

Concept Note

Commemoration of the International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms

10 July 2026 (UNHQ, CR 11) 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Theme

“From Source to Impact: Protecting Land and Life from Sand and Dust Storms”

The theme of the 2026 International Day was adopted by the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms and highlights the importance of addressing both the root causes of sand and dust storms, including land degradation, desertification, and drought, as well as their far-reaching impacts on human health, livelihoods, ecosystems, and sustainable development.

Overview

Sand and dust storms (SDSs) have emerged as one of the most significant environmental and developmental challenges affecting countries across the world. Their impacts extend far beyond the areas where they originate, affecting public health, food security, agriculture, biodiversity, infrastructure, transportation, and livelihoods.

According to the United Nations General Assembly, sand and dust storms are increasing in frequency and intensity in several regions, and now affect more than 150 countries. Their growing economic, social, and environmental costs pose serious challenges to sustainable development, and negatively affect the achievement of many Sustainable Development Goals. Recent scientific evidence further indicates that climate change, drought, land degradation, and unsustainable land management practices may contribute to increasing risks and impacts in many affected regions.

Recognizing the transboundary nature of this phenomenon, the international community has devoted increasing attention to the issue through a series of General Assembly resolutions culminating in resolution **A/RES/80/143 (2025)** on Combating Sand and Dust Storms. The resolution emphasizes the need for strengthened international cooperation, enhanced capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, early warning systems, and support for affected countries, while simultaneously highlighting the growing role of the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms in advancing implementation and coordinated action.

Background

Since 2015 the General Assembly has adopted a series of resolutions on combating sand and dust storms including resolutions 70/195, 71/219, 72/225, 73/237, 74/226, 75/222, 76/211, 77/171, 78/158, 79/212, and most recently resolution **A/RES/80/143** reflecting the increasing recognition

of sand and dust storms as a global challenge requiring coordinated responses at the national, regional, and international levels.

The General Assembly, through resolution 77/294, proclaimed **12 July as the International Day of Combating Sand and Dust Storms**. Furthermore, resolution 78/314 **proclaimed 2025–2034 as the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms**. These milestones provide an important framework for enhancing awareness, strengthening cooperation and supporting practical action in affected countries.

The United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms has become an increasingly important platform for promoting coordinated action across the United Nations system. The Coalition supports implementation through knowledge-sharing, capacity-building, awareness-raising, training, scientific cooperation, and support for the development of national, regional, and interregional plans and strategies.

Objective

The event aims to advance the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions on combating sand and dust storms, including General Assembly resolution A/RES/80/143 and the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034).

It will provide a platform for Member States, United Nations entities, regional and international organizations, and other stakeholders to exchange experiences, strengthen regional and international cooperation, promote capacity-building, and discuss practical actions to address the growing impacts of sand and dust storms.

The discussion will focus on implementation, knowledge-sharing, early warning systems, sustainable land management, technology transfer, scientific cooperation, and support for affected developing countries. Particular attention will be given to strengthening partnerships and identifying practical measures to accelerate implementation at the national, regional and global levels.

Guiding Questions

1. What practical actions are needed to accelerate the implementation of General Assembly resolution A/RES/80/143 and the United Nations Decade on Combating Sand and Dust Storms (2025–2034)?
2. How can regional and international cooperation be strengthened to address the transboundary nature of sand and dust storms and support affected countries?
3. How can the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms further contribute to implementation, coordination, and knowledge-sharing among Member States and relevant stakeholders?

4. What additional measures are needed to strengthen capacity-building, technology transfer, scientific cooperation, and resource mobilization for affected developing countries?
5. Based on current scientific evidence and observed trends, what are the projected future risks and impacts of sand and dust storms on human health, ecosystems, food security, and sustainable development?
6. What successful national, regional, or international initiatives can be scaled up or replicated to enhance resilience and reduce the impacts of sand and dust storms?

Format

The meeting will be held in person at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Statements by Member States, United Nations entities and invited speakers will be followed by an interactive discussion.

The event is organized by the Permanent Missions of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Iraq, the Republic of Senegal, and Mongolia, to the United Nations, in cooperation with ESCAP, ESCWA, UNCCD, UNEP, WHO, FAO, WMO, UNDESA, UNDRR and the United Nations Coalition on Combating Sand and Dust Storms.

Representatives of Member States, United Nations entities, regional and international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders are invited to participate.

Date & Venue

10 July 2026 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

UNHQ, New York (CR 11)