

# TGCI GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

*Global Development Update is a monthly bulletin that informs readers about the events, ideas, and people that are shaping an emerging world community. Click below to learn more about TGCI, and how to sign up for a free membership.*

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## FEATURED STORY

### Land degradation threatens the lives of 3.2 billion

A recent report produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) spells out the looming dangers of land degradation. According to the 129-member group, this phenomenon is largely caused by human activities. If left unchecked, it threatens the livelihood of 3.2 billion people. The extensively peer-reviewed report left little room for debate that unsustainable land management practices are causing irreparable damage to the biodiversity of our global ecosystem. [Read on.](#)

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## HUMAN RIGHTS

### EU press freedom in jeopardy

The European Centre for Press and Media Freedom (ECPMF) recently warned of increasing threats made against EU journalists. The notice was echoed by the annual World Press Freedom Index,

published by Reporters Without Borders. The report cautions that "in no other region in the world has the situation of press freedom deteriorated as much as in Europe." The deaths of two journalists in Malta and Serbia have only served to heighten these concerns. [Read on.](#)



## GENDER EQUITY

### The lethal stigma of rape

Stigma can be one of the most enduring effects of rape. According to a recent UN report on conflict-related sexual violence, stigma can have "life-long, and sometimes lethal, repercussions for both survivors and for children conceived through rape." The report goes on to acknowledge that rape is a weapon of terrorism, and one that was used in Myanmar as a "calculated tool" for "ethnic cleansing." [Read on.](#)



### Can the #MeToo movement go global?

#MeToo has transformed American culture by holding powerful men accountable for sexual harassment. Yet the movement has yet to take root in other countries where sexism and harassment are commonplace. In a world where rape is used as a tool for war, gender violence remains one of the most pressing human rights issues facing the world today, and #metoo has the potential to finally change this narrative. [Read on.](#)

## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### Crossing the carbon threshold

According to a concerning report from the Mauna Loa Observatory in Hawaii, "atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide have exceeded 410 parts per million averaged across an entire month" – the first time in history such a reading has ever occurred. April 18, 2017 was the first time the recorder crossed the 410 threshold, indicating a perilous uptick in global warming that is beyond levels the international science community has deemed to be "safe." [Read on.](#)

### Greening the shipping industry

International shipping is a massive contributor to climate change. That is why 100 member states of the United Nations International Maritime Organization (IMO) recently adopted a strategy for the industry to phase out greenhouse gas emissions. The plan is consistent with the

### Satellite data restrictions limit climate science

Satellites are capable of collecting environmental information from far-flung places that would otherwise be difficult for humans to monitor. Yet their potential as a contributor to climate change research is severely hamstrung by the fact that nearly half of Earth's satellites are restricted in use. Making this information open source will be an essential step towards advancing climate science efforts worldwide. [Read on.](#)



temperature goals established in the Paris Agreement. While the action is laudable, it will be most successful if companies play a leading role in these changes. [Read on.](#)

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## POVERTY REDUCTION & INCOME INEQUALITY

### The invisibility of rural poverty

As the rural-urban divide grows larger, the needs of the former are often ignored. Rural poverty is largely invisible, out of the field of vision of powerful leadership bodies. With 70% of the world's food produced by small farmers, efforts to empower these rural communities and to eradicate the poverty of their citizens will be essential to meet the food security demands of our growing planet. [Read on.](#)



### Crypto for good?

Mining cryptocurrency has the reputation of being a niche activity for those who want to get rich quick. UNICEF Australia, however, has a different idea. The organization has harnessed this emerging technology with the introduction of The HopePage, which allows its supporters to donate their computer processing power to mine digital dollars for the organization. It is an imperfect system, but one that offers a fascinating glimpse at the future of development fundraising. [Read on.](#)

### Benefits of the global economy not shared by all

According to a recent report authored by the United Nations, the outlook for 800 million of the world's poorest inhabitants remains dire. The report, entitled *Financing for Development: Progress and Prospects*, highlights how the benefits of a stronger global economy have not reached the base of the pyramid, and economic growth is still not being structured in a sustainable manner. Efforts to incorporate small businesses and women into the formal economy will be essential to alter this trend in the future. [Read on.](#)

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## GLOBAL GOVERNANCE & CONNECTIVITY

### Can Canada keep the peace?

As China and the United States teeter on the brink of a trade war, Canada has an opportunity to play peacemaker. Canada's finance minister chairs the Group of Seven (G7), which gives the country a solid platform from which to amplify a message of economic peace. In so doing, the Canadians could play a key role in reducing trade tensions and boosting the confidence of global markets. [Read on.](#)



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## GLOBAL PEACE & JUSTICE

### Appetite for banning nuclear weapons in Japan

Aging survivors of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki are urging the government of Japan to adopt the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The UN Nuclear Ban Treaty acknowledges the "unacceptable suffering" of the *hibakusha* – Japanese survivors – and lays out a future free from nuclear weapons. 122 member nations have already signed on, and many citizens of

### Secretary-General encourages collaboration on peace efforts

In a recent speech, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for more alignment in international peacekeeping efforts. "The scale and nature of the challenge we face calls for closer strategic and operational partnerships between all key stakeholders," Guterres opined, "based on what are the national priorities and the national policies." Investing in peace should be holistic, the Secretary-General urged those in attendance, and pledged support for efforts by UN member states towards achieving this objective. [Read on.](#)

Japan think it is time for their country to do so as well. [Read on.](#)



## Nuclear conference cancelled, causes concern

Five years ago, The UN General Assembly decided to hold a three-day High-Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament. The objective was to provide a platform for world leaders to support diplomatic efforts to reduce nuclear conflicts, as well as to further nuclear disarmament measures such as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Surprisingly—given the recent withdrawal by the US from the Iran Deal—the conference was postponed to a future date, leaving many participants searching for answers. [Read on.](#)

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