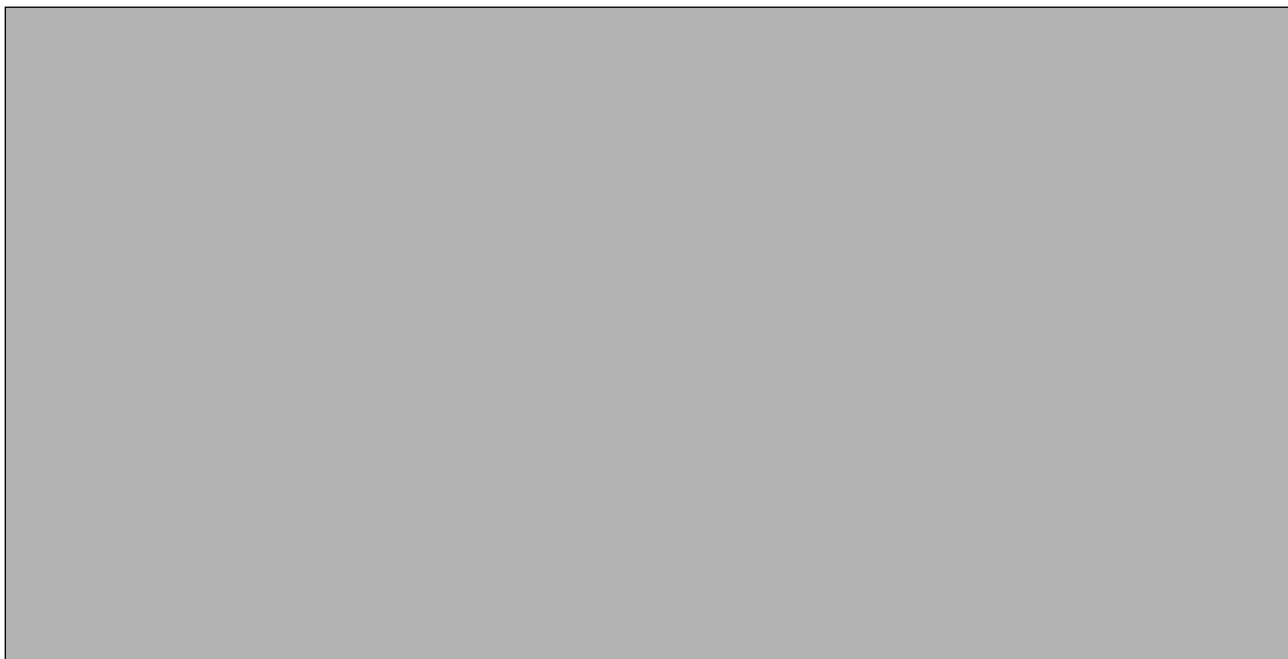




UN in RUSSIA

Activities for Sustainable Human Development



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Visit of the UNESCO Director-General, Koïtiro Matsuura, to Russia

The UNESCO Director-General visited the Russian Federation for the second time 25–26 November 2003 on the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir Putin. The programme of the visit included a meeting of Mr. Matsuura with Mr. Putin, the participation of the UNESCO Director-General in the meeting of the Presidential Council for Culture and Art, a meeting with the First Deputy Prime-Minister of the Russian Federation, Ms. Galina Karelova, and participation at the ceremony of awarding Mr. Matsuura with the title of Honorary Professor of Moscow State University.



Mr. Vladimir Putin greets Mr. Koïtiro Matsuura in the Kremlin

Art in the presence of ministers, including First Deputy Prime-Minister of RF, Ms. Karelova, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Ivanov, Minister of Culture, Mr. Shvydkoy, as well as Chairperson of the Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, Mr. Fortov, Permanent Delegate of the Russian Federation to UNESCO, Mr. Kalamonov, Assistant to the UNESCO Director-General for Culture, Mr. Bouchenaki, Director of the UNESCO Moscow Office, Mr. Quéau, and other representatives of the UNESCO Headquarters.

After the meeting with Mr. Putin in the Kremlin Koïtiro Matsuura made a speech at the Council for Culture and

Opening the meeting, President

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UN Millennium Development Goals Open Perspectives for Russian Regions

A regional forum "UN Millennium Development Goals - Perspectives for the North-Western Region" was held in Syktyvkar, Komi Republic, on 20 November 2003 with support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The forum became one more of UNDP efforts to mobilize support for reaching Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the regional level in Russia and to help regional authorities and communities use the MDGs as tools in establishing their development priorities. Representatives of the Komi Republic authorities, public sector, education institutions, academia and mass media participated in this meeting. A UN Country Team delegation, headed by Mr Eric Brunat, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, on behalf of Mr Stefan Vassilev, UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative took active part in the forum's work as well. UN in Russia presents an extract of Mr Brunat's speech addressed the participants of the forum.



Mr Eric Brunat, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative addresses the forum's participants

The new century opened with an unprecedented declaration of solidarity and determination to rid the world of poverty – let's remind that at the beginning of this century a child of less than ten years dies of hunger each 7 seconds, as well as around 100,000 people a day! In 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration, adopted at the largest-ever gathering of heads of state, committed countries – rich and poor – to doing their best to eradicate poverty, promote human dignity and equality and achieve peace, democracy and environmental sustainability. At the 2000 summit the UN General Assembly also asked the UN Secretary General to prepare a road map for achieving the Declaration's commitments. The resulting 8 UN Millennium Development Goals, to be reached by 2015 or earlier, are as follows:

- Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty;

- Achieve universal primary education;
- Promote gender equality and empower women;
- Reduce child mortality;
- Improve maternal health;
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases;
- Ensure environmental sustainability;
- Develop a global partnership for development.

The Millennium Development Goals' message is simple: escaping poverty traps requires countries to reach certain critical thresholds – for health, education, infrastructure and governance – that will enable them to achieve sustainable human and economic growth. These thresholds, in turn, can be reached only through stronger partnerships among all development actors and through increased international action, including trade expansion, debt relief, technology transfers and aid provision.

The Millennium Development Goals are not proposing yet another panacea or one-size-fits-all solution to the world's problems. Rather the MDGs seek to highlight the key areas of intervention that should guide national efforts and international support. The MDGs also provide a means for benchmarking and assessing development progress. Any policy reforms, institutional changes or budget reallocations may be implemented in a more efficient manner if centered on concrete time-bound objectives.

Among the Millennium Development Goals, Goal No. 1 (halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty) occupies the most prominent position. Today, more than 1.2 billion people – one in every five on Earth – survive on less than USD 1 a day.

The world needs a clear understanding of why global poverty endures, where and what the biggest obstacles are and what needs to be done to address them. A lack of sustained poverty-reducing growth has been identified as one of the major obstacles to achieving a significant reduction of poverty. Economic growth alone is not enough. Growth can be ruthless or it can be poverty-reducing – depending on its pattern, on structural aspects of the economy and public policies. Consider that, according to UN statistics, poverty has increased in some countries that actually have achieved overall economic growth, and over the past two decades, income actually worsened in 33 of 66 developing countries.

Therefore, all countries – especially those that are doing well on average but with entrenched pockets of poverty – should implement policies that strengthen the links between economic growth and poverty reduction. Growth is more likely to benefit poor people if it is broadly based rather than concentrated in a few sectors or regions, if it is labour intensive (as in agriculture) rather than capital intensive (as in oil) and if government revenues are invested in human development such as basic



Meeting with Mr Ivan Kulakov, Chairman of the State Council of the Komi Republic

health, education, nutrition and water and sanitation services. Growth is less likely to benefit poor people if it is narrowly based, if it neglects human development or if it discriminates in the provision of public services against rural areas, certain regions, ethnic groups or women.

Meeting the Millennium Development Goals should start with the recognition that each country must pursue a development strategy that meets its specific needs. Only through a systematic assessment of what is needed for efforts to be properly resourced, and for services to be distributed more fairly and efficiently, can governments assume the full responsibility for the well-being of their citizens and meet international commitments.

Civil society groups – from community organizations to professional associations, women’s groups and networks of non-governmental organizations – have an important role to help implement and monitor progress towards the Goals. Indeed, the momentum for policy change must come from a country’s people, pressing for more schools, better health care, improved water supplies and other essential elements of development. The Goals provide an entry point for applying such pressure. They also empower communities and people to hold authorities accountable by offering a scorecard to assess the performance of political leaders - from local to national government officials.

The private sector is similarly an important player in the development process as it creates jobs and raises incomes. Private businesses should support the Millennium Development Goals in a variety of ways: through corporate philanthropy, technology transfers, greater investment, etc.

National efforts, both public and private, may still leave a large resource gap in terms of Millennium Development Goals implementation. Filling this gap may require additional technical and financial assistance, which can be made available through international organizations such as the UN.

Through expert assistance in designing and implementing development programmes, UN Agencies play a vital role in helping countries meet the Millennium Development Goals. Each of the main UN Agencies has developed a plan of action for helping the countries implement their national strategies.

The UN system also has a global role to play. It is mobilized to:

- Monitor progress globally;
- Track progress nationally;
- Identify key obstacles to the Goals – and solutions;
- Engage broad segments of society around the world through the Millennium Campaign.

Millennium Development Goals monitoring takes place at the global and country

levels. At the global level, the Secretary General is to report annually to the General Assembly on progress towards a sub-set of the MDGs and to report more comprehensively every two years. These reports support a dynamic campaign to help keep poverty issues centre on the national and global development agenda.

The world has made tremendous progress in its knowledge and practice of development policies. The Millennium Development Goals aim to bring this knowledge and practice together in a more coherent framework that recognizes the need for a multi-pronged approach to addressing the roots of development problems and significant progress has been made based on the promises of partnership in recent international declarations. By adopting the MDGs, all countries reaffirmed their readiness to accept the responsibilities of their commitments. Bilateral donors, international organizations, UN specialized agencies, private actors and civil society organizations should step forward with bold specific commitments and actions to ensure success in reaching the Millennium Development Goals.



The UN Country Team delegation and Ms Damira Sarbaeva, Director of Regional Office for CIS countries of UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (second from the right) meet Mr Vladimir Torlopov, Head of the Republic of Komi (centre)

UNFPA Executive Director Visits Russia



Mrs. Thoraya Obaid

The official visit of the UNFPA Executive Director Mrs. Thoraya Obaid to the Russian Federation took place on 4–7 October 2003 and was aimed at reviewing the current status of population and development issues and advocating for greater recognition of pressing population and reproductive health issues in the country. The UNFPA Executive Director was accompanied by Mrs. Ann Erb Leoncavallo, the UNFPA Information Officer and Mr. Ramiz Alakbarov, UNFPA Programme



The Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Yuri Fedotov greets the UNFPA Executive Director

Specialist, Division for Arab States and Europe, Mr. Vassiliy Nebenzya, Deputy Director of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Mrs. Lidia Bardakova, UNFPA Officer in Charge.

Mrs. Obaid visited St. Petersburg, which is one of the project fields, well known for its youth-friendly services and HIV prevention among vulnerable groups, such as commercial sex workers. It is also one of the regions of piloting project on population development strategy.

In the course of her visit the Executive Director met with the acting Governor of St. Petersburg, the Vice-Governor in charge of health and social services, the Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, and various officials of the social and health department of the St. Petersburg municipality.

The UNFPA team visited Youth Friendly Clinic “Juventa”. It offers comprehensive health services, including reproductive healthcare, and prevention, educational and social/psychological rehabilitation services.

The visit to the clinic was continued with a meeting with youth volunteers and representatives of the NGO “Humanitarian Action”. Volunteers and the NGO made a comprehensive presentation of their joint project.

“Humanitarian Action” is a non-government organization concerned with HIV/AIDS prevention among street youth and intravenous drug users. The need to implement some joint activi-

ties with YFC “Juventa” arises from the fact that adolescents using drugs need to be referred for reproductive health services to the clinic. The “Juventa” Youth Friendly Clinic and “Humanitarian Action” were presented with UNFPA certificates of recognition and appreciation.

In Moscow UNFPA Executive Director had meetings with represen-



The main physician of “Juventa” Clinic Professor Pavel Krotin is presented with UNFPA Certificate of recognition and appreciation

tatives of such UNFPA partners as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, the Ministry of Health, the State Duma, the State Committee on Statistics, and NGOs.

At the meeting in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs Mr. Yuri Fedotov, the Deputy Minister recognized the importance of external assistance to the Russian Federation in stabilizing the population, encouraging higher fertility, reinforcing the family through family support policies and practices, improving reproductive health services, and optimizing migration processes.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Development is the lead agency in the country responsible for population and social policies. Minister Al-

exander Pochinok recognized a fruitful cooperation between the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and UNFPA in supporting the demographic policy. The example of such policy could be a new project "Strengthening of National Capacity in the Development and Implementation of Regional Population Development Strategy". This project was signed on 1 July 2003 and is implemented in four regions: St.Petersburg, Smolensk and Saratov regions, the Khanty-Mansiisk Autonomous Area.

Minister spoke about current population projections, which show an

through the provision of equipment and training. There are a number of other initiatives, including continuation of the project in the Smolensk region, the Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV Conference, and the preparation of ICPD + 10 report.



A heart-to-heart talk with Olga Sharapova



A Russian souvenir from Alexander Pochinok

annual decline in population of 700,000 persons, and a progressive decline in the labour force. Mr. Alexander Pochinok noted that one of the possible ways to resolve the economic impact of negative population growth is to encourage migration from neighboring countries, and to ensure the legal status of migrants.

During the meeting with the Deputy Minister of Health, Ms. Olga Sharapova it was stressed that UNFPA enjoys good cooperation with the Ministry of Health, which has been implementing UNFPA funded projects since 1999.

UNFPA was working with the Ministry of Health on improvement of reproductive health services

The meeting with the Chairman of the State Duma Committee on public health and sport Mr. Nikolai Gerasimenko focused on the new abortion regulations approved by the Government and restrictions on the availability of services, as well as the overall support

that the Duma is providing to reproductive health and rights law-making.

At the meeting Mr. Gerasimenko noted that the relationship with Russian Family Planning Association was cordial and welcomed UNFPA participation in drafting legislation on reproductive health and reproductive rights if necessary.

There were a few other important meetings with the Chairman of the State Statistics Committee Mr. Sokolin, the Chairman of the CIS Statistics Committee Mr. Korolev, President of Russian Family Planning Association Ms. Inga Grebeshcheva, and working lunch with the UN Country Team in UNFPA Office in Moscow.



Meeting with volunteers and representatives of NGO "Humanitarian Action"

United Nations and NGOs Present their Assistance Programme for Chechnya and Neighbouring Republics in 2004

On 19 November 2003 in Moscow, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) presented the 2004 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Chechnya and Neighbouring Republics (North Caucasus – Russian Federation) for humanitarian assistance to the civilian population affected by the events in the Republic of Chechnya seeking about US \$ 62 million from the international donor community.

This year, for the first time, 12 NGOs have appealed for funds through CAP. The Appeal is part of a global effort launched by the UN Secretary-General in New York on 18 November to help save the lives of some 45 million people in 21 of the world's worst crises.

Four years after the resumption of hostilities, extreme violence continues to have a devastating effect on the lives of civilians in Chechnya. A climate characterized by frequent dis-

appearances, summary executions, rape, torture, and terrorist bombings has caused many civilians to live in fear. Serious security incidents have also occurred in Chechnya's neighbouring republics. Hostilities have destroyed much of Chechnya's economic and social infrastructure creating a dire humanitarian situation. Most people in Chechnya are unemployed, and a vast majority live below the poverty line.

Despite the government work to rehabilitate infrastructure in 2003, much remains to be done to ensure the availability of shelter to all and the functioning of public services at minimum levels. Because of instability, displaced persons in Ingushetia may be unwilling to return to Chechnya in 2004 and could seek to stay where they are until the situation improves.

To meet the needs of the civilian population, the aid community will

pursue the dual objectives of providing relief and recovery assistance to alleviate suffering, while building capacity of local civil society and government structures.

The current level of federal and local government assistance in Chechnya and Ingushetia needs to be complemented by additional relief and recovery aid to sustain life in dignity for about 1,220,000 affected persons in the region.

The right to seek safe haven in other regions of the Russian Federation, in particular in Ingushetia, and to return to Chechnya voluntarily will remain central to the programme of the humanitarian community.

Various UN agencies and NGOs plan to continue working in the sectors of protection, food, shelter and non-food (clothes, footwear, household articles, hygienic items, etc.), health, water and sanitation, education, mine awareness, and economic recovery. The UN Field Security Coordinator's Office manages staff safety and security arrangements.

The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), facilitates overall coordination of humanitarian agencies in Chechnya and neighbouring republics of the Russian Federation.

Further information on the humanitarian activity in the region is available at the OCHA Office in Moscow and Nazran or on OCHA web-site:

www.ocha.ru



UN Humanitarian Coordinator a.i., Dr Mikko Viononen, presents the 2004 Appeal to representatives of the government (N. Chulkov, MFA, on the photo), donor and humanitarian community

UNHCR Assisted Ex-Inhabitants of Alina Camp in Ingushetia

On 11 December 2003 the last displaced Chechens remaining in Camp A (Alina camp) in Ingushetia relocated to Camp C (Satsita camp).

The Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation had decided to close Alina camp, and the authorities stated that camp residents who did not wish to return to Chechnya at this stage could move to alternative accommodation in Satsita camp or in rehabilitated rooms in temporary settlements. Camp A is the third tent camp for displaced Chechens in Ingushetia to be closed in last and this years.

Of the 818 displaced people who remained in Alina camp at the beginning of December, 351 people relocated to Satsita, 166 moved to temporary settlements in Ingushetia and

another 75 went to stay with relatives or friends in Ingushetia. A total of 226 people returned from Alina camp to Chechnya, primarily to temporary accommodation centres, from December 1 to 11.

New tents were provided in Satsita camp for the displaced people relocating from Alina. UNHCR provided 41 tents for the families, and Médecins Sans Frontières–Holland provided 30 tents. MSF–Belgium and MSF–France assisted with the flooring and installation of 25 of the tents. UNHCR provided eight additional tents for school and medical facilities in the camp. While some technical problems with electricity and gas supplies occurred during the relocation, the utilities were functioning in all camps (including Alina) on December 11.



At Satsita camp in Ingushetia

As of early December, there were nearly 70,000 displaced Chechens in Ingushetia, according to the database of UNHCR's implementing partner the Danish Refugee Council. Some 7,900 were sheltered in tent camps and the remainder in temporary settlements or private accommodation.

Award to Sergio Vieira de Mello

Tuesday 19 August 2003 was one of the darkest moments in the UN's history. The unprecedented attack against the UN on that day took the lives of 22 of our colleagues and friends and badly injured many others. Sergio Vieira de Mello, the former Assistant High Commissioner on Refugees, was among the victims. He was a great colleague and a dear friend for many of UNHCR staff during his over 30 years of tireless, passionate work in the service of refugees and humanity.

On 11 December 2003, Sergio Vieira de Mello received posthumous award "For the Protection of Human Rights" from the Russian Federation Commissioner for Human Rights Oleg Mironov. A picture of Sergio was displayed on the podium.

The annual ceremony is traditionally taking place on the 11 December, between 10 December, UN Human Rights Day, and 12 December, Day of the RF Constitution. A representative of the UNHCR Moscow Of-

fice collected the award (a medal and a diploma) on behalf of Sergio. The diploma is awarded to Sergio in "recognition of his personal contribution to international efforts for the protection of human rights".

Besides S. V. de Mello some 20 Russian personalities and organisations were awarded for their activities in favour of human rights, including one Chechen NGO, several regional ombudsmen and famous film director Nikita Mikhalkov.

International Film Festival on Human Rights

UNHCR took part in the IX International Film Festival on Human Rights held in Moscow during 10–17 December 2003. For the last six years UNHCR has been a sponsor of the festival. One of the festival programmes "Cinematography on

Guard of Refugees' Rights" contributes to a better understanding of refugees' situation by the public at large. Teenagers from various regions who had shot documentaries about refugees and migrants for the first time participated in this pro-

gramme. UNHCR awarded the best of those documentaries. Gennady Sidorov, actor, producer and film director received the UNHCR prize "For coverage of the protection of refugees' rights in cinema" for his fiction movie "Old Women".

(Continued from p. 1)

Vladimir Putin stressed that this meeting will be devoted to international aspects of the Russian policy in the field of culture and art and attracted attention to the participants on the “increased potential of Russia in the international cultural cooperation”. President underlined that “we could review the prospects of cooperation between Russia and UNESCO as well as other international organizations in the field of culture”.

In his speech the UNESCO Director-General expressed confidence in further successful cooperation between Russia and UNESCO. The Director-General presented the main goals of UNESCO in the field of culture, in particular activities as world heritage, preservation of cultural diversity and struggle against illicit traffic of cultural values.

Mr. Matsuura mentioned successful cooperation between the Organization and the Hermitage. “We have started the new project of this museum’s development, which could become a symbol of the universal ideal of preservation of the world cultural traditions”, – he underlined. Mr. Matsuura reminded statesmen of the need to ratify international instruments focused on protection of cultural heritage and passing legislation for protection and preservation of historical heritage and cultural diversity. During the meeting of the Council Koïtiro Matsuura presented the flagship project “Remember the Future” which is focused on preservation and development of television and radio archives. CD and DVD “Masterpieces of world classic music” from the collection of Russian State TV Radio archive (Gosteleradiofond) – the first achievement of the project – were presented to members of the

Council and President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin by the UNESCO Director-General.

During the ceremony of awarding Mr. Matsuura with the title of Honorary Professor of Moscow State University, the future promising joint project of Moscow State University and UNESCO was presented. The project named “Open Courseware Initiative” foresees the creation of a web-site where coursewares based on MSU courses and lectures will be placed for free and open access. Koïtiro Matsuura, announcing the agreement of counterparts of the project, highlighted the great role of this line of development of higher education. Implementation of this project, as he mentioned, will become an important achievement in the field of providing general access to “academic treasures” of the most prestigious university in Russia.

Meeting of the “Scientific” Advisory Committee of the UNESCO Volga Initiative

On November 20-21, 2003 the UNESCO Moscow Office hosted a meeting of the scientific representatives of the Advisory Committee to the UNESCO Project “Sustainable Development of the Volga Basin and the Caspian Sea”. The meeting was organized to discuss and comment

the first draft of the Volga Vision document. Among the participants attending the meeting were representatives of the State Duma Committee on Ecology, the Nizhny Novgorod UNESCO Chair, the Russian National Committees of the 5 Inter-governmental Scientific Programmes

of UNESCO and selected international experts. The meeting recognized that the Vision could potentially serve as a benchmark document to donors and assist in the formulation of project proposals. A final version of the document shall be presented to the public in May 2004.

UNA – Russia
United Nations Association of Russia

Students and Journalists Discuss the Present and Future of the UN



The youth section of the UN Association of Russia (UNA-Russia) marked United Nations Day, October 24, by organizing a meeting between students and journalists, “The

United Nations Today and Tomorrow,” at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Yulii Vorontsov, a member of the presidium of the UNA-Russia, was the meeting’s organizer. Taking part in the debates were leading political observers and commentators from both television and the press: Sergei Brilev, from TV Rossiya; Stanislav

Kucher, from TV Tsentr; Igor Fedukin, from the daily newspaper *Vedomosti*; and others. Among the questions they were asked were: In your opinion, is the UN still alive? What is Russia’s place in the UN? Is this place adequate to today’s realities, and does Russia really need it? What do you think the future of the UN is?

During the meeting, the UN’s role as a necessary instrument of world

UNA – Russia

United Nations Association of Russia

politics as a whole was especially emphasized – as a unique forum for negotiations on an extraordinarily wide range of issues, and as an extremely valuable instrument and medium for Russia's foreign policy in particular.

The participants noted the need for the gradual, consistent, and rational reform of the UN. One point of view expressed was that the administrative component of the UN, rather than its current political

structure, ought to be subject to reform first. Those present freely expressed their opinions on the issues being discussed, and a lively debate ensued.

Announcing the UN Association of Russia's Competition 2004

The UN Association of Russia announces this year's competition for the best composition. Young people 18 and younger (as of May 1, 2004) are invited to express their thoughts on the place and role of the United Nations in the contemporary world.

Compositions should be submitted no later than February 15, 2004, to the following address: Moscow 129010 / Prospekt Mira 36 / The UN Association of Russia / *Competition 2004*.

You can find the Competition's terms at the UNA-Russia website: www.una.ru

UNICEF

UN Children's Fund

Robbie Williams: Solo for Children

World-famous singer and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Robbie Williams visited Moscow this November. Along with doing a concert at the Olympic Stadium, Mr Williams had a special programme of his own: getting acquainted with UNICEF's programmes for the protection of children's rights.

Robbie Williams has been working with the UN Children's Fund for several years now. One of the most important joint projects has been the filming of short TV spot against the exploitation of children in all its forms.



Robbie Williams while playing football with Russian children

It was decided in Moscow to show him the programme for protecting the rights of children who find themselves living under difficult circumstances. At the forefront of this programme is the problem of child neglect-which, according to some estimates, affects more than 30,000 youngsters in the Russian capital alone.

Vera Barbysheva, a worker at the city's Street Children centre (a long-time partner of UNICEF in implementing this programme in Moscow), coordinates the work of streetwise professional and volunteer social workers. These are professional teachers and students from Moscow's institutions of higher education who go out on raids at train stations and other places where street children can congregate. Groups of abandoned children are constantly on the move, exchanging cellars for crawlspaces under roofs and hiding from the police, and usually don't like to publicize their places of refuge.

Vera Barbysheva managed to get a group

of homeless teenagers to agree to show the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador where they were living, and to tell him what their lives were like.

Sasha is 15 years old, and he ought to be living in a children's home in Tambov Region. Only, he doesn't like it there: the careworkers make him go to school, study his lessons, and perform whatever housekeeping duties he's scheduled for. This is why Sasha regularly runs away from his children's home and heads for Moscow. For the last six months, Sasha has been living in the capital, sleeping in railway cars at a depot and in an empty garage.

It was to the garage in one of the complexes at Krasnaya Presnya that the English singer came. The day was cold and overcast, and it had started to rain. Inside the garage, it was even darker and more uncomfortable than usual, even though Sasha had prepared for the visit: he had folded his dirty rags into a pile, swept up a bit, and even bought some candles. Robbie Williams easily slid through a narrow chink made in the back door of the garage and crouched down on the floor.

(To be continued on p. 10)

(Continued from p. 9)

Sasha then said that he didn't believe until the last minute that he'd be meeting *the* Robbie Williams whose posters were pasted up all over town. Sasha wasn't used to grownups keeping their word and coming to see him on his territory. He was a bit flustered at first, but the singer kept himself natural and interested as the conversation progressed, as though he had been crawling into dirty garages and talking to street children all his life. Mr Williams wanted to know what it was like not going to school and not working; to be constantly on the move and to live in fear of being arrested by the police. He didn't try to lecture Sasha at all—on the contrary, he listened to what the boy had to say with kindness, understanding, and support.



A little girl senses a kindred spirit in Robbie Williams

One of UNICEF's tasks is to show the problem of street children from various angles. After meeting with Sasha, the UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador traveled to where he, just like all the other children who find themselves living under difficult conditions, will always be welcome: the Otradnoye Social Rehabilitation Centre for Minors, together with which the UN Children's Fund has long and successfully worked to protect the rights of children. They have just launched a joint project, "In Whose Hands is the Fate of a Child?" The project calls for the training of new personnel and the swapping of experiences by social workers from Moscow, Kaliningrad, and Orenburg. The Otradnoye

centre is playing the role of experimental workshop for developing collaboration between different agencies. Otradnoye opened in 1997 as a children's shelter. Since it has been operating, it has helped more than 2,000 children and adolescents. In 2003, Otradnoye was reorganized as a rehabilitation centre with a separate shelter, and the accent now is on the children's family situation. Around 100 children aged three to eighteen live at the centre today. Approximately 50 children from poor and dysfunctional families come there daily from nearby homes.

When their guest arrived at Otradnoye, it was raining for real, and the children were a bit put out: their scheduled football game would have to be cancelled. However, the singer wouldn't think of turning down a match: he exchanged his own footwear for one of his managers' athletic shoes, and headed at a

run for the football field. The children played as hard as they could, giving no quarter either to themselves or to the singing star. Robbie Williams finally wound up on the ground; however, this neither troubled nor stopped him.

"You play really well!" he told both his teammates and opponents. "I haven't run that fast for ten years now! I think Manchester United'll soon have to worry about being beaten by some strong new footballers in the world arena."

The children took their guest into the centre. He inspected the bedrooms and living areas, talked with some of the younger children, listened to how one of the older kids played the piano, and mentioned that he composed his own songs exactly the same way: he just sits behind his piano for long periods at a time and repeats the same melody over and over. The promising young pianist and the football players were all once street kids, just like Sasha in his garage. They found the strength within themselves to start a new life—to grasp the helping hand being offered by grownups and to make up for lost time.

The neighbours of a little girl who had been abandoned by her mother



A souvenir for the English guest: from Russia with love

UNICEF
UN Children's Fund

brought her to the centre. At the age of four, she practically could not talk, could barely walk, and was truly unmanageable. After several months at Otradnoye, she has begun to emerge from her shell and become a different person. One cannot say that all of her problems have been solved –unfortunately, the first few years of her life so precious for development were lost – but she is talking, playing with the other children, and no longer curls up in

the corner. Mr Williams was deeply touched by the child's history; meanwhile, she sensed in him a kindred spirit and boldly threw herself around his knees, even though she normally shies away from strange adults.

The singer said that he enjoyed his day very much. This was obvious, even



Everyone wants to get autograph of the world-famous singer



Robbie Williams: solo for children

without words: it was difficult to get him away from the football field, and then from the concert that the children gave in his honour. He indulged in a couple of delicious pies baked by aspiring chefs and, to everyone's delight, even started to sing. Perhaps most important, however, was that the children sensed the powerful charge of support from a famous singing

star: "Don't feel as though you've got nothing to live for. Don't write yourselves off. Yes, you've had a hard time, and a lot of the fault is yours, but that was yesterday. I'm just like you: I understand everything and I really believe that tomorrow everything will be okay for you."

A huge team of adult professionals from UNICEF, the Fund's partners, and (of course) such famous people as UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Robbie Williams are working so that everything will be all right for these children, and for others like them.

Telebridge Brings People Together in the Fight Against AIDS

The UN Children's Fund organized the "Moscow and Twelve Regions of Russia" telebridge for December 1, the World AIDS Day.

A pointed and timely real-time dialogue between representatives of UNICEF, the RF ministries of health and education, non-profit organizations, and journalists is now possible, thanks to our modern means of communication. They gathered in various places around the country, including Moscow, Irkutsk, Novosibirsk, Barnaul, Chelyabinsk, Yoshkar-Ola, Krasnoyarsk, Omsk, Arkhangelsk, Belgorod, and Rostov.

The main topics for discussion was the problem of abandoned children born to mothers infected with HIV (there are 6,300 such children in Russia today), and preventative work with teenagers and young adults. Each day, around 100 people are infected with HIV in Russia.

Those who took part in the telebridge debated how to correctly inform and warn the population in order to stop the spread of the epidemic. Tigran Yepoyan, the coordinator of such UNICEF projects, presented a programme for informing young adults about HIV/AIDS, one which is now being implemented jointly by UNICEF and its partner organizations in Novosibirsk, Irkutsk, and Irkutsk oblast.

Dr Yevgeny Voronin, a physician and head doctor of the Republic Clinical Hospital for Infectious Diseases, dwelled at length on his experience in collaborating with UNICEF to see to the social and educational needs of abandoned children born to HIV-infected mothers. With UNICEF's help, teachers specializing in child development now come to the wards of the hospital where 35 such youngsters have lived for several years now. The one thing on which everyone agrees is that the children

have been transformed. This, however, is still not the solution to the problem. Such children must be integrated into society, and they must be allowed to go to ordinary nursery schools and attend regular primary schools. Neither bureaucrats nor the public are ready for this.

The guests assembled in the studios were shown video clips of the abandoned children and young people affected with HIV. The telebridge ended with an appeal to young people from UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador Oleg Gazmanov.



The Eighth Meeting of the High-Level Working Group on Tuberculosis in the Russian Federation



Deputy Minister of Health of the Russian Federation Professor Ruslan Khalfin addresses the HLWG meeting's participants

The 8th meeting of the High-Level Working Group (HLWG) was held in the Russian Ministry of Health on 20 November 2003. The meeting was chaired by Deputy Minister of Health of the Russian Federation Professor Ruslan Khalfin and Special Representative of the WHO Director-General in Russia Dr Mikko Vienonen. The following HLWG members participated in the meeting: Chief TB Specialist of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation Academician Michael Perelman, Deputy Head of the Directorate of Corrections, Head of the Medical Department of the Ministry of Jus-

tice of the Russian Federation Major-General Alexander Ko-nonets, Director of Central TB Research Institute, the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences Prof Vladislav Erokhin, Director of Stop TB Department, Communicable Diseases, WHO Headquarters Dr Mario Raviglione and Regional Adviser for TB, WHO Regional Office for Europe Dr Richard Zaleskis, representatives of the Russian health care authorities and international organizations.

This meeting differed much from the previous ones as the most disputable issues were touched upon giving raise to a hot discussion. Besides discussion of the report of HLWG activities in 2003, report of some Thematic Working Groups' (TWG) activities (TB surveillance and monitoring, laboratory services, TB in HIV-infected persons), report on the activities of the Advisory Board of the Interagency Coordination Committee (ICC) information on the preparation of the application to the Global

Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) regarding TB component was presented. A representative of the Russian Health Care Foundation made a presentation on the implementation of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development loan Project on TB and HIV/AIDS control.

Reports on multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR TB) and on the Medecins sans Frontieres (MSF)/Belgium TB Control project in Kemerovo resulted in an extremely animated discussion. Problem of MDR TB becomes more and more topical and calls for urgent actions to be undertaken by both Russian and international experts. Therefore common approaches to treatment of MDR TB should be finally agreed upon in the shortest possible time.

The 8th meeting has vividly proved the efficacy of the HLWG activities especially when coping with difficult and disputable issues. It has demonstrated close cooperation between Russian and international experts who openly discuss problems and jointly find the best possible solutions.

Russian and International Partners Meet To Mobilize Resources for TB and HIV/AIDS Control

On 21 November 2003 the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation hosted the Meeting of the Russian and International Partners on Resources Mobilization for TB and HIV/AIDS in the Russian Federation held on the initiative of the Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization (WHO), and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The main aim of the meeting was to attract additional financial and technical resources to improve effectiveness of TB control activities in the Russian Federation.

70 representatives of the leading TB research institutes, regional HIV/AIDS prevention and control centers as well as 48 representatives of the international agencies involved into joint TB control projects in the Russian Federation participated in the meeting. Representatives of some embassies and officials from the WHO Regional Office for Europe and WHO Headquarters were among the participants. Chief TB specialists of the Federal Districts, deputy heads of local administrations, health care officials and chief TB doctors from the regions implementing WHO TB Control projects, representatives of the

Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representatives of the military and medical departments of the Federal Security Services and the Russian Ministry of Defense, representatives of the Social Development Department of the Government of the Russian Federation, Health and Sports Committee of the State Duma as well as representatives of the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture took part in the work of the meeting.

Deputy Minister of Health of the Russian Federation Professor Rus-



Dr Ruslan Khalfin (left) and Dr Mikko Viononen (centre) are ready to develop further the cooperation on TB control in Russia

Ian Khalfin opened the meeting passing the message of the Minister of Health Yuri Shevshenko who wished fruitful work and emphasized importance and actuality of that meeting.

Chief TB Specialist of the Ministry of Health of the Russian Federation Academician Michael Perelman; Deputy Head of the Directorate of Corrections, Head of the Medical Department of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation Major-General Alexander Kononets; Co-chairperson of the ICC Advisory Board, TB Control Programme Manager, Health Office of the United States Agency of International Development Dr Nikita Afanasiev; Country Director for Russia of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development Mr Julian Schweitzer; Special Representative of the WHO Director-General in Russia Dr Mikko Viononen and Director of Stop TB Department, Communicable Diseases, WHO Headquarters Dr Mario Raviglione addressed the participants of the meeting with welcoming speech.

In the course of the meeting the significance of the HLWG on TB, established on the initiative of the Ministry of Health and WHO, was repeatedly stressed. In his speech Academician Michael Perelman mentioned that “the HLWG is a unique mechanism for discussion and making rational decisions that can be applied to the fields of public health and med-

icine to cope with the other existing problems”. Academician Michael Perelman stressed that “continuation of the HLWG activities in Russia is of great importance and the experience gained can be used by the developed and developing countries”.

Divided into two working groups the participants of

the meeting discussed mobilization of resources and role of technical agencies in supporting training, supervision and monitoring during the implementation the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development loan Project on TB and AIDS Control and within the implementation of the Five-Year Plan “Provision of Guaranteed Diagnostic and Treatment Procedures for TB Patients and Development of TB Services in Russia”. The participants of the meeting agreed on the priori-

ties of the international cooperation in implementation of TB control activities in the Russian Federation.

International partners treated these goals with understanding and expressed their intention to consider possibilities of providing financial support needed for implementation of the Five-Year Plan, accomplishment of the National TB control strategy revision and functioning of all the strategic components.

The success achieved in Russia can serve as an example of effective implementation of TB control activities carried out under the leadership of the state bodies and provided that coordination of efforts of all the governmental and non-governmental organizations is in place.



The participants of the Meeting

World Health Organization (WHO) works with others to improve the health of population, by helping Member States. WHO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with 192 Member States. WHO Headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland. The European Regional Bureau is in Copenhagen, Denmark.

WHO 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.

For further information please visit

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Launch of the WHO “3 by 5” Initiative

On December 1, 2003 World AIDS Day, World Health Organization launched its initiative to massively increase access to treatment against HIV/AIDS (so called antiretroviral therapy). By the end of 2005 3 million people who need it should get it. WHO office in Russia arranged a press conference in Moscow to launch this new “3 by 5” initiative.

The panel of experts was represented by Dr Gennady Onischenko, First Deputy Minister of Health, Professor Lars Kallings, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe, Dr Vladimir Lepakhin, Assistant of WHO Director-General, Dr Mikko Vienonen, Special Representative of the WHO Director-General in Russia, Mr Flavio Mirella, UNODC Representative in Russia, Mr Igor Pchelin, Editor-in-Chief of the magazine “Steps”, representing people who are living with HIV and AIDS, and UN Country Team on HIV/AIDS. Dr Andrew Ball from WHO/HQ and Dr Irina Eramova from WHO/EURO were invited for providing technical response if such questions would have been raised.

The launch of the WHO “3 by 5” initiative is a historical event in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, as the global emergency. Such historical moments took place in the past when

WHO took a leading role in eradication of small pox, poliomyelitis, etc.

Of 36–46 millions of people living with HIV/AIDS globally, estimated by UNAIDS, from 1,2 to 1,8 millions live in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Introduction of highly active antiretroviral treatment since 1995 has tremendously decreased AIDS mortality rate in the countries of Western Europe, and improved life quality of hundreds of thousands people. Today only 400,000 of 6 million people globally, who need treatment, receive it.

AIDS treatment gap is a global health emergency. To deliver antiretroviral treatment to the millions who need it, we must change the way we act. The WHO strategy in response to the global public health emergency would employ a simple two-pronged approach: 1) simplification and standardisation of treatment; 2) focus on countries with technical support and leveraging funding. Achieving “3 by 5” target requires a minimum US\$ 5,5 billion through the end of 2005.

HIV/AIDS prevention is inseparable from treatment. HIV is a threat to prosperity of the Russian Federation and a focus should be on young people. Growing movement of non-governmental organizations and involve-

ment of people living with HIV and AIDS are important components of overall response to HIV/AIDS epidemic.

First Deputy Minister of Health Dr Onischenko shared his concern regarding growing numbers of women

being infected with HIV, abandoned children born to them; high prevalence of hepatitis B and C in HIV infected people, which adds additional threat to demographic situation. Epidemic of injecting drug use and related to it HIV epidemic has already resulted in under recruitment into military service. Stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV and AIDS in Russia is a serious barrier in access to care. It is envisaged that in 2004 there will be up to 5000–7000 people more in addition to those who already need the treatment. 20 antiretroviral (ARV) drugs have been registered in the Russian Federation and 2 are produced domestically. Unfortunately the cost of ARV treatment in Russia is still high (US\$ 8,000-10,000 per year per person). But there is no reason why Russia could not follow the example of Brazil and negotiate the price down to US\$ 300 per year.

The issue of denial, discrimination and marginalization of injecting drug users will need to be addressed.

There is also lack of correct public information available which is one of the reasons for discrimination. Examples of discrimination as dismissing from work and denial of medical care were provided from people living with HIV and AIDS.

Dr Onischenko confirmed the Russian government commitment to “3 by 5” initiative. Russian Federation will use legal framework for domestic antiretroviral drugs production. However Russia does not exclude assistance through international community in order to better response to the public health emergency. Therefore through the letter from the Ministry of Health Russian Government has officially joined the “3 by 5” initiative and requested relevant assistance.

*WHO Headquarters
WHO Regional Office for Europe
WHO/Russian Federation*



The press conference dedicated to launching the WHO “3 by 5” initiative

Patients' Rights: New Notional Accents and Outlooks for International Cooperation

During the last decade the basic fundamentals of democracy have been increasingly actively established in Russia. The ideas of legality, absolute observance of the rights and freedoms, choice and self-government are reflected in the activity of various state bodies and community organizations which deal with issues of securing and protecting patients' rights.

New notional accents in the activity aimed at the implementation of patients' rights were presented on December 8-9 during the work of the II International Workshop "The Role of Community Organizations in the Implementation of Patients' Rights". The workshop took place at the National Scientific Research Institute of Public Health of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences (RAMS). The meeting was held within the framework of the programme of cooperation between the WHO Regional Office for Europe (WHO/EURO) and the Russian Ministry of Health by the collective efforts of the National Scientific Research Institute of Public Health of the RAMS and the Office of the Special Representative of the WHO Director General in Russia.

Experts of the World Health Organization – Ms. Mary Collins, Advisor of the WHO Programme of Health Care Policy and Stewardship Initiative in Russia, Dr Synnove Amberla, Legal Counselor of the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, and Ms. Nicole Valentine, Programme Coordinator, Evidence and Information for Health Policy Unit, WHO/HQ – took part in the workshop.

The Russian part was represented by Heads of a number of Scientific Research Institutes of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences and the Russian Academy of Sciences,

the Russian Ministry of Health, and officials from mandatory health insurance funds, health insurance organizations, including interregional health care associations of the Russian Federation, community organizations and the press.

In his greetings to the participants of the workshop Academician O. Schepin, Director of the Scientific Research Institute of Public Health of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences remarked that patients' rights are increasingly taking the central place in the focus of modern health care. The role of the WHO Amsterdam Declaration concerning patients' rights and its meaning for modern Russia has been examined by Professor V.B.Filatov, Head of Department at the Scientific Research Institute of Public Health of the RAMS. The presentations of Russian participants of the workshop described their concern about frequent lack of financial corroboration and absence of adequate organizational technologies for the implementation of a number of provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (article 41), the Federal Law "Fundamentals of the legislation of the Russian Federation concerning protection of the citizens' health" (article 30, etc.), as well as certain laws of the subjects of the Russian Federation which are related to patients' rights.

The whole first day of the workshop was dedicated to issues of legal and conceptual substantiation of the assurance and protection of the patients' rights. Dr. Synnove Amberla's presentation served as an example of a productive approach to solving the originating problems. It described the experience of developing the system of Ombudsman – representatives in charge of protection of patients' rights – in Finland. On the same day the monograph "Assur-

ance and Protection of Patients' Rights in the Russian Federation" which has been prepared as a result of joined efforts of the staff of the Scientific Research Institute of Public Health of RAMS and published with the support of WHO/EURO was presented to the participants of the workshop.

On the second day of the workshop, after the comprehensive presentation of Dr. Nicole Valentine on the main principles and trends of the WHO activity aimed at the implementation of human right to health and patients' rights, the Russian experience of implementing patients' rights was described in presentations of the leaders of professional medical organizations and community organizations. For example, the experiences of the Association of haemophilia patients, the Regional community organization "Spidinfosvyaz" (AIDS info communication), the Russian Family Planning Association, the Regional community organization of disabled people dealing with tuberculosis prevention "Nabat" (Alarm bell), etc. were presented.

At the conclusion of the workshop the participants highly appreciated the professional level of its conduction. They accepted a resolution in which the following objectives have been listed among priority activities:

- legislative strengthening of the modern means of expanding the social foundation of health care;
- informational and methodological support of the bodies and organizations dealing with the implementation of patients' rights;
- determining partners in conducting an independent expert examination in the area of assurance and protection of patients' rights.

The UN and International Law's Future: A Look from Moscow

The last November Alexandre Gorelik, Director of the UN Information Centre in Moscow, on the invitation from Konrad Adenauer Foundation (Germany) took part in the International Conference "The Future of the UN and International Law", held in Bonn. "UN in Russia" presents Mr Gorelik's address to the Conference, expressing his personal, not official, point of view.



“radical reform” of the UN structure and functioning. But the real challenge is to dovetail any radicalism with sober assessment of the UN capacities, an understanding it should only do what it can do properly and should not encourage excessive expectations. The institution is to remain forum for debate about international security and provider of peacekeepers in places where there is a peace to keep or aide workers where there is a shattered society to rebuild.

today that sovereign states (and regional alliances) have a certain latitude in carrying out their multilateral obligations. All too often this entails a risk that those states, especially the most powerful among them, may be tempted to consider the “menu” of multilateral actions in an opportunistic way. That is the key problem since from a legalistic point of view, a decision to use force or abstain from it can not be just a function of political expediency.

Today we are witnessing a very contradictory situation: fears for the UN's fate are intertwined with recognition of its unique capacity. Never in recent history has the Organization been more important as a forum for international debate, and never has it been faced with such a multitude of challenges.

Certainly, what happened in Iraq precipitated the crisis, but its ingredients had existed before. What started last fall at the General Assembly and then moved on to the Security Council was a deliberate attempt to solve the ultimate dilemma of world politics: the rule of law or the rule of force? In a nutshell, the task, as Kofi Annan stressed at one point, is “to see power harnessed to legitimacy”.

The best way to do it is to place policy beyond politics. Kofi Annan is right to call for a rethinking, even a

Of course, few UN reforms have been complete enough to have a major impact on the work of the organization. The negotiation process has often cut ambitious proposals down to the lowest common denominator. However, in a fresh effort to encourage the remodeling of the world body, Kofi Annan appointed a blue-ribbon panel to look into global threats and to recommend changes at the UN for a more effective collective action.

To start with, the Security Council's reform means different things to different people. But in any case the body has to squarely face the contradiction between its established role, on the one hand, and conflicting priorities of national policies of member states, on the other hand.

Regrettably, and contrary to the letter of international law, some feel

Whatever the unoscillations say, the Security Council remains the central stage for multilateral action for peace and security. Over the last few years the body has shown a considerable capability to adjust by:

- developing preventive diplomacy tools;
- having a greater recourse to the Secretary-General's good offices;
- reaching out to non-traditional actors in the context of ever more frequent inter-state conflicts;
- addressing issues related to human rights;
- establishing international ad hoc tribunals;
- dealing with non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction;
- breaking new ground in matters related to international terrorism.

To be continued in the next issue

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