



THE MODEL UNITED NATIONS OF BARCELONA

SECURITY COUNCIL

French troops to remain in Mali all year

France's leadership had pledged to pull out quickly after launching a military operation in the West African country in January. Their forces managed to push al-Qaeda-linked fighters out of Malian cities but pockets of resistance remain. France announced that the first of France's more than 4,000 troops in Mali will pull out in late April. And by July, he said about 2,000 French soldiers will still be in the former French colony, and at the end of the year "1,000 French soldiers will remain." He said the French troops would probably be part of a UN peacekeeping operation that France is pushing for.

28Mar 2013, TheTelegraph

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/mali/9960843/French-troops-to-remain-in-Mali-all-year.html>

Mali: Complex Emergency (Humanitarian report)

OCHA Mali in collaboration with humanitarian partner report the humanitarian situation in the region, it covers the period from 15 March to 27 March 2013. The Humanitarian operations continue in accessible areas of the north despite continuing insecurity due to fighting, mines and unexploded ordnance, and sporadic suicide attacks. However a lack of resources is hampering efforts to prevent cholera, which could re-surface in June or July. As of 20 March, an estimated 282,548 people are internally displaced (IDPs) in Mali according to the Population Movement Commission (CMP) report released on 20 March. This figure does not include the 10,100 people displaced reported by NGOs in the north since the beginning of this year. The Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) for Mali is now 21.5 per cent funded. About US\$88 million has been secured out of \$410 million in total requirements. Read more at:

27 March 2013, OCHA

http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/sit%20rep%20english%20final_0.pdf

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

"Will Development Goals Ever Be Enough?"

The post-2015 development goals need to be much more ambitious about preventing avoidable poverty-related deaths within an immediate timeframe. Numerous international agencies already have the expertise needed to prevent these avoidable deaths, and the systems and institutions that can assist them have long been in place. Of additional concern is the selective and target-driven approach they embody which conveniently avoids addressing the root causes of poverty and inequality.

Governments will need to go far beyond their existing commitments to overseas aid and rapidly redistribute resources on a scale never before achieved if they intend to make such a program a reality. Another prominent concern with the MDG framework is its highly depoliticised nature and its failure to address the structural causes of poverty. Countless NGO reports already highlight how to restructure the global economy in a way that can reduce poverty and inequality, covering everything from reforming international systems of trade and finance to re-generating local economies. In a world

of abundant resources and wealth, nothing less than an immediate end to extreme poverty will suffice as a first step towards a sustainable future.

The People's Voice, March 27, 2013

<http://www.thepeoplesvoice.org/TPV3/Voices.php/2013/03/27/will-development-goals-ever-be-enough>

"Nations urged to combine environmental and development goals"

Scientists argue that world leaders should set six new sustainable development goals to achieve global prosperity, as degradation of the natural world is undermining efforts to reduce poverty. Pursuing a post-2015 agenda focused only on poverty alleviation could undermine the agenda's purpose. Countries began the political process of adopting new post-2015 targets earlier in March and most developing countries argued that developed countries should do more because they consider they have been largely responsible for the problems and have greater resources to tackle them.

The proposed new SDGs are: 1) thriving lives and livelihoods; 2) sustainable food security; 3) sustainable water security; 4) universal clean energy; 5) healthy and productive ecosystems; and 6) governance for sustainable societies.

The Guardian, March 21, 2013

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2013/mar/21/nations-urged-combine-environmental-development-goals>

"Austerity driven Europe could miss UN development goals"

As Europe lives on of the worst crisis in decades, economic and fiscal pressure will see many member states missing their targets in fighting poverty reduction. Europe fears that foreign aid will be among the first casualties of long-term austerity measures. Despite the economic crisis, the European Parliament will present a non-binding resolution in April calling for EU governments to live up to their commitment to devote 0.7% of their gross national income to development aid.

Only a few months before the United Nations agrees on the next Millennium Development goals, due to expire in 2015, the focus of the debate has shifted to the new up comers in the global scene. Emerging economies have blurred the dividing lines between developed and developing nations. But experts warn that deciding which countries need help only according to their GDP is a mistake. The EU is collectively the largest aid donor in the world. However, the upcoming months will be crucial in defining how generous Europe wants to be in its fight against poverty.

EurActiv, March 24, 2013

<http://www.euractiv.com/video/austerity-driven-europe-un-devel-518703>

"UN calls for accelerated action on Millennium Development Goals"

The UN and its partners around the world will observe the 1,000 days to the end of 2015, the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to inspire further action. Starting 5 April, the actual milestone date, and running through 12 April, the UN will work with governments, civil society and international partners to mark "MDG Momentum: 1,000 Days of Action".

Since the MDGs were adopted by all UN Member States in 2000, governments, international organisations and civil society groups around the world have helped make tremendous progress to improve people's lives. To build on this success and accelerate action, the Secretary-General has called on the international community to: increase targeted investments in health, education, energy and sanitation; empower women and girls; focus on the most vulnerable people; keep up aid commitments; and re-energise efforts from governments to grassroots groups to make a difference.

Panapress, April 3, 2013

<http://www.panapress.com/UN-calls-for-accelerated-action-on-Millennium-Development-Goals--3-867507-0-lang2-index.html>

"Development goals? What development goals? Blank faces in El Salvador"

Rural communities including some in El Salvador knew nothing of the millennium development goals, and feel excluded, Marta Benavides, the co-chair of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty says. She participated at the World Social Forum (WSF) which grew out of alter-globalisation (alternative globalisation) protests in the late 1990s and is now a regular gathering of social movements challenging the rights of certain institutions and individuals to decide development pathways.

Benavides said the high-level UN process has not delivered on promises of inclusion and participation in defining a common vision. She described how rural communities in eastern El Salvador expressed frustration and anger when she explained what the MDGs are. The high-level panel, appointed by UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon to advise on an overarching vision for post-2015 development, has been operating in parallel and is due to deliver its final report in May. It has been criticised for not including representatives from grassroots civil society, trade unions, or social movements.

The Guardian, April 2, 2013

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/poverty-matters/2013/apr/02/development-goals-el-salvador>

"Sustainable Development Goals Must Sustain People and Planet, Experts Say"

The researchers argue that in the face of increasing pressure on the planet's ability to support life, adherence to out-dated definitions of sustainable development threaten to reverse progress made in developing countries over past decades. The team identified six goals that, if met, would contribute to global sustainability while helping to alleviate poverty. They pointed out that climate change and other global environmental threats will increasingly become serious barriers to further human development. The classic model of sustainable development, of three integrated pillars - economic, social and environmental - that has served nations and the UN for over a decade, is flawed because it does not reflect reality.

The key point is that the SDGs must add up to sustainability, it was said. The SDGs have the potential to lock in the spectacular gains on human development that have been achieved in the past two decades and help the globe transition to a sustainable lifestyle.

Science Daily, March 20, 2013

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/03/130320155228.htm>

EUROPEAN SUMMIT

Banking disunion

"some want another head to roll: that of Jeroen Dijsselbloem, the Dutchman who now chairs the Eurogroup of finance ministers. His offence? Perhaps to have spoken the truth. He presented the decision to force shareholders, bondholders and depositors in Cyprus's two biggest banks to bear losses as a model for future banking crises. Bail-outs by taxpayers had to be replaced by the bail-in of investors. Or, as Mr Dijsselbloem told interviewers, it was time for governments to start "pushing back the risks".

"the turmoil in Cyprus demonstrates why a credible banking union is so urgently needed. With a central supervisor and bank-resolution authority, its banking problems might have been mitigated, or addressed sooner and at lower cost"

The Economist - Apr 6th 2013

<http://www.economist.com/news/europe/21575762-some-worrying-signals-cyprus-and-eurogroups-new-chairman-banking-disunion>

A banking union for the Eurozone

The crisis has highlighted the need for, and difficulties with, a Eurozone banking union. This column argues that, to make a union, you need three crucial ingredients: common supervision, a single resolution mechanism, and common safety nets. The power to control and the resources to rescue must work in parallel. Eurozone leaders have taken the first critical steps, but further progress is needed to strengthen the financial architecture of the single currency.

Vox - 5 Apr 2013

<http://www.voxeu.org/article/banking-union-eurozone>

A Union That Exists in Name Only

The Cypriot catastrophe shows just how far away the euro zone is from creating its much-touted "banking union." There was no euro zone supervision of Cyprus's big banks, no transnational approach to put them into controlled bankruptcy, no common deposit insurance and no bank rescue funds from abroad. Instead, there was weak supervision by the Central Bank of Cyprus and a mad scramble to carve up the banks' assets on national lines. Nicosia was left to shoulder the whole cost of protecting small depositors and the euro zone said that none of its bailout cash could be injected into the troubled banks.

TheNewYorkTimes March 31

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/01/business/global/01iht-dixon01.html? r=0>

UNESCO

Kostas Vaxevanis: Greeks read the foreign press to find out what's happening in Greece.

Kostas Vaxevanis, the editor of Hot Doc, the Greek magazine which published the 'Lagarde list' of alleged Greek tax avoiders, faces a new trial on a charge of breaching private data. He says that Greek journalism has been compromised by its corrupt owners who have got too close to the politicians.

THE GUARDIAN, April 3rd, 2013

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/video/2013/apr/03/kostas-vaxevanis-greeks-foreign-press-video>

Manuel Castells: how modern political movements straddle urban space and cyberspace

Spanish sociologist Manuel Castells argues that the internet has altered protest movements forever. But while he says online activism can be effective, recent major political change has required boots on the ground – and the intersection between urban space and cyberspace is where to find the most interesting modern political movements.

THE GUARDIAN, March 25, 2013.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/video/2013/mar/25/manuel-castells-political-cyberspace-video>

UNESCO/HRC

Muslim-Themed Anti-Gay Ads Coming Soon To San Francisco Buses

Purchased by the pro-Israeli American Freedom Defense Initiative, the most recent set of ads show inflammatory, anti-gay quotations from Muslims like controversial cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and U.K. radio personality Sister Ruby Ramadan. "The ads will increase awareness about the subjugation and oppression of gays under Shariah law," ADFI spokesperson Pamela

Geller told the San Francisco Examiner. At the time, San Francisco District Attorney George Gascon told the Associated Press, "these offensive ads serve no purpose than to denigrate our city's Arab and Muslim communities."

The Huffington Post, March 20, 2013

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/20/muslim-themed-anti-gay-ad_n_2917110.html

Why an International Day to Defend Amina?

Tunisian Amina of 19 years old girl had been threatened with death for posting a topless photo of herself bearing the slogan "my body belongs to me, and is not the source of anyone's honour". Within 24 hours, a number of well known individuals and groups joined in a call to mark 4 April as an International Day to Defend Amina – both to unequivocally defend her and demand her safety and freedom whilst also demanding the prosecution of the Islamist who threatened her.

<http://freethoughtblogs.com/maryamnamazie/2013/04/02/why-an-international-day-to-defend-amina/>

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Ugandan Parliament readying to vote on 'draconian' anti-homosexuality bill.

The Ugandan Parliament is poised to vote on a bill infamously known as the "Kill the Gays" Bill. The bill was first introduced in 2009 by MP David Bahati, but was later tabled and reintroduced a second time in November 2012.

The Newspaper, April 8, 2013.

<http://www.thenewspaper.ca/the-news/item/1133-ugandan-parliament-readying-to-vote-on-%E2%80%9Cdraconian%E2%80%9D-anti-homosexuality-bill>