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**UNITED NATIONS
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International Public Symposium on "Living with Deserts"

- Event:** Symposium for International Year of Deserts and Desertification — "Living with Deserts II: Linkages between Dryland Science and On-the-Ground Practice"
- Date/Time:** Friday, 25 August 2006 (Noon – 6:00 PM)
- Venue:** U Thant International Conference Hall, 3F, UN House (Shibuya-ku, Tokyo)
- Organizers:** United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations University, Tottori University Arid Land Research Center, University of Tokyo The Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science, Ministry of Environment, Japan, Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan International Research Center for Agricultural Sciences, Japan Green Resources Agency
- Supporters:** Science Council of Japan; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan; Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan; Japanese Association for Arid Land Studies; Japan Forum on International Agricultural Research for Sustainable Development
- Cooperator:** Global Environmental Forum

Background:

- To commemorate the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), which entered into force in 1996, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD). The aim of IYDD is to raise awareness about the human consequences of drought and desertification, as well as to celebrate the fragile beauty and unique natural and historical heritage of the world's deserts.
- Drylands cover more than 40 per cent of the earth, and are home to nearly 2 billion people. Poverty, unsustainable land management, and climate change are turning drylands into deserts; desertification, in turn, leads to harsher living conditions and exacerbates poverty.
- Some 10 to 20 per cent of the world's drylands are already degraded. The problem is particularly acute in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, where dryland degradation is a serious obstacle to eradicating poverty and hunger, and is jeopardizing efforts to ensure environmental sustainability and achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals.

About the Symposium:

- This symposium, the 2nd of a series, focuses on international research and activity in the field of dryland research. Participants will review research and outcomes to date, contemplate future directions, and discuss how we can help those who are affected to achieve better lives in the future.
- Simultaneous English-Japanese interpretation will be provided.
- For those unable to attend, the symposium will be "webcast" live (and archived) online; see http://www.unu.edu/uthant_lectures/index.htm

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend the IYDD Living with Deserts II Symposium. Please contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: media@unu.edu) by 24 August to confirm your attendance.

* A related "International Conference on Dryland Studies and Combating Desertification" will be held at Tottori Prefectural Culture Hall on 27 and 28 August. See <http://www.alrc.tottori-u.ac.jp/iydd/> for more information.

MEDIA ADVISORY



United Nations University (UNU) is an autonomous organ of the UN General Assembly dedicated to generating and transferring knowledge and strengthening capacities relevant to global issues of human security, development, and welfare. The University, which opened in 1975, operates through a worldwide network of research and training centres and programmes coordinated by UNU Centre in Tokyo.

International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD)
Tokyo Event: International Symposium
“Living with Deserts II: Linkages between Dryland Science
and On-the-ground Practice“

- 12:00–12:20 Opening Address
Hama Arba Diallo (Executive Secretary, UNCCD)
Gaku Hashimoto (Member, House of Representatives, Japan; on behalf of the late Ryutaro Hashimoto (IYDD Honorary Spokesperson, former Prime Minister of Japan))
Kiyoshi Kurokawa (President, SCJ)
- 12:20–13:50 Keynote Speech
Mahmoud Mohamed Bachir El-Solh (Director General, ICARDA (Syria))
Wang Tao (Director General, CAREERI (China))
Youba Sokona (Executive Secretary, OSS (Tunisia))
Hans van Ginkel (Rector, UNU)
- 13:50–14:20 Short Break
- 14:20–16:05 Panel Discussion 1: Role of dryland science in combating desertification
Panellists:
Zafar Adeel (Director, UNU-INWEH (Canada))
Atsushi Tsunekawa (Director, TU-ALRC)
Kazuhiko Takeuchi (Deputy Executive Director, IR3S)
Houcine Khatteli (Director General, Institut des Regions Arides Medenine (Tunisia))
Shi Peijun (Vice President, Beijing Normal University (China))
Barry Shapiro (Director, ICRISAT (India))
Moderator: Shinobu Inanaga (President, JIRCAS)
- 16:05–17:50 Panel Discussion 2: Practices on the ground in combating desertification
Panellists:
Pietro Laureano (Director, IPOGEA (Italy))
Kikue Sugimoto (Deputy Representative, NGO Human Network)
Norio Ishida (Emeritus Professor, Kyoto University)
Naoya Shimizu (Director, Research and Design Division, Overseas Activities Department, J-Green)
Makoto Kitanaka (Group Director, Group 3, Rural Development Department, JICA)
Charmine Koda (Director, UN Information Center)
Moderator: Iwao Kobori (Senior Programme Advisor, Environment and Sustainable Development Programme, UNU)
- 17:50–18:00 Closing Remarks
Itaru Yasui (Vice Rector, UNU)
- 18:15–20:15 Reception