

U N IN RUSSIA

Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

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**In 2006
humanitarian aid
to the North Caucasus population
will exceed 88 million US dollars /6**

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"I have never taken drugs. If there are people here who do it, please stop. If you believe me, Sergey Bezrukov, please stop!". The famous actor addressed these words to the young people who gathered to the presentation of *The City without Sun* feature film, dedicated to the World AIDS Day

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In 1991, family and maternity benefits accounted for 77% of all social benefits. By 2003 this had fallen to around 32%. Those figures are revealed in a new report "Child Poverty in Russia: Alarming Trends and Policy Options", published by United Nations Children Fund

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Some 40,000 people participated in the first Fight Hunger: Walk the World. Walk the World 2005 involved 200,986 participants in 266 locations in 91 countries. The United Nations World Food Programme invites you to take part in the next Fight Hunger: Walk the World scheduled for 21 May, 2006

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Statement on the Occasion of World AIDS Day (extract)

This year's World AIDS Day follows on the heels of the 2005 World Summit where international leaders reaffirmed their commitment to intensify global and national HIV/AIDS responses. The fundamental challenge now is to ensure we all adhere to that commitment, and take the necessary actions to deliver results. We must, as the World AIDS Campaign 2005 advocates, "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."

The need for a harmonised response is all the more poignant in light of new UNAIDS figures, which show rising HIV infections rates across all regions of the world.

Around the globe, 40.3 million people are now living with HIV, and nearly five million of those were infected in 2005. Eastern Europe and Central Asia show the steepest increase with a 25 percent rise in new infections to 1.6 million people living with the virus. Widespread gender inequalities including political, economic, social and cultural factors exacerbate the vulnerability of women and girls to infection. In sub-Saharan Africa, for example, where sixty-four percent of all new infections occurred in 2005, young women between 15 and 24 years are now at least three times more likely to be HIV-positive than young men. In many countries marriage and women's own fidelity are not enough to protect them. In Colombia, for example, 72 percent of the women who tested HIV positive at an anti-natal site reported being in stable relationships.

Despite these figures there is hope. A decade ago, less than \$300 million was available to developing countries to address the epidemic. This year the total surpassed \$8 billion.

To ensure that this money is used effectively, and to improve the overall architecture of our response to HIV/AIDS, a Global Task Team was formed last spring. It recommended a clearer division of labour among UNAIDS cosponsors, and as a result, UNDP will now play a strategic leading role in addressing the interrelationship between HIV/AIDS and development, governance, human rights and gender.

UNDP is today supporting the launch of the first ever Red Ribbon Award: Celebrating Community Leadership and Action on AIDS, which will be presented at AIDS 2006, the sixteenth International AIDS Conference, scheduled to take place in Canada in August 2006. If we are to keep the promises we have made - if we are to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015 - then individuals, communities and institutions must support each other. This year on World AIDS Day let us Keep the Promise, and working together let us Stop AIDS.



Kemal Dervish,

Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme

1 December 2005

UN in Russia

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Highlight



The Film We Need Now



Nations Organizations in Russia, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

Brochures and leaflets with the information on pandemia, as well as bracelets and red ribbons to support HIV-infected were distributed among those who came to watch the movie. They could visit exhibitions of posters, including the exhibition of honored artist of Russia Vasily Chekashov.

Film by Sergey Potyomkin 'The City Without Sun' was shown for the first time on the first winter day in the Moscow House of Cinema. The presentation of the film was held on 1 December to coincide with the World AIDS Day. It is not by accident that this film was selected, as it is about our young contemporaries who live in this country, and who die from drugs and AIDS, but to whom love, compassion and support can help go on living.

The Central House of Cinema was not just a venue for demonstrating the film. The Union of Russian Filmmakers has conducted the International Human Rights Festival Stalker for a number of years. This year, the programme of the festival for the first time includes Cinema Against AIDS action, organized by the Union of Filmmakers and the Representative Office of the United



audience. In his speech he mentioned alarming statistics data regarding the increase of alcohol consumption, and a growing number of HIV-infected among young people in Russia. Artistic director of the chamber orchestra of the Russian Performing Art fund conductor Valery Vorona shared his concerns and called AIDS a great tragedy comparable to devastating wars. The orchestra performed classical music. In the end they performed the final part of Haydn's Farewell Symphony. It was performed according to the score, and the musicians stood up one after another, blew out candles, and left the stage. The symphony, composed over 200 years ago, still conveys a strong feeling of loss.

Film director Sergey Potyomkin and other members of the film crew spoke about the movie. In his emotional



speech actor Sergey Bezrukov cited the poet Sergey Yesenin: "The poet's gift is to soothe and harass." "I choose the roles that both soothe and harass on purpose. I play a creative person, a photographer in this film. He is a drug addict who has AIDS and is at the last stage of the disease. I have never tried drugs. If there are people here who do it, please stop. If you believe Sergey Bezrukov, please stop!" he said. "AIDS is a terrible problem. If I were a film director I would have made the film more graphic to make the audience even more horrified", the actor emphasized.

During the film show the big hall full of young people was silent. This silence is the most encouraging response the film crew could expect. In 2006, 'The City Without Sun' will be on in all regions of Russia.





UN Development Programme

How to Use the Multi-million Grants to Fight AIDS in CIS Countries



Left to right:
Urban Weber and Vladimir Starodubov

From 5-7 December, the Regional Workshop for CIS countries – Recipients of Grants of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was conducted in Moscow with support from UNDP.

Over 100 representatives from 11 CIS countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan) and Serbia – recipients of grants from The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and representatives of numerous non-governmental organizations gathered at a three days' meeting in Moscow to discuss the issues of grants implementation in CIS countries.

The speakers at the official opening were Mr. Vladimir Starodubov, First Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development of the RF, Mr. Urban Weber, Team Leader, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Global Fund, Ms. Marta Ruedas, Deputy Director, UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and CIS, New York and Mr. Ercan Murat, UN Resident

Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in the RF a.i.

The CIS countries have already received confirmation of 26 grants for over US \$215 mln for the first two years of the projects, starting from 2003. The total amount of grants approved by the Management Board of The Global Fund for a 5 years period exceeds US \$600 mln. More than US \$102 mln have been transferred to the key grant recipients and are actively used for prevention and treatment activities in the countries.

The volume of funding of the programmes aimed at fighting the



Marta Ruedas

three diseases provided by the Global Fund is unique and unprecedented in its size in the modern history of the region.

The main goals of the workshop included a detailed discussion and explanation of the role of Country Coordination Mechanisms that ensure implementation of the grants provided by the Global Fund in the countries, the role of the state, private and non-government sectors in this process, and monitoring and evaluation of projects realization.



Ercan Murat

The Global Fund operates as a financial organization, not an implementing entity. Therefore, participation of the UN system technical partners (UNDP, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), etc.) and representatives of bilateral agencies (USAID, GTZ, HOPE, World Vision International HIV/AIDS Alliance, etc.) was important for the workshop. During a special session the ways of enhancing the technical assistance provided by the partners to the grant recipients of the Global Fund and Country Coordination Mechanisms were discussed.



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UNICEF

United Nations Children's Fund

UNICEF and UNAIDS Launched the Global Campaign against AIDS in Russia



Every day more than 100 new cases of HIV infections are registered in the Russian Federation, with children and young people affected as never before.

"The epidemic in Russia has a young face and is fuelled by stigma and discrimination," said Maria Calvis, UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, "Children are at the very epi-centre of the epidemic, but not at the centre of the response."

Over 21,000 babies have been born to HIV positive mothers – accounting for more than 6% of all those living with HIV, and 2,000 have been abandoned in hospitals or orphanages.

According to UNICEF, 80% of all those with HIV in Russia are under 30 years of age, and over 70,000 people under the age of 19 are living with HIV.

The UNICEF/UNAIDS Global AIDS Campaign, Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS, was launched in Russia on November 14, 2005 to draw attention to the growing impact of the epidemic on children.

Russia's epidemic began slowly, with one case of HIV registered in 1987. By 2001, the country had the fastest growing epidemic in the world.

Today, around 1% of the population is living with HIV. While there are 331,400 officially registered cases of HIV infection, the actual number is thought to be far higher. To date, 7,500 people have died as a result of AIDS and, if the epidemic is not halted, the number of deaths is likely to increase exponentially.

The epidemic, once limited to injecting drug-users, is now moving into the general population. Sexual transmission accounted for just 8% of registered cases in 2000. By 2004 the percentage had soared to 30% (among cases with a known mode of transmis-

sion). And the epidemic is becoming 'feminized', with the share of women living with HIV more than doubling in recent years, from 20% in 2000 to 43% in 2004.

The Government has a country-wide HIV/AIDS programme for 2002-2006, and a new programme for 2007-2010 is being developed. However, the total



budget for HIV and AIDS in 2004 was only US \$19 million, or US \$0.14 per capita. In 2005, the federal budget allocated just US \$4.5 million for HIV surveillance, prevention, treatment and research.

UNICEF welcomes the September announcement by Russian President Vladimir Putin of a major increase in funding for HIV, demonstrating growing concern and awareness among policy makers. It looks forward to hearing what percentage will go to children.

Speaking on 27 September, the President said:

"In 2006, the funding (for HIV/AIDS) will increase 20-30 fold. Up to three billion roubles (US \$105.2 million) will be allocated for these purposes so that all those who need treatment with expensive drugs will receive it."

About the UNICEF/UNAIDS campaign

The Global UNICEF/UNAIDS Campaign aims to achieve measurable progress for children based on internationally agreed goals in four areas:

- Prevention of infection among adolescents and young people;
- Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission;
- Provision of pediatric treatment;
- Protection of orphans and vulnerable children.

The Ministry of Health and Social Development with support from UNICEF has already scored some success with a scheme to prevent mother to child transmission, which helped reduce this transmission over the past three years.

"If this progress can be sustained, it will be a major breakthrough," said Calvis. "and it will pave the way for progress in other areas. As always, the crucial question in a country of this monumental size, is how to go to scale with what works."

By November 2005, about 3,500 people living with HIV were receiving treatment at a cost of US \$1,500-\$3,000 per year each. Scaling up from 3,500 to 15,000 people in 2006 and to 30,000 people and more over the next two to three years would be the major challenge as Russia's AIDS centres have limited capacities.

UNICEF and UNAIDS in Russia support policy development on HIV and children. Work is already underway on the prevention of mother to child transmission, treatment, care, access to education for children living with HIV, prevention among young people through youth friendly services and provision of solid information, and protection of children orphaned or made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS.

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UN Office for the Coordination
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Regions

North Caucasus: International Aid in Transition

The UN and a wide community of international and local non-governmental organizations have been providing humanitarian assistance to the populations in the North Caucasus since 1999, i.e. since the start of the second stage of hostilities in Chechnya.

The general situation has considerably changed since then and the time has come for all the donor community to evaluate everything that has been done over the years of work and take a new look at the future activities in the region.

As is well known, the humanitarian operation in the North Caucasus has so far been planned and funded within the framework of the so-called Consolidated Appeals Process. This well-tuned mechanism is used by humanitarian organizations worldwide to announce their activity plans for the next year in various regions of the world in need of international assistance and appeal to donors for financial support. The process has many times proven its effectiveness in different parts of the world including the North Caucasus where over USD 200 million has been spent over the years of humanitarian operation to alleviate sufferings of the people who found them-



Photo by WFP

selves in dire circumstances caused by the hostilities. Over the last six years the humanitarian community's main task has been to complement the efforts of the government of the country aimed at providing acceptable life standards for many thousands of internally displaced people who had lost their houses in Chechnya and had to live in tent camps, temporary settlements and private housing in the adjacent republics.

This period of enormous hardships is not over yet, although the general situation there has undergone significant changes. A large number of people have returned to Chechnya from the neighboring republics and started to re-integrate in the homeland. However, many returnees, although they have returned home, still remain displaced. The houses these people used to live in before the war are destroyed and it will take a long time, strong efforts and significant funds to restore housing there. All the infrastructure of the Chechen Republic needs to be restored and although the government does quite a lot and some progress is achieved, a lot of work is still ahead.

2005 became a year of great change in the approaches of the UN and its humanitarian partners to the future prospects of providing assistance to the region. It is clear assistance programs should be continued. But what should they focus on?

In the course of an in-depth analysis of the on-going programs and comprehensive assessment of the current needs carried out in cooperation with the authorities the parties reached a mutual understanding that humanitarian assistance in 2006 will be needed in amounts compara-



Photo by OCHA

Grozny, September 2005

ble to or even larger than those of 2005 and preceding years. At the same time, it is obvious to everyone that the Chechen Republic is currently at a stage of transition. The Government pays much more attention to recovery and development issues. Taking into account specifics of the current situation and prospects of its development, the UN and its partners, focus on these sectors while building strategies and tactics of their assistance programs.

Close interaction with the leadership of the North Caucasus republics, in particular with the Government and the President of the Chechen Republic, help the UN and humanitarian NGOs obtain a clearer picture of the regional needs and adequately respond to these needs while planning their programs.

For instance, in response to the UN request the Government of Chechnya prepared a package of proposals of the



Photo by UNDP

republic's ministries and agencies regarding their priorities in humanitarian assistance in 2006. Later, after receiving the sectoral working groups' feedback, the Government resubmitted the renewed document to the UN to be used in the assistance planning for 2006.

This fall the donor community worked hard to finalize its assistance plan for 2006. Current realities considered, the plan is referred to as the 2006 Interagency Transitional Work Plan North Caucasus – Russian Federation.

The total funds appealed for by the participating agencies exceed USD 88 million which is higher than the last year CAP requirements by a factor of 1.5. This growth reflects the increased share of recovery and development programs in the Work Plan.

The participants of the Work Plan rely on generous donor support to enable them to achieve all the goals planned for 2006 and thus make lives of the people in the North Caucasus a little better.

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New Photo Exhibition 'Mines Are Hurting Children' Opened in Moscow

A two-week photo exhibition 'Mines Are Hurting Children' opened on 6 December, 2005 at the State Museum of Contemporary History of Russia (21, Tverskaya Street). It is prepared by UNICEF and supported by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO). The exhibition is devoted

to children who have been killed or injured by mines and other unexploded ordnance in Chechnya over the last 10 years. It presents photographs and information on the efforts of the humanitarian community to minimize the impact of mines on civilian population.

At the opening ceremony of the exhibition UNICEF Representative to Russia and Belarus Mr. Carel de Rooy said:

"UNICEF with ECHO and other donors support, together with the Government of Chechnya, has contributed to an 82% decrease in the number of children killed



Photo by UNICEF



Photo by UNICEF

or wounded by mines and UXO in Chechnya annually: from 41 in 2003 to 7 in 2005. Despite this important result, the danger of mines and UXO continues to linger over the daily lives of children in the republic.”

Deputy Head of the European Commission Delegation to Russia Mr. Paul Vandoren stressed that “the European Commission has a clear objective in the area of anti-personnel landmines. It is defined in the European Roadmap towards 'Zero Victim Target'. The European Commission is committed to strengthening international assistance and supporting various programmes of partners worldwide.”



Photo by UNICEF



Photo by UNICEF

Although the situation in Chechnya has stabilized in the last few years, many civilians still continue to suffer extreme mental and physical trauma, and even death, from the wounds caused by landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). During recent years, UNICEF has registered over 3,000 people in the Republic as mine/UXO victims. Of these, over 600 children have been injured and 132 killed.

The only way to solve the problem is to undertake the complete clearance of all mines/unexploded devices

in the Republic. UNICEF and the European Commission share a commitment to actively advocate for the global ban of anti-personnel mines and the ratification of the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

The advocacy efforts of UNICEF and its partners include raising awareness among both the child and adult population about the dangers of mines and UXO, so that they can keep themselves safe from these weapons. Mine risk education programme has brought tangible results, in that the annual number of new mine/unexploded devices incidents in Chechnya has been steadily decreasing since 2003. A comprehensive programme to assist mine survivors is in place, and conditions are being created for the social reintegration of mine-affected children through the provision of physical rehabilitation, psychosocial assistance and vocational training opportunities.

Providing information through mass media and organizing events such as this photo exhibition are part of these advocacy efforts.



Photo by UNICEF

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The Impoverished Children in Russia

A new report 'Child Poverty in Russia' was launched by UNICEF in Moscow on 15 November 2005.

Families with children account for most of the poor in Russia, and having more than one child increases the chances of being poor by more than 50%, according to the report 'Child Poverty in Russia: Alarming Trends and Policy Options.'

"There is no reason for any child in the Russian Federation to be poor," said Maria Calivis, UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

"With a robustly growing economy and a shrinking child population, Russia can well afford to protect its children from poverty. But current policies are actually concentrating poverty among children – those who will suffer the greatest long-term damage."

The report finds that social support is not geared towards the family. More than 80% of single-headed households and more than 60% of large families are excluded from the non-cash "privileges" social benefit system.

In 1991, family and maternity benefits accounted for 77% of all social benefits. By 2003 this had fallen to around 32%. The report also raises concerns that the Federal Law 122, which devolves power to the regions, may lead to increased child poverty in regions facing economic problems.

The United Nations Children's Fund asks how regions that already have high levels of poverty will generate revenues to finance child benefits. It calls for significantly greater investment in children, providing policy options to reduce child poverty over the next three years:

Suggestion One: (in the short-term): to increase benefits for children from poor families to 25% of the subsistence minimum, with the minimum wage going up to 50% of the subsistence minimum. Such investment would decrease poverty by 4 per cent and lead to an increase in income of 1.2%, thus posing little risk to inflation.

Suggestion Two: (to be carried out over the next three years): to raise the minimum wage to 100% of the subsistence minimum, with benefits for children going up to 50% of the subsistence minimum.

These two steps would lift 8.5% of the Russian population out of poverty, the majority being families with children.

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Supporting Human Development in Central Asia

On December 6, 2005, UNDP presented in Moscow the Central Asia Human Development Report 2005. The Report 2005 *Bringing Down Barriers: Regional Cooperation for Human Development and Human Security* was prepared by a group of experts under the guidance of the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank. It is the second UNDP report since 1999 devoted to the human development issues in Central Asia that employs a comprehensive and integrated approach to the issue. The Report was launched in Moscow in the framework of the international presentation on 7 December 2005 in 5 capitals of Central Asian states, Brussels, Geneva, and Tokyo.

The aim of the Report is to assist the countries of the region, their neighbours and international partners in promoting regional cooperation and integration as a means



for achieving sustainable human development and human security for the people of Central Asia. Demonstrating that the price for non-cooperation in dealing with threats of epidemics, natural disasters and ecologi-

cal catastrophes would be high, the Report also maps how closer cooperation could make Central Asia's economy much larger and richer in 10 years. The Report provides an analysis of the current state of relations among the countries in the region and prospects of their cooperation with the neighbouring countries, as well as unique Russia's role in this process.

In Moscow, the report was presented by Ms. Marta Ruedas, Deputy Director of UNDP Regional Bureau for Eastern Europe and the CIS in New York, and Mr. Jacek Cukrowski, Project Coordinator and Co-Lead Author from UNDP Regional Centre for Europe and CIS in Bratislava.

Representatives of a number of Russian ministries and agencies, executive organs, the Eurasian Economic Community, foreign embassies in Moscow, international and non-governmental organizations, academia, and media took part in the presentation.



UN World Food Programme

Events

Fight Hunger: Walk the World Will Continue



Italy

History and Background

There are 800 million people in the world who know what it is like to be hungry. Sadly, 300 million of those are chronically hungry children. Although there is more than enough food in the world for everyone, and although United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) feeds some 90 million people per year, the staggering problem of chronic hunger persists.

In 1996, 10,000 people, including high-level representatives of 185 countries and the European Community met at the World Food Summit in Rome, and resolved to reduce by half the number of undernourished people by 2015. This became one of the United Nations' eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 2000, 191 UN member states pledged to meet all the MDGs by the year 2015.

On March 4 2005, the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, asked WFP Executive Director James T. Morris to take a lead role in ensuring the achievement of the Goal of halving world hunger by 2015.

The Goal of reducing hunger by half is particularly in line with the WFP mandate and programs, in that WFP targets its food assistance to the world's most vulnerable. Its programs—especially its school feeding and maternal and child nutrition programs—serve as platforms from which to both reduce hunger and address other MDGs as well, including Education for All, poverty reduction, and prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

For a poor family, children are both an economic burden and an economic resource. While a child is an extra mouth to feed, requires clothing and other items that cost the family, a child is also an extra pair of hands in the fields or at home. A child working for others is a source of income.

Children of undernourished mothers get a poor start in life. Infants who are hungry and do not receive the right micronutrients do not attain and maintain good physical and mental health. School is a too often a luxury that many poor families cannot afford, or they must choose between children which to send to school.

Even if a hungry child is able to enrol in school, it is hard for him or her to con-



Portugal

centrate on lessons and to attend school regularly. In areas where hunger is prevalent, school attendance and performance are low and drop-out rates are high.

Every year of missed schooling during childhood cuts deeply into the individual child's potential in terms of productivity and earnings, health and contributions to society. Thus the long-term consequences of child hunger are significantly negative for the individuals, their families and communities, and their nations.

When children get a good start in life, and nutritious food is available for them, their health, attendance and performance improve, and their futures brighten. Food and education combined make an excellent investment in prosperity, health and peace.

This is why eradicating child hunger through maternal and child nutrition and school feeding programs is the highest priority for WFP.

Through these excellent programs and using its extraordinary operational capacity, WFP can do a lot more, given adequate resources. WFP cannot achieve the Millennium Development Goal of halving world hunger by itself, nor by continuing with business as usual, however. Achievement of the Goal will require the focused attention of WFP plus the skills, energy, creativity and commitment of a wide variety of players. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), national and international institutions, private sector companies, professional associations, children's clubs and schools, church groups, civic leaders and citizens will need to join together to achieve the goal.

A tangible joint activity for any and all who are committed to the goal of eliminating child hunger is Walk the World. Walk the World is an annual global walk to raise awareness and funds to and encourage action to end child hunger. The event provides a platform for disparate groups to come together once a year for a public manifestation of support for the cause of eliminating child hunger.

Walk the World's very history demonstrates the power of collab-



Argentina



The Russian Federation

oration between corporate and humanitarian entities and de-centralized organizing. The concept of collaborative relationships between the humanitarian and business sector has been on the UN agenda for a while. At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in 2003, the UN Secretary General described to corporate leaders the need for a “quiet revolution” to renew the United Nations in the twenty-first century by building a stronger relationship with the business community. “Thriving markets and human security go hand in hand; without one, we will not have the other,” he said. WFP has taken the challenge to heart and over the last three years, especially, has extended its partnership base to include an increasing number of private entities.

In fact, the Walk evolved from the initiative of WFP’s corporate partner TNT. In 2003, TNT employees in Asia undertook walks to raise funds in support of WFP school feeding. Based on the success in Asia, TNT organized a global walk in 2004, dubbed it Fight Hunger: Walk the World and invited WFP staff and families to join. Some 40,000 people participated in the Walk in over 70 countries and 24 time zones. The Walk raised US\$1,000,000, or enough to feed 30,000 children for one school year.

TNT Chief Executive Peter Bakker subsequently proposed to turn the Walk over to WFP. WFP Executive Director Morris accepted and 2005 became a transition year, involving WFP more substantially in the planning and implementation of the Walk, and pilot testing different ways of engaging both new and traditional partners.

The 2005 event

A new interactive website <http://www.fighthunger.org> was established to ease communication and allow “grassroots” (non-WFP and TNT) organizers to propose Walks. Launched in May, the site listed the Walk locations worldwide and included a Virtual Walk. Each new visitor to the site triggered a donation of 19 cents from TNT. (19 cents is what it costs WFP, on average, for a school meal for one child)

A small number of cities around the world were targeted for significantly expanding partnerships and participation; and a 50-50 partnership model was developed, through which the costs and the proceeds of the Walk can be shared with partners.

Spectacular backdrops such as the Sphinx and Pyramids in Egypt, the Great Wall in China, the Grand Prix Formula One race in Montreal, Battery Park and the Statue of Liberty in New York City—and more—helped to make Walk the World 2005 a grand success. Elephants and camels walked bearing Fight Hunger: Walk the World signs, and zoo animals added an interesting background touch in Jakarta and Johannesburg.

Walk the World T-shirts, hats, wristbands and other visibility items were available and prominently displayed, and—thanks to hundreds of sponsors—



The United States of America

refreshments and entertainment were provided in many locations. All in all, Walk the World 2005 provided a wonderfully colourful and fun family atmosphere.

Local and international officials and celebrities also added to the festivity. For example, the President of Honduras Ricardo Maduro led the Walk and told the crowd in Tegucigalpa that part of the just-announced debt relief package for Honduras will be used to support school feeding. Marathon record-setter Paul Tergat participated in Walk the World for

the second year—this time in Lisbon. Science Fiction writer Sir Arthur C. Clarke joined, in his wheelchair, in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Race car driver Jarno Trulli spoke out against child hunger to Formula One fans, in Montreal, Canada. Congolese basketball star Dikembe Mutombo walked and signed autographs in New York City, USA. Many many other notable citizens participated worldwide, including politicians, government officials, ambassadors, sports heroes, artists and performers, beauty pageant winners, and you(?).

Perhaps most exciting was the fact that many WFP beneficiaries took part in the Walk as well. In Malawi alone, over 40,000



Malawi

beneficiary children (one quarter of the 200,000 students receiving food through the WFP school feeding program) participated!

It worked! Walk the World 2005 involved 200,986 participants in 266 locations in 91 countries.

The future

Ending child hunger is a challenge that will require worldwide a multi-party effort sustained over time. All who are interested in joining the effort are therefore encouraged to view the effort as long-term coalition-building and public education process—lasting through 2015.

Walk the World is the global, once-a-year demonstration of our commitment and working together. Related activities that span the months between Walks are being considered as well.

Mark your calendar and stay in touch for the next Walk, on May 21, 2006!

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United Nations Population Fund: Launch of the 2005 State of World Population Report

On 12 October 2005, at the Central House of the Journalist in Moscow, a press-conference took place on the occasion of the launch of UNFPA's State of World Population Report, entitled "The Promise of Equality: Gender Equity, Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals". The launch of this year's Report coincided with the 60th anniversary of the United Nations Charter, which, among other things, enshrined the equal rights of women and men.

More than 80 people took part in the press conference, including representatives from the Government and from international organizations working in Russia, scientists and journalists from 20 regions of the country.

Presenting the report, Ms. Sietske Steneker, UNFPA Representative in the Russian Federation, explained its focus on the promise of equal opportunities for men and women and on turn-



Launch of UNFPA's State of World Population Report in Central House of Journalists



Representatives from the Government and international organizations, scientists and journalists from 20 regions of the country took part in the press conference

ing the promise into reality. The following are excerpts of Ms. Steneker's statement:

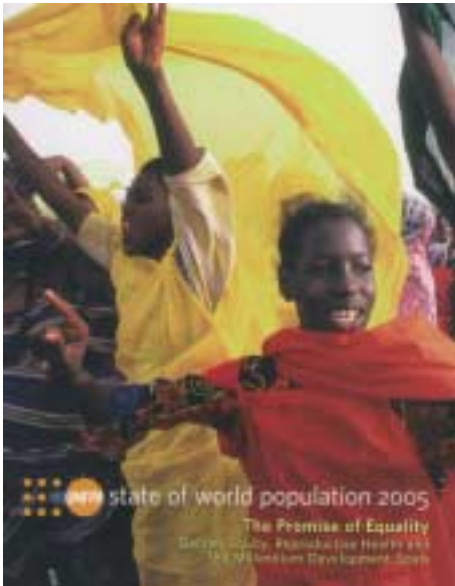
"This year's State of World Population Report comes one month after the 2005 World Summit in New York, where leaders from practically all countries in the world, including President Putin, pledged once more to reduce extreme poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals requires healthy men and healthy women, working together hand in hand as equals.

Worldwide, sexual and reproductive health problems—including HIV/AIDS—remain the leading cause of death and illness in women and girls between the ages of 15 and 44. Perhaps in no other area of health are the disparities between rich and poor so wide and the tragic consequences so utterly immoral. Every year, more than half a million women and girls in the world

die from pregnancy-related complications that are almost entirely preventable. Millions more are left to suffer out the remainder of their lives with injuries that are unheard of in wealthier countries.

Globally, increased investments in sexual and reproductive health are urgently needed to improve maternal health, reduce poverty and combat HIV/AIDS.

Worldwide, the face of HIV/AIDS is increasingly female and increasing-



ly young. Of the 40 million people known to be living with the virus, about half are women, and infection rates among women, particularly young women, are known to be rising in every region. It will be hard to reverse the AIDS epidemic until we end discrimination and violence against women and girls.

Without a cure, prevention remains the first line of defence to halt the AIDS epidemic. Greater investments are needed for prevention, treatment and care. This would go a long way towards stemming an epidemic that proliferates amidst poverty, discrimination, neglect and violence.

Worldwide an estimated 1 in 5 women will be a victim of rape or attempted rape in her lifetime. One in 3 will have been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused. More often than not, the perpetrators go unpunished. Every single country in the world should take steps to end violence against women.

The report also calls for investments targeted at adolescents and youth. Young people today number nearly 3 billion and constitute almost one half of the world's population. Today's cohort of young people is the largest in history. Investments in their well-being will engender positive effects for decades to come. Yet, despite their huge numbers, their needs are too often overlooked by policy makers—even though young people under 25 now constitute the majority in many developing countries.”

Ms. Steneker also clarified that the Millennium Development Goal on gender is related to the empowerment of women, but also, more generally, to gender equality. This means that it should be understood not only in terms of women's rights, but also in terms of overcoming gender disparities that are unfavourable to men, like the example of premature adult mortality in Russia.

In closing, she stated that “today, we have an opportunity to fulfil the promises made more than half a century ago and reaffirmed throughout the 1990s—in Cairo at the International Conference on Population and Development, in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women, in 2000 with the signing of the Millennium Declaration, and this year at the World Summit.”



Ms. Sietske Steneker, UNFPA Representative in the Russian Federation

The UNFPA Report presentation was followed by a lively discussion and the participants' answers to the multiple questions from mass media.

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Meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States Conference Process



UN in Russia introduces the author of the article: Bohdan Nahajlo is currently a senior policy officer in United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Regional Bureau for Europe. He was involved in the CIS Conference process throughout the ten years of its existence, and has also served as UNHCR Representative in Belarus and Azerbaijan.

The concluding meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States Conference Process took place in Geneva on Monday 10 October 2005, with the full involvement of the participating states and agencies. The UN Refugee Agency and International Organization for Migration (IOM) served as co-chairs.

It brought to an end a ten-year process which undoubtedly helped the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States build their capacity to manage challenges in the areas of asylum, migration and displacement and promote cooperation in this regard. At the same time, it was also recognized at the Concluding Meeting that gaps still remain and that it would be desirable to establish a new framework to address them along with new challenges.

The Commonwealth of Independent States Conference Process was initiated in the mid-1990s in response to challenges in the fields of asylum, migration and forced displacement after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. It led to the 1996 Geneva Conference on these issues which in turn produced a coherent and comprehensive Programme of Action on which a follow-up process involving most of the Commonwealth of Independent States countries was based.

The participants in the Concluding Meeting included delegations from ten of the 12 CIS states (Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan did not participate), neighbouring and interested countries, the four lead agencies (UNHCR, IOM,

The Council of Europe and Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, represented by ODIHR and HCNM), inter-governmental organizations (including United Nations Development Programme, International Labour Organization, ICMPD), the European Commission, World Bank, and representatives of NGO lead agencies. The purpose of the meeting was to conclude the ten-year process, adopt a final statement, and look ahead towards a new flexible framework for Euro-Asian cooperation on migration, asylum and displacement issues.

“Much has been achieved as a result of this remarkable ten-year multilateral effort”, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Antynio Guterres, said in his closing speech. “Compared to the situation that existed in the mid-1990s, all the states involved are certainly much better placed to manage displacement and migration problems in a humane and effective manner consistent with international norms”.

Considerable challenges, however, continue to confront the region. “Gaps still remain, especially when it comes to implementation, and asylum and protection are in some cases fragile or absent. New challenges have appeared, especially those related to the increased international concern with security and combating terrorism, border management, the growth of movements including migrants and asylum-seekers into and across the region, trafficking in persons and xenophobia”, said the High Commissioner.

In a concluding statement, participant states agreed to build on the achievements of the Commonwealth of Independent States Conference Process by establishing various appropriate arrangements that together would form a flexible broader framework for working consultation and cooperation.

Participating states recognized that important issues remain to be addressed as regards the implementation of a fair and effective asylum system involving access to the territory, adequate reception facilities, the implementation of a refugee status determination process and the creation of integration possibilities for those found to be in need of international protection.

Participating states invited UNHCR and other international organizations to continue providing technical assistance for the capacity building of relevant administrative bodies and national court systems and training of border guards, national refugee status determination agencies and law enforcement staff for the management of an adequate asylum procedure.

Given the importance of reliable and complete data on asylum-seekers and refugees, it was agreed to strengthen co-operation among the concerned states and with international agencies in relation to the registration and documentation of such groups. In particular, the importance of providing refugees including children with adequate documentation was recognised.

Participating states pledged to adopt or revise citizenship legisla-

tion on avoiding and reducing statelessness as a consequence of state succession and to set up mechanisms enabling persons to establish their nationality.

Finally, the concluding statement emphasizes the need to speed up progress towards a comprehensive and durable solution of the problems still faced by remaining vulnerable groups of formerly deported peoples. Such a solution should be based on the protection of human rights, the elimination of statelessness and the early removal of obstacles to the acquisition of citizenship by those already entitled to it; as well as the facilitation of voluntary return to the country of origin or integration on the basis of equality, respect for human dignity and non-discrimination in the country of residence.

“It is up to all of us now to ensure that we build on what has been achieved and to jointly chart the way forward in a spirit of understanding and cooperation – the hallmark, as we can now say, of the exemplary Commonwealth of Independent States Conference process”, concluded the High Commissioner.

The challenge now is to agree on the scope and structure of a possible new framework to follow on from the Commonwealth of Independent States Conference process, ensure that there is local ownership by participating countries as well as sufficient political and financial support for it.

The Russian Federation has responded by offering to become a co-funder of a new arrangement tailored to continue the work of the Commonwealth of Independent States Conference process

in a new form which responds to changing realities and needs.

UNHCR has already begun follow-up consultations with its partners and the diplomatic missions of the Commonwealth of Independent States countries in Geneva on the next steps. What is awaited now are concrete proposals which could then be considered at an expert level meeting of all the stakeholders early in 2006 at which the modalities of a new arrangement could be worked out.

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Society

Information Future

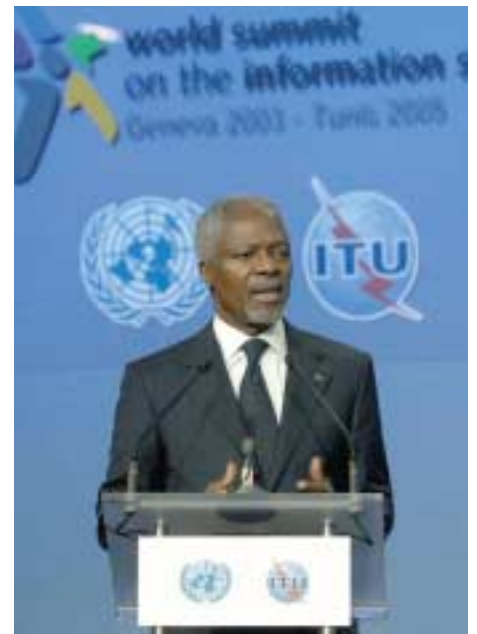
The UN does not plan to ‘take over’ the Internet, but aims to ensure its global reach

The second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis ended on November 16. From the outset the Summit, attended by representatives from 174 countries, including 50 Heads of State and Government, was certain to draw the attention of mass media and expert community. The interest in the Summit was reinforced by debate on Internet governance, which was intensifying as the Summit approached. Unfortunately, commentators often present the issue of “who should govern the World Wide Web?” as central because of its inherent acuteness and salience. This does not, however, fully reflect the true essence of the idea of the “information society.”

Let us see then what the information society and the UN’s vision of the Summit’s objective are, and to what extent the Summit’s work could be considered successful.

The UN views the “information society” as one where human potential is formed, developed and allowed to unlock, providing people with access to necessary instruments and technologies through education and training in their efficient use. Technical, and even financial capacity for the creation of such a society are already in place today, so the problem lies in demonstrating political will to this end.

Technology, information, and communications merely constitute the background, the environment, and the context, while at the heart of it are the people, their potential and their concerns, above all – the problem of inequality. Therefore, the key goal of the Tunis Summit was to ensure that poor countries, and the poor in all countries could make full use of the advantages offered by new information and communication technologies (ICT), including the Internet, in terms of economic and social development.



Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, addresses the World Summit on the Information Society

In this regard it is of great importance that the participants of the Tunis Summit reaffirmed their commitment to the notion agreed upon during the previous phase of the Summit in Geneva in 2003, under



Yoshio Utsumi, the ITU Secretary-General and the World Summit on the Information Society Chairman

which information and communication technologies are a key tool of national development strategies. Therefore, financing further development of ICTs and their transfer to the poorest nations of the world is vital for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The Summit participants welcomed the establishment of the Digital Solidarity Fund and outlined a range of areas where a more efficient functioning of financial mechanisms could be attained, building on such existing financial commitments as the Monterrey Consensus.

What was then the response by the Tunis phase to the issues of the role and governance of the Internet? The Internet was created and advanced through informal, yet very efficient, cooperation among various entities within the private sector, civil society and scientific community at the forefront. The Internet has rapidly grown to be such an important element of economy, education, health service, mass media, management, governance and everyday life that a strong interest toward it on the part of national governments is fully understandable.

Governments are anxious, and have every right to, shape their own policies with regard to the Internet and coordinate their actions among

themselves and with other stakeholders. It is no less obvious that it is every government's responsibility to protect their citizens against, say, propaganda of nazism, xenophobia and other hate ideologies, inciting terrorism, spread of pornography and other criminal activities, which the Internet can be used for.

At the same time, the very heart of the information society, its underlying philosophy is freedom. It is freedom that enables people all over the world to acquire knowledge, allows journalists to perform their professional duty and citizens to hold their governments accountable. Without the right to seek, receive and exchange information and ideas the informa-



Symbol of the World Summit on the Information Society

tion revolution is unthinkable. By the same token, the introduction of censorship in cyberspace or state control over it would mean voluntarily giving up one of the most powerful tools of progress. The protection of the Internet is the protection of freedom itself.

Thus, an important result of the Tunis Summit is continuing the dialogue between two different cultures: the non-governmental Internet community on the one hand and official bodies - governments and intergovernmental organizations - on the other. Contrary to skeptics, the WSIS delegations were able to make progress in this area. They agreed that there is a need for a wider international engagement in deliberations on the Internet governance, although the question of specific steps to achieve this aim is yet to be resolved and debates on the issue are due to continue.

The principles on which agreement has been reached include the following: all nations should play an equal role and have equal opportunities in Internet governance and in ensuring its stable and secure functioning; nations should not intervene in decisions regarding other nations' country code top level domain (ccTLD); it is necessary to strengthen co-operation in developing national policies for generic top level domain names (gTLD).

In his public addresses, and also in this speech at the Summit, Kofi Annan has consistently sought to correct a rather commonplace distortion relating to the work of the WSIS as a whole. According to this misperception, the UN seeks to "take over" the Internet, or establish some form of control over it. This is an absolutely misguided view. It is enough to consider merely the fact that the Working Group on Internet Governance, established by the Secretary General upon request by the member-states, offered four scenarios of internationalization of the Internet, none of which envisaged the transfer of any controlling bodies to the UN. In other words, the UN does not plan to "take over" the World Wide Web, but rather seeks to ensure its global reach.

Lastly, as emphasized at the Summit, the time has come to leave behind the broad discussion on the "digital divide". It is high time the international community moves on to concrete measures and direct its efforts towards the development and capacity-building of digital technology. The two years separating the phases of the WSIS have seen the implementation of more than 2,500 projects aimed at bridging the "digital divide" between the developed and developing countries, yet nevertheless, the Tunis commitment emphasizes the need to do much more, and without delay.

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UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization

International Conference in the Kremlin: How to Safeguard Cultural Heritage

The UNESCO Moscow Office made a new important step towards implementing promising ideas and achieving practical results in the field of cultural and natural heritage safeguarding in cluster countries. This was the international conference “Innovative Policies for Heritage Safeguarding and Cultural Tourism Development” held on 25-27 of November in the historical halls of the Moscow Kremlin Museums. The conference was organized under the aegis and with the support of the UNESCO Moscow Office, the Ministry of Culture and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation, State University – Higher School of Economics and in collaboration with the Moscow Kremlin Museums, Russian Federation Agency for Tourism and the Secretariat of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the CIS countries. The conference was held within the framework of UNESCO international programmes and projects for Heritage Safeguarding and Cultural Tourism Development and on the basis of recommendation of seminars on cultural tourism policies realized by the UNESCO Moscow Office for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and the Russian Federation in 2005.

At the opening ceremony, the Minister of Culture and Mass Communications

of the Russian Federation, Mr. Alexander Sokolov, emphasized the necessity of qualitative improvement of preservation and complex exploitation of cultural and natural heritage as a factor of the World, national and regional development. The Director of the UNESCO Moscow Office a.i., Mr. Dendev Badarch, welcomed the participants on behalf of the UNESCO Director General. The Rector of State University – Higher School of Economics, Mr. Jaroslav Kouzminov, and the General Director of the Moscow Kremlin State Historical and Cultural Museum-Preserve, Ms. Elena Gagarina, stressed the topicality of the conference and the role of the participating institutions in safeguarding cultural heritage.

Over 250 specialists from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, the Russian Federation, United Kingdom and Switzerland, including ministers of culture, tourism and youth affairs of the cluster countries, museum functionaries, scientists, and tourism professionals took part in the conference. It was devoted to problems of cultural-historical heritage preservation and management of historical towns, natural reserves and safeguarded areas for cultural, educational, scientific and recreational purposes.

The participants came to a unanimous conclusion, that safeguarding of the unique monuments and natural reserves of global and regional significance requires not only and not so much financing, but primarily a new management mode and mechanisms of exploitation. All the speakers emphasized the necessity of the creation of a common tourism space in CIS countries, of further dialogue among culture specialists, businessmen and officials of central, regional and municipal administrations, as well as involvement of new cultural objects and natural areas in the tourism activity.

As a result, the conference recommendations to public, commercial and civic organizations, and participating countries were discussed and approved for implementation in heritage safeguarding, cultural and educational tourism, natural reserves and ecological tourism development. The conference results are to make a positive impact on culture, tourism and economies of cluster countries by creating favourable conditions for building of a new effective system including three components: cultural and natural heritage, scientific, cultural, educational and recreational tourism, and travel and leisure industry.

To Keep Lake Baikal Clean

At the request of the 29th session of the World Heritage Committee, a joint mission of UNESCO and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) went to Baikal from 20 October to 1 November 2005 to assess the state of conservation of the site. One of the most important concerns of the Committee is the proposed construction of an oil pipeline through the World Heritage site. The UNESCO/IUCN mission was able to verify in the field that all survey work on the pipeline had indeed been halted.

In a meeting at the Ministry of Natural Resources of the Russian Federation, the Mission pointed out that any route

going through the World Heritage site would in accordance with the Decision of the World Heritage Committee at its 28th session, make a case for inscribing the site on the List of World Heritage in Danger. The mission therefore recommended the Russian Federation in accordance with its commitment under the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage to conserve the values and integrity of the site and to decline any projects of pipelines going through the World Heritage site. The mission further remarked that the route approved in 2004 crosses the Lake Baikal watershed and that in case this option was imple-

mented, the state would need to demonstrate that the necessary measures were taken to prevent pollution of the Lake in case of an accident. The Ministry of Natural Resources informed the Mission that the newly proposed route would be submitted to the State Ecological Expertise and that any decision would be based on the outcome of this Environmental Impact Assessment.

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Results of the Global Microentrepreneurship Awards Competition Announced

On December 1, 2005, the awards ceremony of the Global Microentrepreneurship Awards Competition, held in Russia from August to November 2005, took place in St.Petersburg, in the framework of the launch of the IV National Conference 'Microfinance in Russia: Successful Strategies for Economic Growth'.

The competition was organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Citigroup Foundation and the Russian Microfinance Centre (RMC). It was held under the auspices the Council on the International Year of Microcredit 2005 at the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade of the Russian Federation.

These competitions are aimed at highlighting achievements of the most successful micro-entrepreneurs and the most effective microfinance programmes, and at drawing the attention of public and authorities to the sphere of microfinancing.

The jury of the competition received over 100 applications from microentrepreneurs and more than 40 applications from microfinance organizations. The applications came from different parts of Russia – from St.Petersburg to Kamchatka, and from Kalmykia to the Primorsky region.

The jury included representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Russian Federation, Higher School of Economics, the United Nations Development Programme, ZAO KB Citibank, OAO 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.

The first prize winners in the main nominations are:

- Best microentrepreneur among trade enterprises
Aleksanin Vasily Aleksandrovich, Kaluzhskaya oblast, Kirovsky district, Berezhniki village;
- Best microentrepreneur among non-trade enterprises
Kim Veronika Grigorievna, Nakhodka, Promorsky krai;



- Best employer in the area of microentrepreneurship among trade enterprises
Vorobieva Zinaida Valerievna, Republic of Chuvashiya, Cheboksary;
- Best employer in the area of microentrepreneurship among non-trade enterprises
Shushkov Vladimir Ivanovich, Leningradskaya oblast, Kirov.

Loan officers who worked with the winners among microentrepreneurs also received prizes. Prizes for microfinance organizations were awarded in the category "The most effective microfinance programme to support entrepreneurship."

State Duma deputy Mr. A. Aksakov, UNDP Resident Representative in the Russian Federation a.i. Mr. Ercan Murat, Board member of the Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry Mr. V. Ermakov, Vice President of Citigroup Russia Ms. N. Nikolaeva, and the Director of the Russian

Microfinance Center Mr. M. Mamuta took part in the winners awards ceremony.

Mr. Ercan Murat opened the ceremony by saying that "microfinancing can really help change the life of people for the better, especially of those who need it most. They will be given an opportunity to earn and save; they will stop fighting for survival and begin planning for the future. In other words, microfinancing enables people to break out of poverty."

Vice President of Citigroup Russia Ms. N.Y. Nikolaeva noted: "We are glad that the first Global Microentrepreneurship Awards competition held in Russia has attracted many participants. It was not an easy task for the jury to select winners among so worthy candidates. We hope that this competition will become annual and will draw more attention next year."

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, and a group of students 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. This year the microentrepreneurs were awarded in 30 countries.





World Health Organization

People

Patient Safety: A Global Challenge



The WHO booklet dedicated to patient safety

None of the health care systems can exclude specific cases of so-called 'adverse events' bringing harm to a patient's health. Therefore more and more countries consider issues of patient safety their top political priority. In 2002, the Resolution of the 55 WHO Assembly called upon all countries to provide support and attention to improve patient safety and facilitate development of monitoring systems in public health care worldwide. This incentive has put patient safety firmly on the global health agenda.

Despite raising awareness and growing political commitment of policy makers and health care providers, a lot is to be done to considerably upgrade the situation with patient safety. Again and again same medical mistakes and systemic failures occur slowing down implementation of interventions to reduce well-known risks. Many adverse-event reporting systems are still in an embryo phase of their development and often unfavorable information is withheld by medical workers. Understanding of frequency, nature and decisive factors of adverse events is limited. Despite existing evidences of successful political and programmed initiatives, only in a limited number of cases they turned to be an integrated factor of a core public health programme being implemented country-

wide, nothing to say about their implementation world-wide.

The majority of data on adverse events at present comes from hospitals. However, they also occur within the healthcare system and outside it – in medical doctor's consulting rooms, nursing centres, drug-stores, during provision of home visiting service. At present comparative data from the countries in transition is rather limited. However there are many indications that the issue of patient safety is same acute in these countries, though potential nature of harm may be different to a considerable extent.

In May 2004 the 57 World Health Assembly launched the World Alliance for Patient Safety initiative with the aim to facilitate improvement of patient safety worldwide. The World Alliance for Patient Safety was endorsed in October 2004 by the WHO Director General Dr. Jong-Wook Lee. The Alliance is intended to coordinate and facilitate interventions to improve patient safety all over the world. The first perspective development plan of the Alliance focuses on six main action areas:

- The Global Patient Safety Challenge for 2005 – 2006 'Clean Care is Safer Care'

focused on preventing infection associated with health-care;

- Patients for Patient Safety, mobilizes patients and patient organization in implementing patient safety efforts worldwide;
- Taxonomy for Patient Safety is aimed at developing internationally acceptable data standards for collecting, coding and classifying adverse events and near misses;
- Research for Patient Safety measures the nature of patient harm in developing and transitional countries and improves methodologies and tools for assessing the nature and extent of adverse events;
- Solutions for Patient Safety promote existing patient safety interventions and actions worldwide and coordinate international efforts on future solutions;
- Reporting and Learning generates tools and guidelines for developing patient safety reporting systems and improving existing systems.

One of the major targets in patient safety is learning lessons from adverse





events in health care. Many member states are in the phase of implementation of their initiatives on collecting, coding and classifying data on patient safety. The Alliance has started implementation of two initiatives in support of these efforts.

The most important knowledge in provision of patient safety is awareness of the nature of harm and means to prevent it during medical treatment and care. The fundamental role of patient safety reporting is in strengthening of patient safety by learning lessons from failures and bugs in the system of medical care. Majority of problems result not from some accidental and not linked with each other events. On the contrary, the majority of medical mistakes are caused by the weakness of system, they have deep roots which may be summarized and eliminated. Though every adverse event is unique, by analyzing several events certain similarities may be identified, in particular given the nature and structure of risks which might remain hidden without system of reporting and analysis.

Prevention and mitigation of adverse events requests for improved information exchange on dissemination, types, nature, severity and consequences of adverse events both at the national level and internationally. Lack of standard selection sets and taxonomy of mistakes and adverse events creates an obstacle to these efforts.

The World Alliance for Patient Safety facilitates analysis and comprehension of information on patient health harm worldwide and provides for application the outcomes of the research to upgrade safety of medical care. The key target is to reach global consensus on high level taxonomy able to facilitate data accumulation and analysis by countries and regions. It does not envisage substitution of the existing taxonomies; it will only be a supplement to them by formation of a model providing for direct comparison of data collected by means of various methods.

The World Alliance for Patient Safety was launched by the World Health Organization with the aim of raising awareness and catalyzing high-level support and commitment to tackle patient safety issues worldwide. As a part of its annual programme, the World Alliance for Patient Safety committed to holding an Alliance Day every year to report on progress achieved and discuss new areas of action for improving the safety of care.

Each year, the Alliance Day takes place in a different WHO region. In 2004, the pre-launch Alliance Day took place in Shanghai, the People's Republic of China. This year's event was held on 9 December in Moscow and was followed by a workshop entitled "Institutionalization of Patient Safety: National and Hospital

Perspectives". This event brought together over 100 key international experts, policy makers, NGOs and civil society groups, donors, medical professionals and experts from all over the world to discuss patient safety issues. Technical progress made at regional level was highlighted with a particular focus on the CIS and Baltic countries.

Sir Liam Donaldson, Chief Medical Officer of England, President of the World Alliance of Patient Safety chaired the Alliance Day. The program of the workshop included a keynote speech by Dr Vladimir I. Starodubov, Deputy Minister of Health and Social Development of the Russian Federation on patient safety in Russia, and a presentation of the WHO Regional Director for Europe on regional patient safety prospects. Representatives of the WHO regional offices spoke on a global perspective about the work countries in each region are doing to improve patient safety.

Participants of the workshop concluded that safe medical care should become the must for each health care system. We now make our initial inputs necessary to provide really safe medical care. Through the World Alliance we are committed to facilitate cooperation and partnerships with all countries for patient safety, and only together we will be able to change the situation for the better.

GFATM Funds Are Coming to Fight TB in Russia



WHO TB Control Programme in the Russian Federation together with the Russian Health Care Foundation (RHCF) was fully engaged in preparing the Grant Agreement with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). Grant Agreement signed on October 4, 2005 for two years for the amount of US \$49.5 million becomes effective on December 1, 2005. The project will cover both civil and penal sectors with trainings in TB control, infrastructure development, improvement of laboratory diagnostics of TB, TB/HIV control, MDR TB control. Thus, all activities will aim to reaching Millennium Development Goals with regard to fighting TB and encouraging implementation of the extreme scenario set up by the WHO headquarters.

According to the Grant Agreement the RHCF is the principal recipient and the coordinator of all project activities, while WHO would provide technical assistance. National TB service will benefit from the RHCF coordinating the activities within the project as it also coordinates the World Bank loan project implementation. Thus, the RHCF and WHO will consolidate their

efforts in the effective implementation of these projects through better supervision and coordination of the activities carried out together with the Russian partners.

The launch of the GFATM project took place in Moscow on 14-15 December, 2005. Representatives of the RHCF and the WHO TB Control Programme informed Russian and international partners on the aims and objectives of the project, bi-annual activity plan and GFATM requirements when providing financial support, etc. Special focus was made on the application to the Green Light Committee so that regions where DOTS Plus programme is effective could receive the second-line anti-TB drugs at reduced prices.

11th meeting of the High-Level Working Group in the Russian Federation

Held on September 2, 2005, in Moscow the 11th meeting of the HLWG on TB in the Russian Federation focused on the global targets of TB control, Russia's prospects in reaching them and the HLWG role in this

process. HLWG members, main national and international partners discussed further development of the Russian TB services with the financial support from the federal budget and from the external sources. The meeting unanimously approved recommendations to request:

- The Russian Minister of Health and Social Development to consider a possibility of including the TB control issue into the agenda of the upcoming G8 summit;
- The Russian Government to consider prolongation of the Federal Target Programme on social diseases for 2007-2011;
- To approve the revised HLWG Statute.

HLWG members agreed that to achieve global targets of TB control in Russia, national TB control services should have sustainable financial support and common TB control strategy.

The 12th meeting of the HLWG held on 13 December 2005 reported on the HLWG activities in 2005 and the



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.

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work plan for the next year. The meeting also raised the issues related to the implementation of the World Bank loan Project on TB and AIDS control and the project supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM).

Attention to Tuberculosis Control at the Gatherings in France

This fall Paris hosted the 36th International Union Against TB and Lung Diseases (IUATLD) World Conference on Lung Health on 18-22 October 2005 called 'Scaling up and sustaining effective tuberculosis, HIV and asthma prevention and control'. Most outstanding experts in TB and lung diseases from all over the world gathered to discuss the latest achievements in this field.

The WHO TB Control Programme shared best practices through the four presentations on social support for TB patients, advocacy, work with mass media, with national and international partners and poster displays, as well as thematic presentations on achievements of WHO pilot territories. The audience showed much interest in

the WHO TB Control Programme experience in implementing the incentives and enablers programme, the impact of which was presented on TB patients' adherence to treatment that was studied in the WHO pilot regions of Russia.

The World Bank and WHO organized a symposium on "Expansion of Revised TB Control Strategy in the Russian Federation" within the 36th IUATLD Conference on 22 October 2005 chaired by Mr Marquez, World Bank, Dr Blanc, WHO/HQ, Dr Martynov, Russian Ministry of Health and Social Development, and Professor Perelman, Research Institute of Phthisiopulmonology, Sechenov Moscow Medical Academy. The event gathered over 100 TB experts who had a unique opportunity to learn about the achievements in TB control in penal and civil sector in 1999-2005, mechanisms for cooperation between international partners and national authorities, possible impact of the World Bank loan project and GFATM project on the development of the national TB control in Russia, development of TB-HIV coordination and control in the country, current problems and challenges of TB control in Russia. It was highlighted that the HLWG might serve as a role model of the effec-

tive cooperation and coordination mechanism in the development of the national TB control programme and other countries might benefit from the best practices in Russia.

12th Meeting of the TB Training and Education Collaborative for the WHO European Region

For the 12th time international organizations working in the European Region in the field of TB control met in Copenhagen on 17-18 November, 2005 to update each other on TB related trainings held from May till November 2005. Trainings in multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) control, TB/HIV control and advocacy and communication were in the focus of the discussion. Presentations on training of trainers were of great interest and a heated discussion was about the methodology of training trainers. The WHO TB Control Programme updated on the progress of the TB library. Programme for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) expressed their interest to support further development of the database for it to become a regional database of TB materials.



Write to the President about the UN Reform

In an effort to ensure that the UN is prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan published the report 'In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights for All'. The Secretary-General emphasizes the importance of reforming the United Nations and urges the member states to introduce changes to the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, and the UN Secretariat.

There is a wide range of ideas and models aimed at increasing efficiency, reforming the ways of financing the UN, making the organization more democratic and enhancing its cooperation with civil society.

The topic for the next annual essay competition, organized by the United Nations Association of Russia, will be 'UN in the 21st Century'. Young people will have an opportunity to give their opinion on how the UN should work in the 21st century.

The students are encouraged to give their evaluation of the prospects of the UN reform and write a letter to the President of the Russian Federation with answers to the following questions:

1. What are the most important aspects of the UN reform and why?
2. What position should the Russian Government take on the UN reform?

Please send your essays to UNA-Russia: 129010, Moscow, 36, Prospekt Mira. Essays should be no longer than 5-7 printed pages. The deadline for sending essays is 1

March 2006. Participants not older than 18 on 1 August 2006. The authors of the best works will be invited to Moscow to take part in the second stage of the competition.

The winners of the competition will have special privileges entering MGIMO University.

For further information please visit UNA-Russia official web-page: www.una.ru

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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 / The Film We Need Now

Presentation of the film "The City Without Sun" by Sergey Potyomkin in the Moscow House of Cinema took place on 1 December to coincide with World AIDS Day. The film is about our young contemporaries who die from drugs and AIDS, and who need love, compassion and support to go on living.

UNDP / Statement by UNDP Administrator on World AIDS Day

"This year on World AIDS Day let us Keep the Promise, and working together let us Stop AIDS, as the World AIDS Campaign 2005 advocates," said Kemal Dervish in his message on World AIDS Day.

UNDP / How to Use the Multi-million Grants to Fight AIDS in CIS Countries

On 5-7 December, the Regional Workshop for CIS countries – recipients of grants of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria was held in Moscow with support from UNDP.

UNDP / Supporting Human Development in Central Asia

On 6 December 2005 in Moscow, UNDP presented the Central Asia Human Development Report 2005 Bringing Down Barriers: Regional Cooperation for Human Development and Human Security, prepared by a group of experts under the guidance of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS.

OCHA/North Caucasus: International Aid in Transition

The UN and NGOs appeal for US \$88 million for assistance in the North Caucasus in 2006, putting more focus on development and recovery programmes, as defined in the 2006 Interagency Transitional Work Plan for the North Caucasus.

UNICEF / UNICEF and UNAIDS Launch Global Campaign against AIDS in Russia

The UNICEF/UNAIDS Global AIDS Campaign Unite for Children. Unite against AIDS was launched in Russia on 14 November 2005 to draw attention to the growing impact of the epidemic on children.

UNICEF / New Photo Exhibition 'Mines Are Hurting Children'

Opened in Moscow

A photo exhibition "Mines are Hurting Children" opened on 6 December 2005 in Moscow. The exhibition is devoted to children killed or injured by mines and other unexploded ordnance in Chechnya over the last 10 years.

UNICEF / The Impoverished Children in Russia

Families with children account for the majority of the poor population in Russia, and having more than one child increases chances of being poor by 50%, UNICEF report "Child Poverty in Russia says."

WFP / Walk the World Will Continue

Ending child hunger is a challenge that requires worldwide a multi-party effort sustained over time. Walk the World is an annual global walk to raise awareness and funds and encourage action to end child hunger.

UNFPA / Launch of the 2005 State of World Population Report

UNFPA presented in Moscow the State of World Population Report The Promise of Equality: Gender Equity, Reproductive Health and the Millennium Development Goals focusing on the equal opportunities for men and women.

UNHCR / Meeting of the CIS Conference Process

On 10 October 2005, the concluding meeting of the CIS Conference process Geneva brought to an end a ten-year process, which had helped the CIS countries to manage challenges in the areas of asylum, migration and displacement, and promote cooperation in this regard.

UNIC / Information Future

The second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society was held in Tunis in November. Control of the Internet was one of the central issues on the Summit agenda. The UN does not plan to 'take over' the Internet, instead stands for its global reach.

UNESCO / International Conference in the Kremlin: How to Safeguard Cultural Heritage

On 25-27 November, the international conference Innovative Policies for Heritage Safeguarding and Cultural Tourism Development was held in the Moscow Kremlin with the support from UNESCO Moscow Office.

UNESCO / To Keep Lake Baikal Clean

A joint UNESCO/IUCN mission visited Lake Baikal to assess the state of conservation of the site. It was followed by a meeting in the Ministry of Natural Resources where the mission presented its recommendations.

UNDP / Results of the Global Microentrepreneurship Awards Competition Announced

On 1 December 2005 in St. Petersburg, the awards ceremony of the Global Microentrepreneurship Awards Competition, held in Russia from August to November 2005, took place in the framework of the IV National Conference Microfinance in Russia: Successful Strategies for Economic Growth.

WHO / Patient Safety: A Global Challenge

More and more countries consider issues of patient safety a top political priority. The World Alliance for Patient Safety facilitates analysis of information on patient health harm and implementation of the outcomes of the research to upgrade safety of medical care.

WHO / GFATM Funds Are Coming to Fight TB in Russia

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will provide \$ 49.5 million to Russia from 1 December 2005. The project will cover both civil and penal sectors with trainings in TB control, infrastructure development, and improvement of laboratory diagnostics of TB, TB/HIV control, and MDR TB control.

UNA-Russia / Write to the President about the UN Reform

The topic for the next annual essay competition, organized by the United Nations Association of Russia, is "UN in the 21st Century". Young participants will have an opportunity to give their opinion on how the UN should work after the reform.



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 |