

PRESS RELEASE



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Global Forum in Istanbul to focus on action agenda for UN “Rio + 20” Sustainable Development summit

Leaders from governments, international organizations, think tanks and corporations to examine solutions for global sustainability and inequality challenges, and policy choices for a better future in first UNDP Global Forum on Human Development

Istanbul—Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan of Turkey and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Associate Administrator Rebeca Grynspan will open discussions on March 22 in a high-level forum here for development experts, government ministers from both North and South, business executives, and top UN officials to examine the global policy changes required to ensure a sustainable future for people today and for generations to come.

Three months before world leaders gather in Brazil for the “Rio + 20” U.N. Conference on Sustainable Development, UNDP’s first “Global Human Development Forum” will provide a unique and timely opportunity for a fresh, candid examination of the critical social, economic and environmental challenges now facing the world community.

“Rio+20 is a historic opportunity for the international community to agree on urgently needed action to ensure human development progress and a healthy environment for future generations,” said Rebeca Grynspan. “In Istanbul, we will focus on the global policies, resources, and commitments needed to make this sustainable future a reality.”

The forum is organized with the support of the government of Turkey. The 2011 Human Development Report —“Sustainability and Equity: A Better Future for All”— will serve as the overarching framework for the Istanbul dialogue.

Cevdet Yılmaz, Turkey’s Minister of Development said Turkey welcomes the opportunity to host the Forum and address these pressing issues with the invited experts and development officials from other governments around the world. “In order to have resilient people and resilient planet, we have to reach a common understanding in terms of sustainability and equity,” said Yılmaz.

The forum will also feature the launch of a major new report by the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe: “From Transition to Transformation: Sustainable and Inclusive Development in Europe and Central Asia”. This

report, with contributions from 13 U.N. agencies, offers new policy proposals to help manage the needed change to a greener economy with benefits for people throughout that region.

The recent recommendations of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's High Level Panel on Global Sustainability will also be examined in depth at the Istanbul Forum. Those recommendations, strongly endorsed by the government of Turkey, include a commitment to new 'Sustainable Development Goals' to guide global priorities in the decades following the 2015 conclusion of the UN's 15-year Millennium Development Goals campaign, and support for the Secretary-General's "Sustainable Energy for All" initiative, which would provide clean fuels and basic electricity service to the 1.5 billion people who now live entirely off the power grid.

Tarja Halonen, the outgoing president of Finland and co-chair of the Secretary-General's Global Sustainability Panel, will be among the speakers at the Forum. These Panel's proposals will be examined in depth by ministers of the environment from Nepal and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, members of the national planning commissions of India and Pakistan, and other officials of developing countries represented at the conference.

Other Forum discussion topics include: "A New Deal on Sustainable Development"; "Innovative Financing for Sustainable Future"; "Assessing Human Progress"; and "Building Coalitions for Change".

The two-day meeting will conclude with the adoption by consensus of an "Istanbul Declaration" articulating commonly agreed goals and priorities for the "Rio+20" UN Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012.

Other notable speakers at the Forum will include; Brian Atwood, Chair of the OECD Development Assistance Committee; Senator Cristovam Buarque of Brazil; Gunilla Carlsson, Sweden's Minister for Development Cooperation; Olav Kjørven, UN Assistant Secretary General and Director of UNDP Bureau for Development Policy; Khalid Malik, Director, UNDP Human Development Report Office; **Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, Minister of Planning, Kenya** ; Lyonpo Thakur Singh Powdyel, Minister for Education of Bhutan; Fatma Şahin, Turkey's Minister for Family and Social Policies; Cevdet Yılmaz, Turkey's Minister of Development; and Kandeh K. Yumkella, Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

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