

U N IN RUSSIA

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Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

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Beslan, one year later: though the pain still cuts deep, life and hope are returning to the town /4-6

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A conference devoted to the discussion of a strategy for the North Caucasus social and economic recovery, organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), was held in Rostov-on-Don on 29-30 August

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Every 5 seconds one child in the world dies of hunger. Responding to the UN World Food Programme appeal, over 200,000 people Walked the World in 269 cities, 91 countries and 24 time zones to fight child hunger on 12 June 2005

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Dr. Inge Baumgarten: For people in Russia the difference in risk of dying from a violent attack (28.0 deaths per 100,000), compared to the United Kingdom, being 32 higher. And homicide is only the visible tip of a violence iceberg

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Chernobyl: The True Scale of the Accident

A total of up to four thousand people could eventually die of radiation exposure from the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (NPP) accident nearly 20 years ago, an international team of more than 100 scientists has concluded. As of mid-2005, however, fewer than 50 deaths had been directly attributed to radiation from the disaster, almost all being highly exposed rescue workers, many who died within months of the accident but others who died as late as 2004.

The new numbers are presented in a landmark digest report, "Chernobyl's Legacy: Health, Environmental and Socio-Economic Impacts," just released by the Chernobyl Forum. The Forum is made up of 8 UN specialized agencies. The Forum's report aims to help the affected countries understand the true scale of the accident consequences and also suggest ways the governments of Belarus, Ukraine and Russia might address major economic and social problems stemming from the accident. Members of the Forum, including representatives of the three governments, will meet September 6 and 7 in Vienna at an unprecedented gathering of the world's experts on Chernobyl, radiation effects and protection, to consider these findings and recommendations. The report's findings included:

Approximately 1,000 on-site reactor staff and emergency workers were heavily exposed to high-level radiation on the first day

of the accident; among the more than 200,000 emergency and recovery operation workers exposed during the period from 1986-1987, an estimated 2,200 radiation-caused deaths can be expected during their lifetime.

About 4,000 cases of thyroid cancer, mainly in children and adolescents at the time of the accident, have resulted from the accident's contamination and at least nine children died of thyroid cancer.

An estimated five million people currently live in areas of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine that are contaminated with radionuclides due to the accident.

Most emergency workers and people living in contaminated areas received relatively low whole body radiation doses, comparable to natural background levels.

Poverty, "lifestyle" diseases now rampant in the former Soviet Union and mental health problems pose a far greater threat to local communities than does radiation exposure.

Structural elements of the sarcophagus built to contain the damaged reactor have degraded, posing a risk of collapse and the release of radioactive dust.

Except for the still closed, highly contaminated 30 kilometer area surrounding the reactor, and some closed lakes and restricted forests, radiation levels have mostly returned to acceptable levels.

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Founder:
United Nations Office
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Editor-in-Chief: Victoria Zotikova
Editor: Vladimir Sadakov

Address:
119034, Moscow,
Ostozhenka St., 28
Tel. 787-21-00
Fax: 787-21-01
E-mail: vladimir.sadakov@undp.ru

The UN Secretary-General's Message on the World Population Day



Photo by Lidia Bandakova, UNFPA

Volgograd young people learning about healthy life styles

This World Population Day is an occasion to stress the empowering effect of gender equality, and the fact that respect for this human right benefits everyone – men, women, boys and girls alike.

Equality between men and women is a guiding principle of the



The UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan

United Nations, inscribed in the United Nations Charter. It is also central to global efforts to free people from fear and want to which nations agreed in the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. At the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, equality and women's empowerment were considered both ends in themselves and cornerstones of development. Equality goes hand-in-hand with investments in education, economic opportunity and reproductive health, and taken together, these are a powerful force for lifting millions out of poverty.

By contrast, when discrimination prevents true equality, the consequences are grave. Millions of girls are "missing" from populations because parents preferred the birth of sons. More girls than boys are out of school, denied their right to an education and the keys to a better life, and impoverishing the communities in which they live. Poverty, gender discrimination and violence are fueling the AIDS epidemic, with the number of women and

adolescent girls newly infected rising in every region. And in some regions, alarmingly high levels of maternal mortality are claiming the lives of too many women and depriving children of their mothers' love and care.

Despite these enormous challenges – indeed, because of them – women all over the world are mobilizing to secure their rights. And they are registering important successes. Global and national debates on human rights and human development are focusing on issues of gender equality and women's empowerment. Many countries are enacting laws and policies that advance women's rights, and are supporting services to improve and protect women's health. More women are participating in politics, and more men are taking responsibility as partners for change.

On this World Population Day, let us resolve to empower women and girls by our commitment to gender equality. And let us remember that every society that wishes to overcome poverty, hunger, armed conflict and disease must draw fully on the talents and contribution of all of its members.



Photo by Lidia Bandakova, UNFPA

UNFPA

Tel.: (7 095) 787-21-13

Fax: (7 095) 787-21-37

E-mail: russia.office@unfpa.org

www.unfpa.ru



UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

Highlight

Quieting the Pain of Beslan Children



Rehabilitation for children caught up in the Beslan school siege continues at a UNICEF supported centre in Vladikavkaz, but there are still those who are too fearful to go back to school. Journalist John Varoli visits the Centre, which offers hope and the beginning of a road back towards normality for the traumatized youngsters.

August 1, exactly 11 months since Beslan School Number 1 was attacked, and a bus full of Beslan first-graders pulls up at the North Ossetian State Children's Rehabilitation Centre in Vladikavkaz, the capital of this small republic.

September 1, 2004, should have been one of the most memorable days in their lives – their very first day at school. In Russia, this is one of the most important days in a child's life, and celebrated with great pomp. Indeed, they will never forget that first day in September, and that is precisely why they have come to the Centre today: to help their troubled young minds and souls come to terms with incomprehensible suffering.

“These children are some of the most difficult cases we have here, and we attach a lot of importance to this project,” says Larissa Khabaeva, UNICEF psychosocial project coordinator and the North Ossetian Education Ministry official responsible for the overall psychosocial response to Beslan, who oversees the Centre. “They are utterly frightened of the very idea of school and have not gone

back since that day last September. We plan to work with them over the next few weeks and get them ready so they can finally go to the first grade this September.”

As 30 seven-year-old children go into the Centre, they look curiously at decorations on the wall and a large fish aquarium in the hall. For several hours each day over the next three weeks, they will be welcomed here as if it were their own home. The Centre's specialists do everything possible to make the children feel relaxed in the new surroundings.

A group of young women, all trained psychologists, quickly break the children into smaller groups, which are then invited to different rooms. I accompany the group that goes for art therapy, while another group heads for massage therapy, and yet another is led by a psychologist to the relaxation room – a wonderful place with soothing music, cool mountain air and comfortable couches.

The children in the art therapy group waste no time picking up paint brushes and splashing the paper in front of them with bright colours.

“This problem must be tackled in its entirety,” added Dr. Khabaeva, who said that the art therapy programme has been one of the most effective means of treatment. “All these children have exceptional needs – physical and psychological – and we must treat them as best as we can.”



Photo by Maltina Bezbaeva

Children relax together in the Rehabilitation Centre

Since last October, the Centre's caring and committed specialists, most of them trained with UNICEF support, have provided an array of rehabilitation services for children and parents, ranging from medical assistance to psychological counselling.

Among the children's most common physiological complaints are trouble sleeping, headaches, nausea and vomiting. To counter these symptoms, the Vladikavkaz Centre offers qualified psychological and neurological help to repair the damage to nervous systems, employing physiotherapy such as relaxation treatments, therapeutic games, and massage.

“It's amazing that in a few months we were able to put together such a professional and caring team,” said Dr. Khabaeva. “We started from scratch and didn't know where to begin.”



“Our team has the right generation balance,” she added. “The children get help from both older and more experienced psychologists, as well as from young motivated professionals who in many ways are closer to the children psychologically, and can find better ways to contact them.”

Almost 700 children have been diagnosed at the Centre since October, though only 200 have completed the rehabilitation course. About 110 children are considered fully rehabilitated, but psychologists specify that relapses do happen.

“The children almost always make progress, but sometimes there is a

sudden and dramatic regression,” said Layla Yakhyaeva, a psychologist at the Centre. “For instance, a few months ago there was a bomb scare at one of Beslan schools, and the children who had been hostages were once again traumatised. And even though some of these children had completed our rehabilitation course, they were calling us that very evening to discuss their fears.”

For years to come, flashbacks and nightmares will haunt the children of Beslan like most children suffering from the ravages of war. Specialists are also concerned that more serious disorders, such as drug addiction and alcoholism, as well as increased incidence of family strife, lurk in the future unless timely and effective treatment is provided to all 7,000 children in Beslan. But for now, resources are limited, and many Beslan families continue to balk at rehabilitation. Many don't understand its benefits, and Dr. Khabaeva speaks of how difficult it was to track down and convince parents of the current group of first-graders to come to the centre. Ossetians are proud people, and most personal problems are solved within their extended and tightly-knit families.

Photo Therapy

Journalist John Varoli sees how a UNICEF's photography workshop for the children of Beslan turns into an extraordinary period of rehabilitation and rejuvenation. The children's photographs are of such a high standard that the Beslan authorities will open an exhibition of their work as part of the commemoration of the first anniversary of the siege of School No. 1.

Several months before the first anniversary of the Beslan school tragedy, UNICEF decided to commemorate the event with a photo exhibition that would be something very different – a bold and more insightful perspective than that offered by a professional photographer. The answer: why not give cameras to the children of Beslan and let them photograph their hometown? Thirteen children from Beslan were selected, five of whom had been hostages during the siege at the school.

First, they'd have to be instructed at least in the basics. Enter Italian photographer, Giacomo Pirozzi. He has been to Beslan before, to chronicle the tragedy that

“We didn't think it would be so difficult in the beginning,” said Dr. Yakhyaeva. “Most important is to gain the children's trust because they don't believe that adults can protect them any more. Parents are often more difficult; they come here in mourning clothes and cry a lot. It has been very difficult.”

Dr. Yakhyaeva says denial continues to scar both parents and children, especially siblings. A Beslan girl, Inna, 8, lost her six year-old brother during the siege. Pumped with news about the tragedy from TV, Inna was well informed but awfully frightened, and at first refused to go to the Centre. Eventually she and her mother accepted the offer to attend, but once during a game another child inadvertently mentioned that Inna's brother was dead. “No, he's still alive,” she blurted out anxiously. “He'll come home soon.”

Since the Centre opened last October, UNICEF has been a key and crucial partner, providing equipment, medical supplies, furniture and, above all, funding for the training of specialists. Looking to the future, UNICEF officials recently met with the Centre's director, Zhanna Tsutsieva, to



discuss the plans for opening another branch of the Centre in Beslan itself.

That branch will be small, with only six or seven rooms, but it will bring help closer to those families who use the excuse of distance as a reason not to travel the 40 minutes to the Vladikavkaz Centre. The new branch, set to open at the end of October 2005, will also provide outreach services; again primarily to those troubled families that refuse assistance. In the region where the people have lost faith in their government, UNICEF's contribution has provided powerful psychological sustenance.

“Since this project began, UNICEF has always lived up to its promise,” said Ms. Tsutsieva. “UNICEF finishes what it begins.”

befell this small Ossetian town last autumn, but this time his task is more unusual. In less than a week he has to teach 13 children how to become photographers – good enough to put together an exhibition. It's a risky experiment, and many wonder whether it will work.

July 22, 2005 - Day 1 of the Children of Beslan Photo Workshop. Under the curious gaze of 13 slightly apprehensive teenagers, Giacomo puts his laptop on the table in the auditorium of the ‘Ossetia’



sanatorium on the outskirts of Vladikavkaz, the region's capital city. He hooks his laptop up to the overhead projector, and introduces himself.

Giacomo, smiling and convivial, quickly gets down to business and engages the children with questions about their photography experience and their understanding of its purpose and essence. Answers come in from around the table: “it's fun,”; “it's useful to help remember things from the past,”; “to help recall past emotions,”; “to inform people”. Giacomo is impressed. He has a sharp group.



Photo by Madhina Bezbaeva

Children at the Rehabilitation Centre take an interest in the work of Ludmila, one of the workshop participants

Even so, Day 1, and part of Day 2, are not easy. Giacomo, though he provides a



lively explanation of photo basics with the help of an interpreter, has to cram into a few days what generally requires a three-month photography course. Prolonged discussion of the technical aspects tends to put heads down on the table, but the enthusiasm of the children to pick up these new skills never wanes. On Day 3, when the children are given the cameras and let loose on Beslan, the fantastic results exceed everyone's expectations.

“There was some worry in UNICEF about how well this workshop might turn out,” Giacomo confided at the end of the workshop. “But what happened here was much more than anyone expected, and there has been an incredible and enthusiastic response from the children. I’m happy to have been able to contribute to the healing process here.”

“We never expected that the workshop would turn out to be genuine art therapy, and the results were incredible,” said Amir Tagiev, a psychologist from Moscow who has spent months working with the children of Beslan, and who attended the workshop. “It was extremely important that the children felt responsible for their performance, and that they were treated with respect themselves.”

Giacomo showed the children many of his own magnificent photos – from AIDS sufferers in Africa, to tsunami survivors in Asia – to point out proper technique, and asked the children for their opinions, leading to lively discussions. One boy, Misha Dzarasov, 13, often took shots with his mobile phone of the African and Asian photos.

“He showed us very beautiful photos, but these were photos where the children saw suffering elsewhere in the world, how people suffer for not just three days but for years and how children often die in horrible circumstances; and for the Beslan children this was dramatic,” said Mr. Tagiev. “It was very important that the children saw this – people dying from and liv-

ing with AIDS, and that they saw through these photos how people could still smile.”

After the mini-photo tour of the world, the workshop focus moved closer to home. The children knew Giacomo had photos of Beslan and asked to see them. As soon as they came up on the screen, an icy silence covered the room. For the first time, the children’s attention was 100 per cent. It was a compelling prelude to what was to come once they were sent to Beslan.

On Days 3 and 4, the children were finally given small Canon digital cameras. First stop, a heart-rending visit to the ruins of Beslan’s School No. 1 where the



memories of those children who were hostages began to flow rapidly. Next, the cemetery where the victims lie in peace, followed by visits to victims’ families, stops at children’s playgrounds, the psychological Rehabilitation Centre in Vladikavkaz, as well as encounters with random people on Beslan’s streets.

While some may doubt the wisdom of letting the children visit the school and cemetery, it was the children themselves who chose to do so. Indeed, there was concern at first among the workshop organisers about the idea. But the children insisted. This was the point when it became clear that the workshop was more than a lesson in photography. It was now a form of art therapy. During those two days in Beslan, the children began to look at the tragedy with new eyes, from behind a camera lens. Most were then able to better cope with the pain that had persisted for almost one year. And they performed the task with greater professionalism, sensitivity, insight, and understanding than any professional photographer could have done.

Two days in the field netted over a thousand shots. Giacomo then worked into the early morning hours with the children to select about 400 truly excellent photos, listing them according to various categories: the School; the Cemetery; Visits to families

who lost loved ones; Love and Joy (shots of current Beslan life); and the Children’s Rehabilitation Centre in Vladikavkaz.

“Most important, we wanted to show that life continues in Beslan, and the children really wanted this to come out,” Giacomo added. “The photos are so beautiful and so full of colours, especially the section on Joy and Love.”

By the end, it was clear the workshop had left an indelible impression on the children. He not only taught them the finer points of an important art form, he helped them confront and deal with their worries and fears.

“Honestly, I didn’t like it much in the beginning,” admitted an outspoken Soslan Dzugaev, 13, who won the workshop prize for Best Photo. “I found it a little strange, but then I really came to like it. It especially became interesting when we went out and began photographing.”

“Visiting the family who had lost a child at the school was the toughest part,” added Soslan, who was the one



who suggested the group visit the school ruins. “It was also tough to go to the school and to the cemetery, to see the graves of my neighbours who died; but seeing the faces of the smiling children was one of the better moments.”

Indeed, most of the photos show smiling children. This is perhaps the message the children of Beslan are now trying to get across – that one year later, though the pain still cuts deep, life and hope are returning to their town.

UNICEF

Tel.: (7 095) 933-88-18

Fax: (7 095) 933-88-19

www.unicef.org/russia



UN Development Programme

Regions

For Economic Development in the North Caucasus



Road reconstruction in Voznesenskaya village, Ingushetia

A conference to discuss a strategy for the North Caucasus social and economic recovery organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was held in Rostov-on-Don on 29-30 August. Representatives of federal agencies, regional authorities, governments of the republics of the North Caucasus, donor-countries, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations working in the North Caucasus as well as researchers and experts were invited to take part in the meeting.

It was the first time that such a high-level meeting with involvement of almost all participants of the recovery process in the North Caucasus was dedicated to issues of the economic and social development rather than humanitarian problems.

Ms. Kaarina Immonen, then UNDP Resident Representative a.i., greeted the participants. Her opening remarks were followed by speeches by heads of other UN agencies working in Russia. Mr. Sergey Miroshchnikov, Director of Federal Relations, Public Administration and Local Governance Department of the Ministry of Federal Relations, representatives of governments of the Chechen Republic, Ingushetia and North Ossetia-Alania, heads and experts from international and non-governmental organizations also addressed the audience.

All the speakers and the participants were united by the primary objective of the meeting: to help develop a comprehensive strategy for economic recovery in the republics of the North Caucasus

in the course of transition from humanitarian relief to economic and social development. This approach is pro-partnership and the strategy is one of a wider government support, in line with its priorities. At the same time, UNDP hopes that sharing experience – whether local or in line with the international best practices – during the workshop will add value to the government planning and prioritization process, which is currently underway.



Rehabilitated public recreational area in Tsalikh village, North Ossetia-Alania

The participants looked in detail at the government priorities in the economic recovery of the republics of the North Caucasus, contribution of the international community, ways of provision of a smooth transition from humanitarian relief to development assistance as well as the key components of the recovery strategy in the North Caucasus, and a number of other issues. During an open discussion the participants proposed a number of interesting ideas that would be taken into consideration in the course of the implementation of the programme of sustainable reintegration and recovery in the North Caucasus.

This conference became an important step in the process of further formulation and implementation of the programme of recovery in the North

Caucasus launched by UNDP in the republics of North Ossetia-Alania and Ingushetia in late 2004. The programme is aimed at assisting in the sustainable socio-economic development of the region, integration of displaced persons by alleviating poverty of both the displaced persons and local communities involved in the integration process. Another objective of the programme is to facilitate peaceful coexistence of different ethnic groups in the region. All these goals could be achieved through supporting entrepreneurship, establishment of small and medium enterprises, jobs creation, and provision of access of the poorest groups of society to the sources of finance, supporting integrated development of agriculture as well as providing displaced persons with shelter in sustainable communities.



Digging a trench for water pipes in Kantyshevo village, Ingushetia

"Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" Competition Is Launched for the First Time in Russia

The first international "Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" (GMA) competition was launched in Moscow on 25 August 2005. The competition is aimed at highlighting achievements of the most successful micro-entrepreneurs and the most effective organizations working in the area of microfinance from all regions of Russia and to raise awareness of the society and authorities about the sphere of microfinance.

In Russia, the competition is organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Citigroup Russia and the Russian Microfinance Centre (RMC). The competition will be held under the auspices of the Council on the International Year of Microcredit 2005 under the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation.

Ms. Kaarina Immonen, UNDP Resident Representative in the Russian Federation a.i.; Ms. Natalia Larionova, Head of Division of the State Economic Regulation Department of the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of RF; Ms. Nataly Nikolaeva, Vice-President of Citibank Russia; and Mr. Mikhail Mamuta, Director of the Russian Microfinance Centre, took part in the press conference organized at the UN Information Centre in Moscow.

Ms. Kaarina Immonen opened the press-conference by saying that the main objective of the United Nations is to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, targeted primarily at alleviating poverty. "Microentrepreneurship is an effective

instrument for achieving these goals. A several hundred dollars loan can give a person an opportunity to build his own enterprise and lift him out of poverty."

"Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" Programme in Russia is an important step in the promotion of microfinance as an instrument for new enterprises and jobs creation. The Programme has our full support and we hope that the competition will be a success," Nataly Nikolaeva noted.

According to Mr. Mikhail Mamuta, Director of the Russian Microfinance Centre, "the implementation of the Programme will have a positive effect on development of the microfinance sector that will trigger an increase in small enterprise crediting."

Applications will be accepted from 25 August till 7 October. Applications are made by microfinance organizations on behalf of their clients. The jury includes representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation, Higher School of Economics, United Nations Development Programme, ZAO Citibank, Russian Microfinance Centre, Vneshtorgbank, New Eurasia Foundation, Women's Microfinance Network, OPORA of Russia, League of Credit Unions, Union of Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, Resource Centre for Small and Medium Enterprises, National Union of Financial Support Organizations, Russian Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises.

Prizes will be awarded in the following nominations:

- Best microentrepreneur among non-trade enterprises;
- Best microentrepreneur among trade enterprises;
- Best employer in the area of microentrepreneurship among non-trade enterprises;
- Best employer in the area of microentrepreneurship among trade enterprises.



Photo by Elena Selyuk

Prizes for microfinance organizations will be awarded in "The most effective microfinance programme to support entrepreneurship" category. Loan officers who worked with winners of the competition among microentrepreneurs will receive prizes.

The GMA awards ceremony will take place on 1 December 2005 in St.Petersburg at the IV National Conference "Microfinance in Russia: Successful Strategies for Economic Growth."

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2005 the International Year of Microcredit in order to highlight the impact of microfinance on poverty alleviation. In November 2004, to commemorate the launch of the International Year of Microcredit, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the Citigroup Foundation (the philanthropic arm of Citigroup), and a group of professionals from a number of universities united to organize business competitions for microentrepreneurs. In 2004 the "Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" competition for the first time was held in 8 countries: Afghanistan, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Mexico, Mozambique, Pakistan, and Rwanda; also, a local competition took place in New York. This year the GMA competitions will be held in 30 countries including Russia.

For more information on the competition and microfinance in Russia please contact Elena Selyuk at UNDP at 7 (501) 414 0827, e-mail Elena.Selyuk@undp.org, visit the United Nations Development Programme website www.undp.ru or Russian Microfinance Centre website www.rmcenter.ru



Photo by Elena Selyuk

Women and the Public Chamber

An inter-regional roundtable Public Chamber as a Tool for Interaction Between Authorities and Society was held from 19 till 20 June in Veliky Novgorod. The roundtable was organized by Women's Movement of Russia (WMR), the State Duma Committee on Women, Family Affairs and Children and the Novgorod Oblast administration.

This acute issue attracted over 100 representatives of executive and legislative authorities, public organizations, political scientists, and those who took part in the development of the draft law On the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation. The readers are offered a speech by Galina Kalinaeva, one of the roundtable participants and the UN Gender Theme Group Coordinator:

Our discussion is extremely important for a deeper understanding of the situation and development of the strategy for gender issues promotion in the Public Chamber. I consider it a matter of principle to conclude our discussion with a proposal to create a Commission on Gender Equality at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

Russia signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Declaration and Platform for Actions, adopted at the 4th UN World Conference on Women's Status, the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. Thus our country took on international responsibilities for creating a national mechanism for improvement of women's status, an independent organ that should have the right to directly influence the government policy shaping and participate in the legislative process in part of improvement of women's status, and have a budget of its own.

Due to recent reforms the system of the national mechanism operating at the federal level was abolished. Accordingly, the issues of gender equality were not included in the state policy

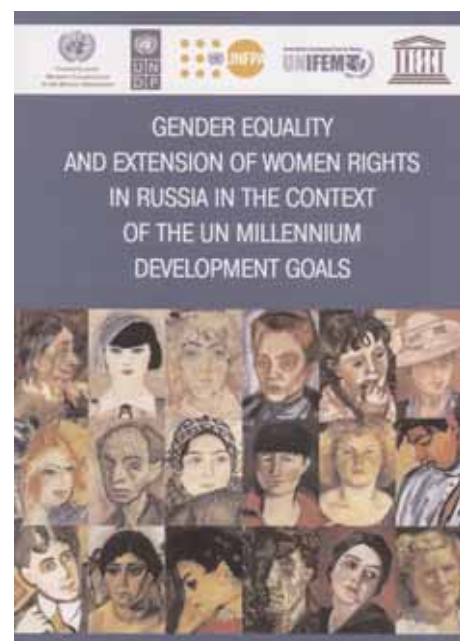
at all; therefore the socio-economic problems of women are looked at only through the lens of family and children.

Concrete tasks for achieving equality and gender-sensitive indicators are not included in the Mid-term Programme of the Socio-Economic Development of the Russian Federation (2005-2008) and in the Consolidated Report on the Results and Main Areas of the Russian Government Activity. An integral indicator similar to the Human Development Index proposed by UNDP in 1994 that takes into account a gender factor is lacking as well.

The Gender Theme Group organized by the UN and the experts of Gender Budgets in Russia UNIFEM project proposed several variants of including gender indicators in the above-mentioned documents. The materials were sent to the Government and placed on the Woman and Society Internet website on 29 October 2004 for further discussion in the Internet (<http://www.owl.ru/rights/discussion2004/ind ex.htm>).

Currently in Russia, over 40 reforms (some of them already suspended). Russian scientists conducted a number of researches on gender issues recently and came to a conclusion that system reforms resulted in worsening of women's financial situation. An imbalance in employment, income, access to economic resources and assets still exists...

A difficult process of reconstruction of the old national mechanism for improvement of women's status is now under way. Hopefully, it will develop into a national mechanism for gender equality. That is why creation of a Commission on Gender Equality at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation is both politically and ideologically critical. The Commission could deal with the issues of conducting a public (gender) assessment of laws and other legal regulations and their consequences for the issues of considerable significance for providing



"Gender Equality and Extension of Women Rights in Russia in the Context of the UN Millennium Development Goals" Report is published. For more details please visit www.undp.ru

equality of men and women in the socio-economic, fiscal, political and cultural spheres, as well as support of initiatives of women's NGOs.

Furthermore, as an active process of creating regional public chambers similar to the federal chamber is going on in the subjects of the Russian Federation, it is important that such commissions are established in the regional chambers as well. In this case we will be able to build vertical and horizontal links, provide for the information exchange, joint discussion, and lobbying of the most acute gender issues.

I hope that WMR, organizers and participants of the meeting will succeed in finding effective solutions for implementation of this idea.

UNDP
 Tel.: (7 095) 787-21-00
 Fax: (7 095) 787-21-01
 E-mail: office@undp.ru
www.undp.ru



United Nations Industrial
Development Organization

New publications

Carlos Magariños: UNIDO Experience for UN Reform

Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Carlos A. Magariños recently visited the Russian Federation. The Programme of the visit included participation in the UNIDO Round Table “The New Role of the Government in Fostering Competitiveness in the Global Industrial Setting”, opening of the joint UNIDO-International Congress of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs (ICIE) International Conference on the role of organizations of the private sector and civil society (CSOs) in promotion, transfer, adaptation and diffusion of new technology and innovations as well as the presentation of the book “Economic Development and UN Reform. Proposal in the context of the Millennium Development Goals” in Marriott-Aurora Hotel. Mr. Magariños presented his book to specialists in international law, representatives of the UN Agencies in Russia and answered the questions of the journalists.

The book is a “practical proposal to increase the effectiveness of the UN system in the field of economic development”, Mr. Magariños emphasized.

His proposal is linked to the current reform efforts aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the UN and its specialized agencies.



According to Mr. Magariños, the proposal can claim originality in at least two aspects. In the first place, it gives less weight to bureaucratic arrangements and more to organizing the system’s activities around a set of substantive economic development topics or issues in the search for coherence, efficiency and effectiveness. In the second, it adopts a bottom-up approach, drawing from the actual experience of reform of a particular piece of the UN’s economic development machinery.

In fact, the ideas underlying Mr. Magariños’s proposal have already been successfully implemented while reforming UNIDO, headed by him since 1997, and thus might serve as a roadmap to guide the reform of other UN system agencies and the UN system as a whole.

In particular, Mr. Magariños suggests to formulate a common agenda for action, or “a business plan” in the field of economic development for all units of the UN system, defining the MDGs as a common policy orientation.

To address the lack of coordination between various UN agencies and institutions multiple options of reorganization have been proposed. However Mr. Magariños asserts, in most cases the focus has been made on institutional reorganization. Now, Mr. Magariños notes, “the establishment of a new body or the creation of a new coordinating mechanism will enhance the UN contribution to economic development only after a relevant set of substantive issues – selected through a proper political process, approached with a modern outlook and clustered around a clearly defined agenda – is defined to give a better focus and guidance to the system’s activities.”

Thus, the idea is to strengthen the “programmatically” component of the present reform which will enhance the effectiveness of institutional arrangements and will marshal more profound and rational use of the huge potential of the system towards implementation of the MDGs.



UNIDO Director General Carlos A. Magariños signs his book for the readers

“Now the time has come, - says Mr. Magariños, - for this gradual and slow shift in accent from ‘institutional’ to ‘programmatically’ arguments in UN reform proposals to be carried forward and sped up, placing a number of substantive issues at the core of the reform process with a view to strengthening the link between development, peace and security and ensuring a positive reciprocal interaction between them.”

In conclusion, Mr. Magariños announced that his proposal will be submitted for discussion at the UN General Assembly Summit, which will be held this autumn in New York. He hopes that his proposal will be supported by the Russian government.

UNIDO

Tel.: +7 (095) 9430021

Fax: +7 (095) 9430018

E-mail: office@unido.ru

www.unido.ru



UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization

Bioethics As a Priority for UNESCO

The term “bioethics” was coined in 1970 by Dr. Potter, an American oncologist, who proposed to combine biological and medical knowledge with a system of human values with the aim to achieve decent standards of living for all people. At present, bioethics focuses on the interdisciplinary research of anthropological, moral, social and legal implications of rapid advances in biomedical technologies and their application (genetic, reproductive, transplantology, etc.). The primary task of bioethics is to facilitate the search for ethical, human rights-based responses to the moral challenges posed by such biomedical advances and practical implications of this progress.

UNESCO as a leading international agency in bioethics focuses on the development of a legal framework, analy-

sis, facilitation of scientific cooperation, promotion of education and awareness-raising at all levels, and defining common ethical standard-setting framework in scientific and biomedical research.

In 2005, the Social and Human Sciences Sector of the UNESCO Moscow Office initiated a range of activities and projects in the field of bioethics. In particular in January 2005, the Office organized in Moscow expert consultations on ethics teaching and bioethics. Besides, within this meeting a discussion on the draft Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights was arranged. Experts' comments were submitted to the International Bioethics Committee as a contribution of the Russian Federation to the consultation process. This document will be submitted to the UNESCO General Conference (October, 2005) for adoption by the member-states.

Furthermore, the Office launched a series of activities and projects aimed at the development of knowledge sharing and information exchange instruments (Regional Bioethics Russian-Language Information and Education Centre in Vilnius was established, bioethical electronic discussion forum in Russian is being developed by Russian experts, a brochure "Bioethics: Questions and Answers" is under preparation). With a view to increase public awareness in the field of human rights and the procedures of their protection in biomedical context, the Office, in cooperation with UNFPA and the Community of People Living with HIV/AIDS, has initiated the project “Reproductive rights of HIV-positive women”. Besides, an International conference on social justice in healthcare is planned to be held in late 2005.

Hey Youth, How Are You?

In June, the UNESCO Moscow Office jointly with the German Society for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) presented the “Youth Development in Russia” report. Prepared by a group of authors this report was published on the initiative of the Education and Social and Human Sciences Sectors of the UNESCO Moscow Office and with the support of the GTZ. On the basis of statistical data, it investigates key aspects of youth development – education, health, employment, partici-

pation in social and political life and asocial behavior. For the first time, an aggregated indicator, characterizing conditions of youth development – Youth Development Index – was experimentally calculated by regions and presented in this report.

The presentation was held in the Russian-German House with the participation of Mr. Brezina, Head, GTZ Education Informational Centre; Ms.



Schuler, Head, GTZ Youth Programmes; Mr. Agranovich, head of the authors' group, Executive Director, Interregional Association for Education Monitoring and Statistics, representatives of the UNESCO Moscow Office.



Coursing towards Civil Society

As a part of the overall efforts on the promotion and dissemination of knowledge in the social sciences the UNESCO Moscow Office supported the project of the UNESCO Chair of the State University of Management on conducting advanced training courses for trainers on “Management of non-profit organizations in the non-governmental sector”, upon completion of which trainees obtain a state diploma. The courses were held in the framework of the Eurasia Foundation project "Creation of a part-

nership network of professional personnel training for the third sector in the Russian regions" and were based on the methodical developments of the Chair, produced with the support of the UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES).

UNESCO

Tel.: (7 095) 230-05-54

Fax: (7 095) 238-60-85

www.unesco.ru

Continuing the tradition of the Russian Red Cross in St. Petersburg



The Red Cross in Russia began its life in St. Petersburg in 1867, and it embodied the highest ideals of humanism which mankind had attained. The first Charter of the Russian Red Cross was signed by the Emperor Alexander II. Members of the tsar's family and leading figures in Russian society considered it an honor and a duty to work for the Red Cross and to help people.

Continuing the tradition of the Russian Red Cross, the St. Petersburg branch is contributing to the implementation of humanitarian and social programs in the city.

One of the main areas of its work is helping refugees and asylum-seekers, who experience major difficulties in the process of integration, particularly in terms of acquiring a corresponding legal status. For the absence of this status, they have been defenceless for a long time and were forced to exist in a permanent state of fear for their lives and the lives of their children.

Refugees and asylum-seekers are acutely in need of support and protection, both from state structures and from non-governmental organizations. Since 1993, with the support and assistance of UNHCR, St. Petersburg Red Cross has been implementing various programs for integration of refugees and asylum-seekers

into Russian society, for their social and psychological adaptation, and to teach them what they need to know about the status determination or temporary asylum procedures in Russia.

We have set up a rehabilitation infrastructure on the basis of obtained information, conducting sociological research and monitoring the situation within St. Petersburg, and also analyzing the effectiveness of the help being provided.

Having a relatively modest experience in helping migrants, our society is unable to cope with many problems related to this process. Thus, the work of numerous committees and departments, and also non-governmental organizations (NGOs) demands coordination, joint work and understanding of the aims and objectives of integrating refugees and asylum-seekers in the Russian society.

The 12 years of cooperation between the St. Petersburg Red Cross and UNHCR, including governmental and non-governmental organizations, has demonstrated the effectiveness and necessity of help on issues of legal and social protection at our Refugee Counseling Centre, which was opened in 2000. The Centre staff provides assistance in the refugee status determination and temporary asylum procedure, in understanding reasons for refusal and ways of appeal, helps in preparing various applications and requests, explains the procedure of international aid programs for voluntary repatriation of refugees and asylum-seekers.

The medical and social centre provides help to about 2,000 people annually. Consultations are given by various specialists (physician, paediatrician, cardiologist, psychiatrist, psychologist, oculist, and others). Where necessary, people are admitted to city hospitals as inpatients.

It should be noted that permanent stressful situations coupled with lack of means of protection cause numerous illnesses in both adults and children. About 85% of patients exam-

ined require treatment. Unfortunately, the state has not developed a mechanism for giving help to those whose status is still being considered.

An educational and community centre gives refugees free instruction in Russian, computer skills, hairdressing and basic cutting-out and sewing.

Special attention is given to children. Individual lessons are given to those children whose educational level is lower than that of other children of their age. Refugee children study Russian history and culture, and at Sunday school they learn their native language, and the history and culture of their own people.

In 2004, under the global initiative of Microsoft 'A World of Unlimited Possibilities' the St. Petersburg Red Cross, with the support of UNHCR, opened a Computer Literacy Centre for refugees and asylum-seekers. The Centre is equipped with advanced personal computers and a server with licensed software. The Centre provides refugees with access to computer technology and helps them express their potential more fully.

At present, the St. Petersburg Red Cross, with the help of the European Union, is working on a new project – Refugees House – which is very important for the city and will undoubtedly, bring huge benefit to the whole process of giving comprehensive help to refugees and asylum-seekers in St. Petersburg.

More detailed information on the Red Cross programmes to protect refugees in St. Petersburg can be found on the St. Petersburg Red Cross website at www.spbredcross.org

Tatyana Linyova,
Chairperson of the Board
of St. Petersburg Branch
of the Russian Red Cross

UNHCR

Tel.: (7 095) 232-30-11

Fax: (7 095) 232-30-17/16

E-mail: rusmo@unhcr.ch

www.unhcr.ru



UN World Food Programme

Events

Walk the World Approaches the Kremlin

This year, the Walk the World march took place again in Svoboda Street in the North-Western District of Moscow. TNT and WFP staff met near TNT Office to walk 5 km in the march that has been organized by TNT since 2003 to raise funds for the WFP's School Feeding Programme.

This year the march in Moscow was supported by Greece 2004 Olympic champion Lyubov Galkina (rifle shooting) who participated together with her husband Evgeny Aleinikov (Olympic Bronze medal in Sydney). She did so despite the fact that on Sunday



ties Walking the World on Sunday 12, WFP spokesperson and model Lauren Bush brought along her grandfather, former U.S. President George H. W. Bush, to the Athens Greece Walk.

1 2 June 2005: more than 200,000 people Walked the World in 269 cities, 91 countries and 24 time zones to fight child hunger.

been scheduled for 21 May), we will march around the Kremlin, and we kindly request outstanding public leaders, sportsmen, artists and other celebrities to support this noble action aimed at the reduction of the number of hungry children in the world where every 5 seconds one child dies of hunger.

WFP Moscow

12, she had to pass her exam in German at the Russian State Academy for the Humanities. Fortunately Lyubov had a chance to practice her German with Chris Czerwinski, WFP Senior Emergency Coordinator in Moscow who came to march with his wife Rachelle and Haaro von Graafeiland (TNT Director).

The walks are as diverse as their locations: in Rome, where WFP is headquartered, the Mayor opened the event and the walkers marched through the ancient ruins, including around the Colosseum. In Cairo, Walk the World covered the 3km to the Pyramids and in New York, walkers congregated at the Hunger Memorial. Among the other several thousand citizens and celebri-



Olympic champion of 2004 Lyubov Galkina with her husband Evgeny Aleinikov

Unfortunately, in Moscow, the participants of the march could not walk in the vicinity of the Kremlin this year, because the date of the Walk coincided with the Russian Day of Independence, and a lot of meetings and demonstrations were held in the city centre that day. We hope that next year (the Walk has already

WFP

Tel.: (7 095) 956-49-68

Fax: (7 095) 956-49-89

www.wfp.org

REFERENCE: TNT is a global leader in mail, express service and logistics with its HQ in Holland



World Health Organization

Opinions

Violence As a Major Social Threat in the Russian Federation

People in the Russian Federation are at a much higher risk of dying from homicide and assault than their fellows in Western Europe. The risk of dying from a violent attack (28.0 deaths per 100,000), compared to the UK, where it is as one of the lowest (0.9 per 100,000), is 32 higher. When it comes to family violence, the figures are even worse. Women and children suffer violence most often from a person known and close to them. Alcohol is associated with a large proportion of violent attacks. Males are not only likely to be the perpetrators of violence, but are also victims: at all ages males are much more likely to die violently than females. And – to be clear – homicide is only the visible tip of the problem.

For every death there are 20-40 hospital visits and an unknown number of self-treated cases, which never get reported. Most types of violence have, besides injuries, enormous health consequences including depression and anxiety disorders, suicide and suicide attempts, obesity and eating disor-



ders. Risky behaviour like harmful alcohol use and drug abuse, unsafe sexual behaviour and smoking, and sexually transmitted infections (including HIV/AIDS) may result from violence too.

To provide a platform for exchange on this important development challenge in the Russian Federation, a meeting of technical experts on violence and health “Towards healthy life styles and healthy future generations” was organised on 28 June at the Moscow Research Institute of Psychiatry by WHO and the MoH RF national focal point for violence prevention. The approx. 30 representatives from the MoH RF, research institutes, institutes of public health, NGOs, networks working in the prevention of violence, and UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA agreed on the need for a strengthened and coordinated multi-sector and multi-agency action. They also came up with a number of recommendations: development of a national target programme, creation of a task force for coordination of further activities, a partnership - based and coordinated approach across relevant sectors, ministries and civil society.



WHO in partnership with the Ministry of Health & Social Development of the Russian Federation and a core group of resource persons will continue working in this direction. The next step is the development of a national report on violence and health aimed at providing a comprehensive basis for policy development.

For further information contact: Dr. Inge Baumgarten, Violence and Injury Prevention Programme, WHO Regional Office for Europe, iba@euro.who.int or Dr. Dmitry Veltishchev, Moscow Research Institute for Psychiatry, dvelt@zebra.ru.

Dr. Inge Baumgarten,
Violence and Injury
Prevention Programme,
WHO Regional Office for Europe

WHO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with 192 Member States. It has four main functions: to give worldwide guidance in the field of health; to set global standards for health; to cooperate with governments in strengthening national health programmes; to develop and transfer appropriate health technology, information, and standards.

WHO, Russia

Tel.: (7 095) 787-21-17

Fax: (7 095) 787-21-19

E-mail: m.vienonen@who.org.ru

Special Representative of the Director-General in Russia, Dr Mikko Vienonen

Web sites:

www.who.int and www.who.dk

Fighting TB: Hot Summer 2005

How to Overcome Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis

The spread of Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) causes serious concern. Common and uncontrolled usage of the 2-line anti-TB drugs across the Russian regions without modern recommendations on MDR-TB control is alarming.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation (MoH&SD) and the Federal Correctional Service of the Russian Federation consider the response to MDR-TB as a priority. MDR-TB detection, diagnosis and treatment need significant funds that burden the health care budget. Raising additional funds through the World Bank loan and the grant of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria may help solve the problem of MDR-TB. However, it is important to realize

that key issues including effective, appropriate and timely use of funding will also arise.

On 14-18 June, 2005, in St. Petersburg Partners in Health (PIH), WHO (Moscow office, Regional Office for Europe and Headquarters) and Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) held a Workshop on Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis Management.

Leading Russian and international experts in TB attended the event that have the following objectives:

- To analyse the epidemic situation with MDR-TB in the Russian Federation;
- To discuss national and international experience in MDR-TB control in order to develop the best model of organization of MDR-TB control in Russia;
- To develop recommendations on



improved MDR-TB detection, diagnosis and treatment in the Russian Federation intended for health authorities.

Participants of the workshop developed proposals for organization of detection, diagnostics and treatment for TB among MDR TB patients. To ensure effective MDR-TB control in the country Russian and international experts recommended to:

- Strengthen political commitment, coordination, management and human resources at the federal and regional levels;
- Centralize procurement of the “second-line” TB drugs at the federal level and strengthen cooperation with the Green Light Committee;
- Establish reference-laboratories at the federal TB Research institutes to enhance drug resistance surveillance and ensure quality control of laboratory investigations;
- Establish centres of excellence at the federal TB Research institutes to treat MDR TB patients;



The participants of the Workshop on Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis Management in St. Petersburg

REFERENCE:

¹ The “2-line anti-TB drugs” – drugs used for treatment of TB patients with drug and multidrug resistance (MDR TB).

² “Green Light Committee” – temporary working body of the Working Group on TB multidrug resistance, which assesses if the projects on MDR TB treatment correspond to modern recommendations and provides access of these projects to high quality 2-line anti-TB drugs at reduced prices.

- Revise recommendations on MDR TB surveillance and monitoring;
- Revise recommendations on treatment adherence.

Green Light of Hope

Green Light Committee (GLC) meeting followed the workshop on June 18. Dr. Fuad Mirzayev (WHO/HQ) and Dr. Peter Cegielski (CDC/USA), meeting moderators, provided full information about GLC procedures and requirements. Russian partners, representing TB research institutes and regional TB experts responsible for GLC applications had in-depth discussion on completing GLC application which is a prerequisite for obtaining GFATM funds to fight TB in the Russian Federation. The meeting resulted in setting up next steps in applying to GLC.

Assisting in Implementing World Bank loan Project

WHO TB Control Programme in the Russian Federation continues providing technical assistance in implementation of the World Bank loan project on TB and HIV/AIDS control through:

- Regional needs assessment and development of implementation plans at regional and federal levels;
- Establishment of coordination offices at five federal TB Research institutes;
- Development of educational materials and modules on "TB

control at the district level" as well as new modules and educational materials on all elements of TB control including management, epidemiology, clinical aspects of TB control, etc.;

- Expert and technical assistance in training: the training courses plan for the year 2005 is under revision; besides the draft Plan and TOR for training activities at federal and regional levels for 2005-2006 is under preparation.

Two advanced workshops

Two advanced workshops on TB control management on international level for Russian WHO TB consultants were held in August. An advanced workshop for Russian WHO TB consultants in TB control management was held for 22 participants from TB control institutes and TB dispensaries from 1 to 6 August, 2005 in the Moscow region. Almost the same kind of training was held for 14 WHO TB Control Programme specialists on August 8-10. Dr G.B. Migliori, Director of the WHO Collaborating Center for Control of Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases in Europe, Tradate, Italy, headed the training process.

Winner of the Contest for Journalists Visits New Jersey Medical School, National TB Center, USA

Ms Ekaterina Khokhlova, Senior Editor of the TV and Radio

company "The Oriental Express" from Chelyabinsk accompanied by the cameraman Evgeny Bolotov, of the same TV and Radio company visited Moscow and the New Jersey Medical School National TB Center from 3 to 14 August. The visit is granted as the first prize for winners of a contest on excellence in reporting TB, which was conducted as part of World TB Day Campaign 2004. The objective of the visit to Moscow and the USA is to make a 15-minute TV spot covering national and the USA experience in fighting TB through interviews with national and American health officials, partner agencies and medical institutions.

The TV spot is a 15-minute informational piece aimed at raising awareness of the general population about TB and changing public perception of the problem. The spot is expected to depict the present state and the prospects of TB control in Russia and the States based on lessons learned while treating TB, fighting the deadly synergy between TB and HIV, and the continuing spread of MDR-TB. The TB spot will highlight joint efforts of international organizations in fighting TB. It will also reveal many common misconceptions people have about the disease that causes 2 million deaths every year. The TV spot will be broadcasted at TB-related events and TB trainings across the country and possibly on national TV channels.

Europe and World Health Organization Help Russia to Combat HIV/AIDS



In June 2005, EC signed a contribution agreement with WHO EURO for the project HIV/AIDS prevention and combating, phase II in the Russian Federation.

The main objective of the project is to support the Ministry

of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation in formulating strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention and control with regard to anti-retroviral therapy and blood safety.

Within this technical assistance project, the World Health Organization will focus on development of human resource capacity of health workers in the areas of

HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, as well as to assist in introducing anti-retroviral therapy in selected pilot regions.

The project will be implemented in accordance with international best practices and evidence-based medicine, articulated in the World Health Organization global “3x5 HIV/AIDS Initiatives” and in accordance with other relevant partners.

Beneficiaries of the project will be people living with HIV/AIDS, health professionals, researchers and instructors at medical and research institutions as well as regional and federal government officials. The envisaged time-frame of the project is August 2005 to December 2007.



The project is considered to help the Russian youth to choose a healthy way of life



Society

Civil Society Debates the UN Reform



Alexei Borisov

On 23-24 June 2005 representatives of NGOs, civil society and private sector came together to participate in the Informal Interactive Hearings of the UN General Assembly, held in the UN Headquarters in New York.

The target group chaired by the UN Secretary-General chose over two hundred participants from the most respected non-governmental organizations and private sector from all over the world.

The discussion was centered around the proposals of the UN Secretary-General report "In Larger Freedom: towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All" and a draft outcome document to be tabled at the Summit in September. The program of the Hearings was divided into four main sections corresponding to four main topics of the UN Secretary-General report: freedom from want, freedom from fear, sustainable Development and renewing the UN.

Representatives of NGOs and private sector voiced out concrete proposals regarding themes and introduced amendments to the outcome document. However, there are many impediments to the successful implementation of the UN Secretary-General proposals, namely: the enlargement of the Security Council, reformation of the UN Human Rights Commission, non-recognition by many countries of the equality of women which makes it difficult to implement all the Millennium Development Goals, and other obstacles.

Alexei Borisov, Vice Chairman of the United Nations Association of Russia and Head of the UNESCO Department of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations represented the Russian Federation at the Hearings. He believes that the Hearings were historic, as for the first time the NGO and private sector representatives were engaged in an open dialogue with governments in order to make decisions important for international community. And it is encouraging to see that the UN is in the vanguard of democratization of international relations.

Today, a few days before the September Summit, we hope that feasible and crucial decisions will be soon taken at the highest level, which would renew the UN system and give hope for a stable and peaceful development of mankind.

UNA-Russia
Tel.: (7 095) 680-80-67
Fax: (7 095) 680-33-58
E-mail: una@una.ru
www.una.ru

Farewell to Arms?

According to some experts, small arms and light weapons take the lives of 300 thousand people a year, most of whom are civilians. To this another 60 to 90 thousand direct victims of wars and armed conflicts of various kinds should be added. In other words, what we are witnessing is a regular use of firearms in various situations including local armed conflicts. Suffering from this are ordinary people in the most diverse corners of Earth – from Columbia where terrorist acts are still being committed by Maoist guerrillas, to the Philippines where large quantities of small arms and light weapons are being shipped to Islamist fighters, let alone Afghanistan and a host of hot spots in Africa.

At present most observers agree that one of the main culprits for such a situation are international arms traders who acquire arms quite legally, but then sell them on illegal markets – this is how the weapons may end up in unstable countries or other conflict situations. This is why following the completion of the round of talks on tracing weapons, held under the UN auspices, the attention of the international community is now being shifted to the issues of illegal arms trade and arms merchants.

Regrettably, international rules for identification and monitoring of instances of illicit arms trade are not yet legally binding. There are several reasons for this. Some developing nations, for instance, consider such activities as intervention into their internal affairs, while the United States refused to join the initiative prohibiting the sale of arms to individuals citing their own constitution which guarantees the freedom of acquisition of weapons by American citizens.

Since 2001, a special system of measures has been in existence within the UN framework, in order to address the issue of proliferation and inappropriate use of small arms, first

of all, to curb their illicit trade. These measures are aimed at reducing demand for weapons and their supply through various steps at the national, regional and international levels. So, the main goal of the Second Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects held in New York on 11 – 15 July was to assess the efficiency of the efforts by the states to implement the Programme of Action.

Although the reports submitted by states – altogether there were over 70 of them – did reveal significant progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action, the prevailing opinion in the UN is that much more needs to be done to stop the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. For the member-states, international and regional organizations and representatives of civil society the meeting in New York became a forum for information exchange on the implementation of the agreed measures and evaluation of progress – or lack thereof – in certain areas, as well as for setting priorities for future activities. The discussion was centred on how best to attract a more focused attention of the political circles and public opinion on such a serious problem as proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The local expert community, media and, through them, the public at large had a good chance to learn more about this problem shortly after the meeting in New York. On 3 August the UN Information Centre in Moscow hosted a briefing by the head of Russian delegation at the biennial meeting, Deputy Director of the Foreign Ministry Department for Security and Disarmament Affairs Petr Litavrin.

According to the diplomat, for Russia, besides all other aspects of the issue, it is also important that this



country suffers substantial losses as result of illegal production of Russian small arms abroad, when a manufacturer does not obtain a proper license. This problem can not be solved by declarations, but rather by painstaking work with countries where such unlicensed weapons are being produced. Among them are not only Asian countries, but also a number of states in Eastern Europe, including EU and NATO members.

Mr. Litavrin said that, as a rule, the governments realize the problem and are willing to engage in bilateral negotiations with Russia. So, at the next review conference on SALW, which will take place next year in New York, Russia intends “to raise this issue in a more determined manner.”

During the last decade Russia ceased to be one of the main exporter of small arms and light weapons. According to Petr Litavrin, the sales came down significantly. At the same time, Russian weapons are well known not only for their reliability, they are also rather expensive. This is why these are not the weapons that terrorists and combatants can easily afford. Instead, the latter often opt for cheaper surrogates of “Kalashnikov,” the diplomat observed.

UNIC Moscow

UNIC

Tel.: (7 095) 241-28-01 (Library),
241-28-94

Fax (7 095) 230-21-38

E-mail: dpi-moscow@unic.ru

www.unic.ru

Summary

You can find the full version of the UN in Russia Bulletin in English at www.undp.ru or www.unrussia.ru (Documents)

UN / Chernobyl: The True Scale of the Accident

"Chernobyl's Legacy: Health, Environment and Socio-Economic Impacts" report was released by the Chernobyl Forum. It presents new data and researches by more than 100 scientists.

UNFPA / The UN Secretary-General Message on the World Population Day

"This World Population Day is an occasion to stress the empowering effect of gender equality, and the fact that respect for this human right benefits everyone," UN Secretary-General said in his message on World Population Day.

UNICEF / Quieting the Pain of Beslan Children

Since the North Ossetian Children's Rehabilitation Centre in Vladikavkaz opened last October, UNICEF has been its key partner, providing equipment, medicines, and funding. Almost 700 children have been diagnosed, and 200 underwent rehabilitation there.

UNICEF / Giacomo Pirozzi's Photo Therapy

UNICEF's photography workshop for the children of Beslan conducted by the Italian photographer Giacomo Pirozzi turned out to be a genuine art therapy.

UNDP / For Economic Development in the North Caucasus

On 29-30 August 2005 in Rostov-on-Don, UNDP organized a meeting to discuss a strategy for the North Caucasus social and economic recovery.

UNDP / "Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" Competition Is Launched for the First Time in Russia

On 25 August 2005, the first international "Global Microentrepreneurship Awards" (GMA) competition was launched in Moscow. It is an important step in the promotion of microfinance in Russia.

UNDP / Women and the Public Chamber

On 19-20 June in Veliky Novgorod, the inter-regional roundtable "Public Chamber as a Tool for Interaction Between Authorities and Society" was held. The readers are offered a speech by Galina Kalinaeva, the UN Gender Theme Group Coordinator.

UNIDO / Carlos Magariños: UNIDO Experience for UN Reform

UNIDO Director General presented in Russia his new book "Economic Development and UN Reform. Proposal in the Context of the Millennium Development Goals." The book is a practical proposal to increase the effectiveness of the UN system in the field of economic development.

UNESCO / Bioethics Is a Priority for UNESCO

In 2005, the Social and Human Sciences Sector of the UNESCO Moscow office launched a number of initiatives in the field of bioethics, including expert consultations and a discussion of the draft Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights.

UNESCO / Hey Youth, How Are You?

The UNESCO Moscow office, together with the German Society for Technical Cooperation, presented the "Youth Development in Russia" report, which investigates key aspects of youth development: education, health, employment, etc.

UNESCO / Coursing Towards Civil Society

UNESCO supports the "Management of non-profit organizations in the non-governmental sector" training as part of an overall effort to promote and disseminate knowledge in social science.

UNHCR / Continuing the Tradition of the Russian Red Cross in St. Petersburg

One of the main areas of the Red Cross work is helping refugees and asylum-seekers. Since 1993, the St. Petersburg Red Cross, in cooperation with UNHCR, has been implementing a variety of programmes in this field.

WFP / Walk the World Approaches the Kremlin

This year the Walk the World march proceeded along Svoboda Street in the north-west of Moscow. The march was organized by TNT and WFP to raise funds for WFP School Feeding Programme.

WHO / Violence as a Major Social Threat in the Russian Federation

People in the Russian Federation are at a high risk of dying from homicide and assault. WHO, in cooperation with the Russian Ministry of Health, is going to produce a national report on violence and health aimed at providing a basis for policy development.

WHO / Fighting TB: Hot Summer 2005

The spread of Multidrug-resistant TB is an issue of a great concern in Russia. On 14-18 June 2005 in St. Petersburg, a Workshop on Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis Management was held with participation of WHO, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention and Partners in Health.

WHO / Europe and World Health Organization Help Russia to Combat HIV/AIDS

The EC signed a contribution agreement with WHO for the project HIV/AIDS prevention and combating, phase II. The main objective of the project is to support the Russian Federation in formulating strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

UNA-RUSSIA / Civil Society Debates the UN Reform

UNA-Russia participated in the Informal Interactive Hearings of the UN General Assembly in New York in preparation to the World Summit in September.

UNIC / Farewell to Arms?

The international community is addressing the issue of small arms and light weapons, which kill 300,000 people a year, mostly civilians. The attention has been shifted onto issues of illegal arms trade and arms merchants.



Millennium Development Goals

The Millennium Development Goals is a set of specific and measurable targets aimed at reducing poverty and raising living standards, which was adopted by 191 United Nations member-states, including the Russian Federation, at the Millennium Summit in 2000.

These Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be reached by 2015 or earlier, are as follows:

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| Goal 1 | Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger |
| Goal 2 | Achieve universal primary education |
| Goal 3 | Promote gender equality and empower women |
| Goal 4 | Reduce child mortality |
| Goal 5 | Improve maternal health |
| Goal 6 | Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases |
| Goal 7 | Ensure environmental sustainability |
| Goal 8 | Develop a global partnership for development |