

## 2010 Africa Day Symposium



### *Participant Biographies*

---



**ABDIRASHID DULANE**

*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*

Abdirashid Dulane has served as ambassador to Japan since 2006. He was the vice minister of water resources in Ethiopia from 2003 to 2005. Prior to this, he was president of the Somali Regional State, Ethiopia from 2000 to 2003 and deputy minister of water resources from 1995 to 2000. Mr. Abdirashid obtained a B.Sc. in chemistry and physics from Somali National University, Somalia and an M.Sc. in soil and water science from the University of Arizona, USA. He began his career as a high school teacher, later working at the Bonka Research Station as a chemist, then soils research officer and finally soils programme leader. He was project manager at the UNHCR and World Bank funded Furjano Refugee Settlement Project from 1989 to 1991 and from 1994 to 1995 was project general manager of the South East Rangeland Project in Ethiopia.



**MOUNKAILA GOUMANDAKOYE**

*Regional Director and Regional Representative, Regional Office for Africa, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*

Mounkaila Goumandakoye is the regional director, regional representative of UNEP in Africa. Mr. Goumandakoye has held various senior positions in a wide range of national, regional and international institutions within and outside the United Nations, past positions including policy advisor and acting director of the UNDP Drylands Development Center; director of environment of the Republic of Niger; head of the Ecology and Environment Division of CILSS (an intergovernmental organization devoted to environment management and drought mitigation in the nine Sahelian countries of West and Central Africa) and regional coordinator for West and Central Africa of the United Nations Soudano Sahelian Office (UNSO). Mr. Goumandakoye graduated from the University of Arizona in the United States and holds an M.Sc. in watershed management. He also holds a degree of engineer in applied sciences from the Polytechnic Institute of Mali.



**NOUREDDINE BEN FARHAT HACHED**

*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Republic of Tunisia; Chair, 2010 Africa Day Symposium*

Noureddine Hached was governor of the Prefecture of Mahdia, Tunisia from 1976 until 1978 when he was seconded to the Cabinet of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. He was a member of parliament from 1979 to 1981. From 1981 to 1984 he was ambassador of Tunisia to Belgium, Luxembourg and the European Community and subsequently ambassador of Tunisia to Algeria. He served as the minister of labour from 1985 to 1986, and subsequently as ambassador and executive secretary representing the African Unity Organization in Geneva and as ambassador of Tunisia to Italy. He has served as deputy secretary general and, later, vice-secretary general, of the League of Arab States. In 2007 he was appointed ambassador of Tunisia to Japan. He is a recipient of the Order of the Republic and the Order of Independence (Tunisia), the Royal Order of Belgium, and the Republican Order of Italy. He holds a Ph.D. in economics from the Université de Paris-Sciences Economiques.



**WANGARI MAATHAI**

*Founder, Green Belt Movement*

Wangari Maathai is the founder of the Green Belt Movement, an environmentalist, a civil society and women's rights activist, and a former member of parliament in the Republic of Kenya. Ms. Maathai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 and has since become a spokesperson for a number of important initiatives, including "Mottainai: The Four R's", Protecting the Congo Basin Rainforest Ecosystem, and the Millennium Development Goals. She has received numerous awards and distinctions, and has served on a number of professional and academic organizations. She was a Montgomery fellow at Dartmouth College, USA in 2001, and then a visiting fellow for conservation at Yale University, USA in 2002. Ms. Maathai received an M.S. in biological sciences from the University of Pittsburgh, USA and a Ph.D. in anatomy from the University of Nairobi. She is also the author of two books, *Unbowed: A Memoir* and *The Green Belt Movement*.



**MELES ZENAWI**

*Prime Minister, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia*

Meles Zenawi was elected prime minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in 1995 and re-elected for a second and third term in 2000 and 2005 respectively. From 1991 to 1995 he served as the president of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and chairman of the Council of Representatives, the legislative body of the transitional government. He interrupted his medical studies at the Medical Faculty of Addis Ababa University in 1974 to join the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF). He was elected to its leadership committee in 1979 and then to its executive committee in 1983. He is chairman of both the TPLF and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF), a political alliance of the four main political organizations in the country. Mr. Meles also currently serves as the chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC). During the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, he was nominated by UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon to head a high-level advisory group together with former UK prime minister Gordon Brown to mobilize funds promised to developing countries. Mr. Meles received an M.B.A. from the Open University, UK in 1995 and an M.Sc. in economics from Erasmus University, the Netherlands in 2004. He was awarded the World Peace Prize and holds honorary doctorates from Hannan University, South Korea and Kokushikan University, Japan.



**CHINAMI NISHIMURA**

*Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Japan*

Chinami Nishimura is a member of the House of Representatives of the National Diet of Japan, representing Niigata Prefecture's First District. She assumed the post of parliamentary vice-minister for foreign affairs at the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in September, 2009. Prior to joining the Ministry, she was elected three times to the House of Representatives, in 2003, 2005 and most recently in 2009. Ms. Chinami received her master's degree from the Graduate School of Law, Niigata University and has also studied in Thailand and the UK. She served as an adjunct professor at several universities and colleges before being elected to the Niigata Prefectural Assembly in 1999.



**KENZO OSHIMA**

*Senior Vice-President, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)*

Kenzo Oshima was educated at the Faculty of Law, University of Tokyo, before beginning his career in public service at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan (MoFA). He has since then served in various positions at MoFA including director of the Technical Cooperation Division, director of the Aid Policy Division, and director general at the Economic Cooperation Bureau. He was also deputy director general at the Asian Affairs Bureau. His services overseas include counselor at the Embassy of Japan in the United States of America, ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Australia and permanent representative of Japan to the United Nations. Outside MoFA, he was appointed executive director, International Peace Cooperation, Headquarters of the Cabinet Office, and under-secretary-general for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations. He has been the senior vice-president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) since 2007.



**KONRAD OSTERWALDER**

*Rector, United Nations University*

Konrad Osterwalder was born in Frauenfeld, Thurgau, Switzerland, in June 1942. He studied at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule; ETH) in Zurich, where he earned a diploma in theoretical physics in 1965 and a doctorate in theoretical physics in 1970. In 1971, he accepted a research position at Harvard University where he was promoted to assistant professor for mathematical physics in 1973 and associate professor for mathematical physics in 1976. In 1977, he returned to Switzerland upon being appointed a full professor for mathematical physics at ETH Zurich. During his tenure there, he served as head of the Department of Mathematics (1986–1990) and head of the Planning Committee (1990–1995), and was founder of the Centro Stefano Franscini seminar center in Ascona. He was appointed rector of ETH in 1995 and held that post for 12 years. From November 2006 through August 2007, he served concurrently as ETH president *pro tempore*. He has served as vice president of the Conference of Rectors of Swiss Universities, chair of the University Council of Darmstadt University and as president of the Conference of European Schools of Advanced Engineering Education and Research. Professor Osterwalder joined the United Nations University on 1 September 2007 as its fifth rector. In that role, he holds the rank of under-secretary-general of the United Nations.



**VESELIN POPOVSKI**

*Senior Academic Programme Officer, Director of Studies on International Order and Justice, UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace*

Vesselin Popovski is a former diplomat (1988–1996), UN desk officer at the Bulgarian Foreign Ministry, and later first secretary at the Bulgarian Embassy in London. He holds master's degrees in international relations from the Moscow Institute of International Affairs (1988) and from the London School of Economics (1996), and a Ph.D. from King's College, London, on the methodology of analysis and classification of UN Security Council resolutions. Other positions include: research fellowship at NATO Academic Program "Democratic Institutions" (1996–98); lecturer and programme director at the Centre for European Studies, Exeter University, UK (1999–2002); visiting lecturer at King's College, London; as well as work at the Centre for the Study of Democracy, Westminster University and Huron University (USA). He is a contributor to the ICISS Report Responsibility to Protect (2001) and co-author of the Princeton Principles of Universal Jurisdiction (2001). From 2002 to 2004 he worked for the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights in Moscow, implementing the European Union Project "Legal Protection of Individual Rights in Russia". He has published on intervention, human rights, the International Criminal Court, and UN reforms. His most recent book is *Human Rights Regimes in the Americas* with Monica Serrano (UNU Press 2010).



**GABRIEL ALEXANDRE SAR**

*Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Republic of Senegal*

Gabriel Alexandre Sar is the ambassador of Senegal to Japan and concurrently ambassador to Indonesia and the Philippines, positions he has held since 2001. Prior to this, he served as ambassador of Senegal to the United Kingdom, concurrently to Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. From 1992 to 1993 he was ambassador, adviser and interpreter of the president of the Republic of Senegal. Other positions held include first counselor at the Embassy of Senegal in London, UK; minister-counselor, head of the protocol department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Senegal; and minister-counselor responsible for conference and protocol matters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Senegal. Mr. Sar received a B.A. in law and English from Rennes University, France and has studied at Dakar University, Senegal; Ecole Nationale d'Administration et de Magistrature, Senegal; and Oxford University, UK.



**KAZUHIKO TAKEUCHI**

*Vice-Rector, United Nations University (UNU); Director, UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace*

Kazuhiko Takeuchi is a United Nations University vice-rector, director of the UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace, deputy executive director of Tokyo University's Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science, and a professor at the Graduate School of Agricultural and Life Sciences, Tokyo University. He is the author of *Regional Ecology* (Asakura Shoten, Tokyo; 1991), *Creating a New Eco-environment* (University of Tokyo Press; 1994), and, for younger readers, *Nature and Us* (Popura Sha, Tokyo; 2004) and *A Guide to Global Sustainability* (Iwanami Shoten, Tokyo; 2007). He has served, *inter alia*, as the vice-president of the Japanese Institute of Landscape Architecture, the president of the City Planning Institute of Japan, special adviser to the Rural Planning Association, and trustee of the Center for Environmental Information Science. He holds a doctorate in agrobiol-ogy from the University of Tokyo.



**MOHAMED AHMED TAWFIC**

*Director, Environmental Impact Assessment Unit, Suez Canal University, Egypt*

Mohamed Ahmed Tawfic is an environmental toxicologist with extensive experience in teaching, research and consultancy work. He has lectured at the School of Environmental Science, University of Portsmouth (UK) and was a visiting professor at Manchester University (UK), University of Leiden (the Netherlands) and University of Venice (Italy). He has served as an environmental consultant or expert for a number of international bodies, including UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO, the World Bank, and USAID. He is a member of numerous international and regional organizations, and is an observer in International Green Chemistry. He has published a large number of research papers on environmental pollution and monitoring, and co-authored six books on environmental pollution and environmental management systems. He holds a Ph.D. in environmental toxicology from the Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London (UK).



**AKIRA YAMADA**

*Deputy Director-General, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), Japan*

Akira Yamada is the deputy director-general of the International Cooperation Bureau at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a position he has held since 2008. Prior to this, he was the minister-deputy chief of mission at the Embassy of Japan in Spain. He has additional experience at Japan's diplomatic missions in Argentina, the United States and Iraq. Mr. Yamada is a graduate of the University of Tokyo's faculty of law. Since joining the Ministry in 1981, he has served as deputy director of the Economic Cooperation Bureau's Aid Policy Division, director of the Services Trade (WTO) Division, director of the Second Latin and Caribbean Affairs Division, and director of the Grand Aid Division, among others.



Visit our Priority Africa website:  
[www.unu.edu/africa](http://www.unu.edu/africa)

The 2010 Africa Day Symposium video webcast will be archived at  
[videoportal.unu.edu/event/59](http://videoportal.unu.edu/event/59)