work of regional committees on the topic of chemicals management.*

Minamata Convention on Mercury. (2013, January 19). *Convention Text*. Retrieved 11 January 2014 from: <http://www.mercuryconvention.org/Convention/tabid/3426/Default.aspx>

*The Minamata Convention represents the first binding international treaty on the management of mercury. Key provisions include benchmarks to cut mercury emissions, product regulations, and controls on mines and industrial plants. It is the result of four years of intergovernmental negotiation. The Minamata Convention is the newest international instrument governing the topic of harmful substances and hazardous waste management. Since UNEP is responsible for administering the Convention Secretariat, delegates should be familiar with the progress of this instrument.*

United Nations Environment Programme, Chemicals Branch. (2013, February). *Report on the Costs of Inaction on the Sound Management of Chemicals*. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: [http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Portals/9/Mainstreaming/CostOfInaction/Report\\_Cost\\_of\\_Inaction\\_Feb2013.pdf](http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Portals/9/Mainstreaming/CostOfInaction/Report_Cost_of_Inaction_Feb2013.pdf)

*This UNEP publication presents data analyses of the effect of harmful chemicals on individual health, the environment, and development efforts. It primarily addresses long-term consequences in an economic framework. The report uses data from the UNDP-UNEP Partnership Initiative for the Integration of the Sound Management of Chemicals into Development Planning Processes. The report also includes concluding commentary on the cost of international management efforts in contrast with the cost of inaction.*

United Nations Environment Programme, Chemicals Branch. (2013, October). *Mercury: Acting Now!* Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: <http://www.unep.org/hazardoussubstances/Portals/9/Mercury/Documents/Publications/Mercury%20Acting%20Now.pdf>

*This document builds upon the UNEP 2013 Global Mercury Assessment report and UNEP's Mercury: Time to Act report. It was released in conjunction with the Diplomatic Conference for the Minamata Convention on Mercury to raise awareness about the need for ratification. The Acting Now! Report documents the activities of the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership since 2005. It provides several valuable diagrams to connect existing UNEP partnership areas with articles in the Minamata Convention. The document presents a comprehensive overview of existing programs of action in the international community.*

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### III. Facilitating South-South Cooperation for Environmental Capacity Building

#### *Recent Developments*

South-South cooperation is an essential step towards achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).<sup>67</sup> Since this topic is very current there are always new developments in this area. In order to further promote and establish South-South cooperation the Global South-South Development Expo 2013 held 28 October – 1 November 2013 at the United Nations Office in Nairobi, Kenya, was hosted by UNEP.<sup>68</sup> The topic of South-South cooperation was also discussed at the 68th session of the General Assembly in 2013.<sup>69</sup> The Secretary-General also reported on the state of South-South cooperation, with this report then being presented to the General Assembly.<sup>70</sup>

#### *Global South-South Development Expo 2013*

This Expo, supported by the UN and UNEP, focused exclusively on South-South cooperation and is the first to do so.<sup>71</sup> The aim was to show southern solutions concerning development that were successful in order to achieve the MDGs.<sup>72</sup> These solutions are Southern-grown development solutions (SDSs).<sup>73</sup> Sharing SDSs enhances the possibility of achieving sustainable development.<sup>74</sup> The point is to identify shared aspirations and goals in the global South for a sustainable development and then sharing SDSs.<sup>75</sup> This is then supported by triangular cooperation, meaning not only countries from the South but other countries and public-private partnerships as well.<sup>76</sup> During the Expo there were different Solution Exchange Forums one of them being “Building Inclusive Green Economies: Policy Drivers and Best Practices from South-South cooperation” led by UNEP.<sup>77</sup> There panelists described the issues occurring in Africa and focused on Peru and Vietnam as case studies in order to discuss the best practices to solve them.<sup>78</sup> Different approaches to capacity building such as electronic reporting systems were suggested by participants.<sup>79</sup> This showed the importance of capacity building and sharing SDSs – while pointing out that those solutions do not necessarily apply to all issues.<sup>80</sup>

#### *68th session of the General Assembly*

During the 68th session a report of the Second Committee on South-South cooperation was discussed.<sup>81</sup> The report also included a draft resolution which was adopted by the General Assembly during the 71st meeting on 20 December 2013 without a vote.<sup>82</sup> The resolution A/RES/68/230 promotes South-South cooperation and points out that it is no replacement for North-South cooperation but an important addition to it.<sup>83</sup> This is underlined by the fact that successful South-South cooperation needs to be supported by the international community for example by financial institutions.<sup>84</sup> It is further stated that it is not to be regarded as development aid but as cooperation between equal partners.<sup>85</sup> Another draft resolution was introduced on behalf of the Group of 77. As the current President of

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<sup>67</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, *Global South-South Development Expo* [Website], 2013.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> UN General Assembly, *Agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly*, 2013.

<sup>70</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, *News & Events* [Website], 2013.

<sup>71</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, *Global South-South Development Expo, The Expo* [Website], 2013.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, *Global South-South Development Expo, Solution Forum I* [Website], 2013.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> UN *Meetings Coverage & Press Releases GA/11478* [Website], 2013.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> UN GA, *Report of the Second Committee*, 2013.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

the General Assembly, John W. Ashe, remarked, the Group of 77 is a showcase for how South-South cooperation can work.<sup>86</sup> However the draft was withdrawn with the adoption of A/RES/68/230.<sup>87</sup>

#### *The state of South-South cooperation*

The report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation points out that there has been significant growth in the South offering new possibilities for South-South cooperation.<sup>88</sup> While reaffirming the role and development of organizations from the United Nations System, the Secretary-General also addressed the private sector as well as civil society.<sup>89</sup> Both are indispensable for capacity building in South-South cooperation and although the private sector in form of corporations has furthered this cooperation, environmental capacity building was not completely focused on.<sup>90</sup> The state of South-South cooperation is described in a differentiated way. While there has been rapid economic growth in the South, the progress in areas associated with this has not been as distinctive.<sup>91</sup> This is the case in some of the areas that are of importance to UNEP such as transportation or environmental governance.<sup>92</sup> Furthermore issues associated with climate change such as droughts are identified as challenges that have to be more incorporated in South-South cooperation.<sup>93</sup> The report ends with several recommendations for better cooperation which were affirmed by the delegations at the General Assembly.<sup>94</sup>

#### **Conclusion**

South-South cooperation is always a current topic. Many organizations, not only from within the United Nations systems, are involved and need to be involved.<sup>95</sup> It does not exclude North-South or triangular cooperation and, therefore, financial institutions, NGOs, and other organizations play an essential part in building environmental capacities. Events such as the Global South-South Development Expo 2013 are very important because they provide a forum where problems and solutions can be discussed while specializing on South-South cooperation. Another focus should be on the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report and their implementation.

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<sup>86</sup> Ashe, *Formal Handover of the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 from the Republic of Fiji to the Plurinational State of Bolivia*, 2014.

<sup>87</sup> UN GA, *Report of the Second Committee*, 2013.

<sup>88</sup> UN GA, *The state of South-South cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/212)*, 2013.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, *News & Events* [Website], 2013.

<sup>95</sup> UNEP South-South Cooperation, *Partnerships*, 2013.

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*With many organizations involved in this topic, this website shows what partnerships exist and lists them there. It gives an overview of who works on this topic and what areas South-South cooperation is relevant for. It is possible to access different initiatives and programs by following the provided links.*

United Nations General Assembly. (2013). *Report of the Second Committee*. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/443/Add.2](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/443/Add.2)

*The report of the Second Committee contains two draft resolutions that were introduced on the topic of South-South cooperation with the recommendation to the General Assembly as a resolution. Delegates can review the resolution here. This also includes references to other resolutions which helps to learn what has been discussed or still needs to be done.*

United Nations General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (29 July 2013). *The state of South-South cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General (A/68/212)*. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from:

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/212](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/212)

*This report of the Secretary-General is great when it comes to an overview of what has been done concerning South-South cooperation in the last year. It focuses on different areas of cooperation as well as different organizations involved and gives a great introduction. The report also contains recommendations and it can be interesting to follow up on an implementation of them.*

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (2013). *Global South-South Development Expo* [Website] Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: <http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/services/expo/2013.html>

*This website gives information on the Global South-South Development Expo. This unique Expo focuses only on South-South cooperation. There is information about past Expos and also information on Solution Exchange Forums. Solutions that were presented are accessible here as well as a summary of the specific forum containing questions and discussions about the issue and the applicability of the found solution.*

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. (2013). *News & Events* [Website]. Retrieved 10 January 2014 from: [http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/news/articles/2013/south-south\\_cooperationadvancedonallfronts-sg.html](http://ssc.undp.org/content/ssc/news/articles/2013/south-south_cooperationadvancedonallfronts-sg.html)

*Aside from this article the website provides a great selection of updates on the topic of South-South cooperation. It is divided into news articles and events giving the option to search for specific information. This is a good way to stay up to date but also browse through older events to validate if progress has been made.*

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