



# UN in RUSSIA

Activities for Sustainable Human Development

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## The United Nations in the Russian Federation Presents “Leadership for Action – for a Russia without AIDS”



Set in the majestic backdrop of the Moscow World Fine Art Fair gala opening on 2 June, the United Nations Country Team in Russia pre-

already been carried out in many countries, puts a special emphasis on leaders in Arts and Media as critical actors in enhancing the national re-

sented a new collaborative initiative “Leadership in Action – for a Russia without AIDS”. The Fair was sponsored by the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, the City of Moscow, the Cultural Committee of the City of Moscow, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Fine Arts Gallery. The UN initiative, which has

response to HIV/AIDS. As the UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, put it, to increase our response to AIDS “we need complete mobilization of society – everyone has to get engaged and to join in the fight. But above all, the leaders have to lead.” This challenge was reiterated to the crowd of influential members of the Arts and Media community by the UN Resident Coordinator in the Russian Federation, Mr Stefan Vassilev, and Mr Shombi Sharp, Head of the HIV/AIDS Unit for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which coordinates the initiative.

The United Nations supports an effective, broad-based national re-

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sponse to HIV/AIDS as an urgent priority, enshrined as one of eight Millennium Development Goals (proclaimed by the UN in 2000 and supported by all member states). The epidemic has already taken hold in the country: over the last five years, Russia has experienced one of the most explosive rates of HIV spread



***A video message from the UN Secretary-General Mr Kofi Annan stressing the importance of leadership in fighting AIDS***

in the world. There are already nearly 300,000 people living with HIV registered by the health authorities. Experts believe the total number to be much greater – and it is growing all the time.

In addition to the dramatic human cost, several studies have demonstrated that the AIDS epidemic could begin in the near future to take a heavy toll even on economic growth and human development in Russia, diminishing population levels and life expectancy, draining government budgets and lowering economic growth.

However, speaking at the event on behalf of the UN Country Team and UN partners, the UN Resident Co-



***The UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in the Russian Federation Mr Stefan Vassilev***

ordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, Stefan Vassilev, gave a message of hope. “Each one of us, together, do have the power to make a difference and save lives,” Mr Vassilev said, addressing the audience of prominent politicians, diplomats, businessmen, media personalities, and artists. “While public health responses are fundamental, HIV/AIDS is a complex issue that goes beyond the medical sphere, feeding on socio-economic vulnerability, uninformed behavior, stigma, and discrimination. We know now from international experience over the past 20 years, that individual and



***Mr Shombi Sharp, Head of the HIV/AIDS Unit for the United Nations Development Programme***

collective leadership is the foundation for success.”

The UN initiative has already won support from prominent representatives of artistic and media circles, who spoke about the AIDS problem in the Russian Federation and the role of leaders: Veronika Borovik-Khilchevskaya, head of “Sovershenno Sekretno” media holding, Vladimir Pozner, a TV anchor and President of the Russian TV Academy, and Olga Sviblova, Director of the Moscow House of Photography. Mr. Pozner stressed that “our government does not realize and our people do not understand the scope of the problem. It is the respected personalities, like Vladimir Spivakov and Dmitri Khvorostovsky, who should make them aware.”

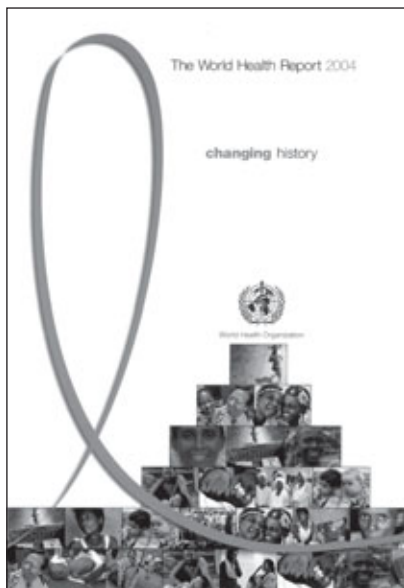


***Ms Veronika Borovik-Khilchevskaya, Head of “Sovershenno Sekretno” media holding***

As a very first step of the Arts and Media group of our initiative, thanks to a generous grant from the Moscow World Art Fair, UNDP will launch shortly a national competition for artists to produce a piece of work that best captures the spirit of ‘A Russia Without AIDS’. The winner’s work will be published and disseminated broadly as part of the national World AIDS Campaign, and as a priority on the occasion of 2004 World AIDS Day on 1 December.



## The Global Effort against AIDS Is Changing History: World Health Report 2004



“This is a critical moment in the history of HIV/AIDS, – says *The World Health Report 2004 - Changing History* issued 11 May, 2004. – There is more money, more political will and more attention being paid to this killer disease than ever before. And yet, more people than ever are dying of AIDS and becoming infected with HIV. By using HIV treatment programs to strengthen existing prevention programs and improve health systems, the international community has a unique opportunity to change the course of history.”

This year’s World Health Organization report on the state of humanity’s health calls for a comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategy which links prevention, treatment, care and support for people living with the virus.

The report confirms that tackling HIV/AIDS is the world’s most urgent public health challenge. Unknown barely a quarter a century ago, it is now the leading cause of death for young adults worldwide. Until now, treatment has been the most neglected element in most de-

veloping countries: almost 6 million people in developing countries will die in the near future if they do not receive treatment, but only about 400000 of them were receiving it in 2003.

Vital resources have now been pledged, including more than US\$ 20 billion from donor countries and through multilateral funding agencies, including the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the United States President's Emergency Plan for HIV/AIDS Relief and the World Bank.

These funds must now be used swiftly and in a coordinated way to prolong the lives of millions of children, women and men who will otherwise soon die. Adequate technical support for HIV/AIDS programmes must be mobilized to ensure that the new investments have the greatest possible long-term impact on the health of people in poor countries.

"At long last, global investment in health – and particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS – is on the rise. It brings a welcome and long overdue improvement in the prospects for controlling the worst global epidemic in several centuries. The challenge now is to coordinate all our efforts and to ensure that this money benefits the people who need it most", said Jong-Wook Lee, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The Russian Federation continues to have one of the numerically fastest growing epidemics in the world. As of March 2004, over 280 thousand HIV infected persons were registered in the country. Experts from the World Health Organization, UNAIDS, and the Russian Federal

AIDS Center estimate that the actual number of individuals living with HIV/AIDS in Russia is from 600000 to 1000000 people.

Since epidemic began to spread rapidly in 1996, there is now a sharply increasing number of cases of HIV infection in need of treatment. This increase is occurring in a society and health system ill-equipped to provide these patients with treatment, care and support that’s why the issues raised in the report are topical for Russia and need to be addressed urgently.

### Hope through treatment

In September 2003, WHO, UN-AIDS and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria declared lack of access to treatment with antiretroviral medicines a global health emergency. In response, these organizations and their partners launched an effort to provide three million people in developing countries with antiretroviral therapy by the end of 2005 – the "3 by 5" initiative.

By March 2004, 48 of the countries with high burden of HIV/AIDS had expressed their willingness to join the initiative. Russia was among them. It appeared to be very timely since antiretroviral (ARV) therapy in Russia is available on a very limited basis. Currently only around 1800 people with HIV/AIDS receive this therapy.

Injectable drug users have little or no access to antiretroviral treatment due to the inadequacy of support services for them and widespread stigma

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## Annan: to Focus on Millennium Development Goals

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has told a forum of economic policy-makers and business leaders from the Russian Federation and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) that they must keep focusing on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as they pursue economic reforms.

In an address to the eighth St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, delivered on his behalf by Sergei Ordzhonikidze, Director-General of the UN Office at Geneva, Mr. Annan said the conference offers an opportunity to promote greater economic cooperation between the Russian Federation, the CIS and the rest of the world.

"After years of difficult transition and sometimes painful economic reforms, many of the countries in the CIS [comprised of former constituent states of the Soviet Union] have entered a new phase in their development. The CIS has been one of the most dynamic regions of the global economy during the last four years," he said.

But he stressed that while measures such as the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) Human Development Index show that living conditions for most people within the CIS have improved since the late 1990s, some regional indicators from the World Health Organiza-

tion (WHO) remain a cause for deep concern.

Mr. Annan urged delegates to pay close attention to the MDGs, a set of eight, time-specific targets – such as halving extreme poverty, reducing child mortality and achieving universal primary-level education – agreed to by world leaders at a summit in 2000.

The Secretary-General added that the recent inclusion in the European Union of eight countries from Eastern and Central Europe means the forum is also well placed to encourage stronger economic ties between the enlarged EU and the CIS.

## Human Development Report-2004 Discussed

On 10 June 2004, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organised the hearings of the draft of the 2004 Human Development Report for the Russian Federation at the Central Institute of Economics and Mathematics under the Russian Academy of Science. This year the subject of the report is "Knowledge-based Development."

The report, prepared by a group of independent Russian experts and scientists, represents an innovative at-

tempt to thoroughly analyze the interrelation between the contemporary state of Russian society, the dynamics of its intellectual capital, and development of human potential. In addition, the report traditionally contains a comparative analysis of the socio-economic situation in the regions, territories and republics of Russia, as well as human development indexes in a majority of regions.

The hearings were opened by the Senior Adviser to the Resident Represent-

tative of UNDP in the Russian Federation, Mr Shombi Sharp, and the head of the team of the report authors, Professor of Moscow State University, Mr Sergei Bobylev. A brief presentation of the main chapters by the respective authors was followed by a lively discussion. The participants praised the quality of the report, noted the topicality of the selected subject, and commented on the report's contents. They proposed to organise a round-table discussion of the study on TV, as well as to discuss it through Internet.

## UNDP and Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Two New Projects



The United Nations Development Programme and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation have joined forces in preparation and implementation of two projects, aimed at making Russia an interna-

tional donor and supporting the public-private partnership. The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the RF, Mr Yury Fedotov, and the UNDP Resident Representative in Russia, Mr Stefan Vassilev, signed the project documents on 11 June 2004.

The Preparatory Assistance project "Russia as an emerging donor. Strategic research, advisory services, and training (RUSAID)" is aimed at the provision of advisory services to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economic Development and Trade, and other relevant agencies involved in the development and implementation of the technical assistance programmes. In addition, the purpose of the project is to prepare a full-fledged project doc-

ument to support the government efforts in the establishment of a national agency and/or mechanism for providing technical assistance abroad.

The other project is entitled "Support to the public-private partnership (PPP) in Russia on the basis of the Global Compact principles and corporate social responsibility (CSR) strategy." It will seek to further stimulate companies to commit themselves to applying socially responsible practices in their business, thus providing for more equitable sustainable development. It envisages the exchange of information and knowledge, as well as raising awareness of the corporate social responsibility practices in the private sector, government bodies, public associations and NGOs.



## UN Staff Member Killed in Cross-fire in Ingushetia



The fighting between armed non-state actors and Government security forces in the Republic of Ingushetia on 21 June directly and indirectly affected the work of the United Nations.

Tragically, Magomed Getagazov, a local staff member of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Nazran was killed. He was caught in the cross-fire in Nazran while returning home from work in a private vehicle. Magomed had been part of the UN team in Ingushetia since May 2002, and had become a much appreciated colleague over time, always positive and helpful. He will be deeply missed by his colleagues and friends from the humanitarian community.

The UN Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs have paid tribute to Magomed, and joined many others in expressing condolences to his family.

## Humanitarian Aid for Chechnya Supported by the Russian Government and Donor Countries



On 4 June 2004 the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Moscow presented the Mid-Year Review of the 2004 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Chechnya and Neighbouring Republics. The CAP, as the appeal is known, was launched in November 2003 by 9 UN agencies and 12 non-governmental organizations with active humanitarian assistance programs in the North Caucasus. Its projects were formulated in consultation with the Government, donors and

the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. The United Nations and non-governmental organizations participating in the appeal requested a total of US \$61,923,703 in November. After donor funding of almost US \$30,000,000 and slight project revisions, organizations are still seeking US \$32,760,122.

The Mid-Year Review event became an open discussion on the humanitarian situation in the North Caucasus by representatives of the Fed-

eral Government, the governments of Chechnya and Ingushetia, the UN, donor countries, international organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Government praised the contributions made by international organizations through the CAP to alleviate suffering in the region. Humanitarian needs remain substantial, and international organizations expressed their resolve to continue programs to meet humanitarian needs in Chechnya.

Since January some 10,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) living in Ingushetia have decided to return to Chechnya. Nevertheless, assistance and protection for 50,000 registered IDPs still in Ingushetia remains a priority.

The discussion also looked beyond immediate humanitarian needs to the Government's plans for economic recovery in Chechnya. Planning for the 2005 CAP will complement Government programs in areas of social-services support and economic recovery.



## UN Staff Safety and Security: Training in Moscow

Nowadays security is one of the biggest challenges for UN staff globally. The blue UN flag and UN symbols, which once stood as a shield for its staff, now need protection in many places.

Since 1999 the UN has lost more of its civilian personnel than those engaged in peacekeeping operations. Between January 1994 and October 2002, 74 incidents involving hostage-taking or kidnapping involving 262 staff occurred – 8 in 2002 in separate incidents in Somalia, Sudan and Guyana.

Preceded by previous disastrous attacks on UN staff in Rwanda, West Timor, Afghanistan, the 19th of August 2003 was a turning point for the United Nations with the horrific and murderous suicide terrorist act on the UN Headquarters in Baghdad leaving 22 killed, including Special Representative of the Secretary General in Iraq, Sergio Vieira de Mello, and putting these victims among the more than two thousand persons who have died serving the United Nations as civilian staff or peacekeepers since the organization was founded in 1945.



*Mr John Logan, UNSECOORD HQ in NY Desk Officer, addressing the Security Management Team in the Russian Federation*

On the UN Staff Day, 11 June 2004, the UN remembered its 111 United Nations workers who died in the service of peace during the last year.

The Secretary-General and UN Officials are continuously urging greater attention and strongly calling for preventive steps to UN staff safety and security, especially for those colleagues in the field. They stress that all security measures must be taken before staff are employed in the field.

The primary responsibility for the safety and security of UN personnel in field operations rests with host Governments. No security measures can be effective without their full commitment and efficacy. Unfortunately, the riskiest situations for humanitarian personnel also tend to be those where local government structures have frayed.

At the same time each UN organization/agency is obligated to protect and care for the staff it dispatches to troubled areas. This is outlined in the report of the Secretary General – “Inter-Organizational security measures: framework for accountability for the United Nations field security management system” dated 28 August 2002.

In the Russian Federation more than 900 international and national staff work in 23 UN programmes, funds and specialized agencies with offices scattered over 20 regions of the Russian Federation, including hazardous areas in the North Caucasus region. The Office of

the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD) in the Russian Federation has been supporting the UN Designated Official for Security and the Security Management Team for four and a half years in providing UN staff safety and security through developing, managing, coordinating and facilitating security systems, practices, policies and procedures. The security situation in the North Caucasus in 2004 continues to be extremely dangerous and complex. This year has seen an escalation in the level of militant activity and security operations in the Republic of Ingushetia, particularly in the Sunzhenski and Nazran districts. Besides the on-going crisis, the North Caucasus region also suffers from a high crime rate. All this requires one of the most stringent security regimes to be applied anywhere in the world by the UN for the safety and security of its staff.

From 17 to 24 June UNSECOORD HQ in NY Desk Officer Mr John Logan visited the Russian Federation to provide Security Management Team Training in Moscow attended by UN in RF Agencies, Affiliated Banks’ Heads and Deputy Heads of Agencies, Heads of Sub-offices and Security Focal Points. The SMT Training outlined the importance of accountability of the UN Security Management System and aimed at providing security accountable personnel with overall instruments and knowledge of UN Security Management System. The SMT Training also covered such topics as the terrorist attack on the UN in Baghdad and lessons learnt, Threat/Risk Assessment and Management, Hostage Incident Management and a Group Exercise on Risk.



## Walk the World in Russia

On Sunday morning of 20<sup>th</sup> June, Muscovites living in Svoboda (Freedom) street were surprised to see hundreds of men, women and children, wearing T-shirts and caps with TPG/TNT<sup>1</sup> and WFP logos. They were marching from “Baltica” cinema towards TNT Office in Svoboda Street. The T-shirts read “Fight Hunger” and the inscription explained why these people get together.

Walk the World event that took place in Moscow was part of a worldwide drive by TPG, WFP’s corporate partner, to raise awareness among people about the problems of hunger and collect money for WFP School Feeding Programme.<sup>2</sup> As the world was turning on 20 June, TPG and WFP staff were walking around it through 24 time zones in 24 hours to help thousands of children into school and out of hunger. The event started at 10:00 local time, beginning and ending in Auckland, New Zealand, and covered 64 countries where TPG is present.

In Russia TPG is represented by TNT office that arranged Walk the World event in Moscow. The march

that started at 10:00a.m. at Baltika cinema moved along the streets in the west of the city. The marching TNT colleagues and WFP employees with their families and friends were headed by Harro van Graafeiland, TNT Country General Manager, Chris Czerwinski, WFP Senior Emergency Coordinator, and Koryun Alaverdyan, WFP Emergency Coordinator. Some OCHA and UNSECOORD staff also came to support the initiative and brought their families with them.

The march ended at the TNT building where a brief meeting was held. Harro von Graafeiland and Chris Czerwinski greeted the colleagues and their families and friends and thanked them for coming to walk against hunger. “It takes \$34 a year to keep a child fed and in school. Our ultimate goal is to feed a child for every one of the 163,000 TPG employees every year,” Harro von Graafeiland, TNT Country General Manager, said. He also said that TPG/TNT uses their skills and resources to offer assistance to WFP. Chris Czerwinski said that the cooperation of TPG and WFP is mutually beneficial and the money collected by TNT/WFP staff in Moscow will be spent by WFP to-



*Hundreds of men, women and children are marching from “Baltica” cinema towards TNT Office in Svoboda Street*

wards mini-projects to be realized within the school feeding programme for children in Chechnya and Ingushetia.

The mini-projects are supposed to start in September. And so far on their way home the people who marched on that sunny day in Moscow were thinking that they had made a small contribution to improve the world where one child dies every seven seconds from hunger and related causes.

<sup>1</sup> TPG is a global leader in mail, express and logistics, and provides services under the Royal TPG Post and TNT brands. In December 2002 the company entered into a long-term partnership with WFP, the world’s largest humanitarian agency and the UN’s logistics arm, to help them fight hunger. TPG is composed of three companies, one of which is the courier company TNT

<sup>2</sup> WFP launched the school feeding programme in September 2002 as a temporary solution with the Chechen Ministry of Education to ensure that school students in classes 1–4 and children at kindergartens receive food during the school day.

The school feeding activities currently serve approximately 75,000 children in 294 primary schools and pre-schools in Chechnya.



*The Walk the World march ends at the TNT building where a brief meeting was held*



## World Refugee Day 2004 in Russia

UNHCR organized an out-door event dedicated to the World Refugee Day on 20 June at the Moscow City Palace for Youth s Creativity for a total capacity of about 800 visitors. A fair of refugee communities was held, as well as a concert with both refugee and local music bands. A theatre performance for children was on, and the brass band would entertain the public throughout the festivities. UNHCR distributed printed materials, some souvenirs including t-shirts with UNHCR logo and balloons. A photo exhibition was displayed by UNHCR.

Some 30,000 copies of the fly-cards devoted to the World Refugee Day were produced in Russian, with a special design, and distributed at 800 spots in Moscow on the advertising stands, including bars, restaurants, movie theatres, shops and shopping malls, etc, from 11 to 20 June 2004.

In Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia, UNHCR organised the "Living Together" exhibition of children's drawings on asphalt, bringing together 300 participants. The agency's staff visited and gave presents to some 60

single elderly people, and organized visits to the cinema and the zoo for some 70 refugee children.

Most vulnerable displaced children from Chechnya were taken to Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia) for one day to a side-show park.

Interviews were given to the radio, TV and newspapers. A press release on World Refugee Day was placed

on the website jointly with the World Refugee Day leaflet and kit.

A radio programme, "New place of residence", on Radio of Russia was devoted to the World Refugee Day. The World Refugee Day spot was broadcast by local TV channels throughout the week. The World Refugee Day web banner was placed on the web-sites of the UNHCR partners and media.



*Out-door event dedicated to the World Refugee Day in Moscow*

## Russia's "Memorial" Wins 2004 Nansen Refugee Award

Russia's Memorial Human Rights Centre, a non-governmental organization that has helped tens of thousands of refugees and internally displaced people across the Russian Federation, has been named this year's Nansen Refugee Award winner.

Announcing the 2004 award, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Ruud Lubbers said that among the Russian Federation's relatively young NGO community, the Mos-

cow-based Memorial Human Rights Centre stands out as a highly respected and effective advocate for the displaced and the dispossessed. He said the Nansen Award Committee was particularly impressed with the wide range of services carried out by the Centre on behalf of forced migrants and internally displaced people as well as refugees from as far afield as Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

The Nansen Refugee Award is given annually to individuals or or-

ganizations that have distinguished themselves in work on behalf of refugees.

Memorial Human Rights Centre emerged during the former Soviet Union's "perestroika" period and was formally established in 1987 as a department of the Memorial Society, one of the country's first NGOs. The Centre became independent in 1993, with a mandate to monitor and report on the human rights situation in Russia and





across the former USSR. The scope of its activities rapidly evolved amid an influx of millions of forced migrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic countries, as well as displacement from the Chechnya conflict. Gradually, it also gained expertise in providing help to thousands of refugees from the so-called “far abroad.”

The Nansen Refugee Award, named after Fridtjof Nansen – Norwegian polar explorer and the world's first international refugee official – was created in 1954. Previous recipients include Eleanor Roosevelt, King Juan Carlos I of Spain, Queen Juliana of the Netherlands, Médecins Sans Frontières, the late Tanzani-

an President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, the people of Canada, Italian tenor Luciano Pavarotti and Dr. A. Tonelli.

The award includes \$100,000 for a refugee project of the recipient's choice and was formally presented to the Memorial Human Rights Centre on June 20 – World Refugee Day – in Barcelona as part of the Universal Forum of Cultures, Barcelona 2004. The award ceremony was presided over by Her Royal Highness the Infanta Cristina of Spain, and Spanish actor Imanol Arias was master of ceremonies for the evening event in Barcelona’s Palau de la Musica Catalana. UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Ange-

lina Jolie also attended as the High Commissioner’s guest of honour.



*Svetlana Gannushkina, the Council member of the Human Rights Centre “Memorial” received the award on behalf of the organization*



## The 50th Anniversary of Russia's Joining UNESCO

Within the framework of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Russia's joining UNESCO on 1 June, 2004, which is observed as the International Day for the Protection of Childhood, an important charitable action for the benefit of children with special needs took place in the Moscow International House of Music, where an international concert World Stars for Children was arranged by the non-profitable international foundation World of Art headed by Vladislav Teterin. The action was supported by the Russian President V.V. Putin, the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Moscow Government, and UNESCO. His Holiness Alexy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia, and His Holiness Pope John Paul II blessed the event. The participants in the concert included the Russian National Philharmonic Orchestra with its main conductor and artistic director Vladimir Spivakov (USSR People’s Artist); the



UNESCO World Children’s Choir; the Choir of the Choral Art Academy with its conductor Professor Victor Popov (USSR People’s Artist); Maria Gulegina, one of the world’s most renowned sopranos familiar to audiences of the majority of opera houses in the world; and Mayiu Kisima (the violin), a prodigy from Japan. Mr. Sergey

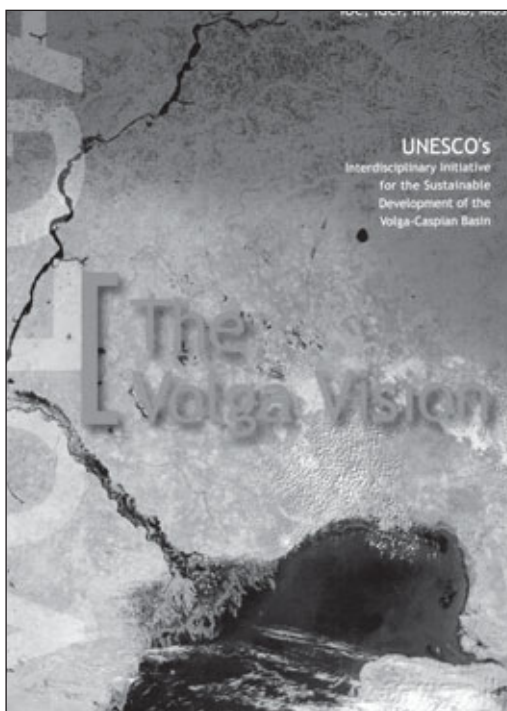
Lavrov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, addressed his greeting to the concert’s organizers, participants and guests. Mr Philippe Quéau, the Director of the UNESCO Office in Moscow, read out the Address of the UNESCO Director General to the participants in the charitable concert.



## Cooperation Along a Big River: the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the UNESCO Interdisciplinary Initiative "Sustainable Development of the Volga Basin and the Caspian Sea"

The UNESCO project "Sustainable development of the Volga basin and the Caspian sea", which was initiated by five intergovernmental scientific programmes of UNESCO and launched at the 4<sup>th</sup> Great Rivers Forum in Nizhny Novgorod in 2002, has now passed through its 1<sup>st</sup> phase that resulted in the Volga Vision document. The Volga Vision, describing the desirable future of the Volga basin by 2030 and serving as a basis for future strategies and actions, was officially presented at the 6<sup>th</sup> Great Rivers Forum in Nizhny Novgorod in May 2004.

During a special section the representatives of the project working group discussed the document and further activities for the realization of its objectives. Full and short versions of the Volga Vision are available at [www.volga.unesco.ru](http://www.volga.unesco.ru).



*Greeting of Mr Philippe Quéau, Director of the UNESCO Moscow Office at the opening of the Great Rivers Forum (among reporters – President's Representative to the Volga Federal District Mr Sergey Kirienko, Governor of the Nizhny Novgorod region Mr Gennady Khodyrev and others)*

Following the decision of the UNESCO member-states at its General Conference in 2003 to extend the Volga project to the Caspian region the UNESCO Moscow Office organized a 1<sup>st</sup> planning meeting in Yaroslavl in June 2004 to discuss with representatives of Caspian states the issues of the new project phase "Sustainable Development of the Caspian sea".

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Initiative also envisages the elaboration of projects aiming at the implementation of the Volga Vision ideas. For example, the UNESCO Moscow Office has facilitated the elaboration and submission to the European Commission of a project propos-

al titled "Cooperation Along a Big River (CABRI) – Institutional coordination among stakeholders for environmental risk management in the Volga basin" and the creation of a project consortium including partners from state institutes, NGOs and private companies in Russia and the European Union, and the UN University.

CABRI is envisaged as a 2-year project for developing international cooperation and institutional coordination in environmental risk management in large river basins in the EU, Russia and the New Independent States with focus on the Volga River. The project initiative was supported by the State Duma of the Russian Federation and several regional administrations. Information on the project is available at [www.unesco.ru](http://www.unesco.ru).

## Second Intergovernmental Conference “Making Europe and Central Asia Fit for Children”

From May 13 through the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Second Intergovernmental Conference “Making Europe and Central Asia Fit for Children” took place in Sarajevo. The meeting was organized by the governments of Bosnia & Herzegovina and the Federal Republic of Germany with active involvement and support of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). A total of 50 governments’ representatives of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia countries as well as 27 young people from 15 countries participated in the meeting.

In her opening address to the Conference, Ms Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UN Children’s Fund said:

“Our journey began in Berlin in 2001, at the First Intergovernmental Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia – and continued in 2002 at the UN General Assembly’s Special Session on Children, where governments vowed to help build A World Fit for Children – a world where there the highest aspiration of citizenship is to ensure the right of every child to grow to adulthood in peace, health and dignity.

All of us here today – representatives of governments, multilateral agencies and the many faces of civil society, the media and, of course, children and young people themselves – want that world for the children of Europe and Central Asia. Is it within reach? The joyous celebrations marking the expansion of the European Union suggest that it is, because this is a region of shared optimism and ambition.

But the real answer is: It depends on whether children and their families are rich or poor. It depends on whether they come from an ethnic minority or a family of migrants or refugees. It depends on whether they live in a neglected rural backwater, an urban slum or a middle-class suburb. From the Atlantic coast of

Ireland to the Pacific coast of the Russian Federation, we see that the same groups of children are excluded from social progress time and time again – the ethnic minorities, the migrants, in some areas it is the girls – and in every area, it is the poorest and most vulnerable.”

The Conference participants discussed, what did it mean a region ‘fit for children’, and how to achieve this goal. Five working groups focused their attention on 5 areas of vital importance both to children and adults:

- investing in children;
- children moving across borders;
- violence against children;
- discrimination and social exclusion in education;
- cities ‘fit for children’.

The Russian youth delegation was formed of three young people: Katya Tsvetkova and Stanislav Nikonov from St. Petersburg, the Rovesnik youth club’s members, and Masha Sirotkina from Penza, vice-president of the “UNPRESS” league of young journalists. Everyone of them chose a theme to concentrate upon it for debating and searching ways to solve that very problem.

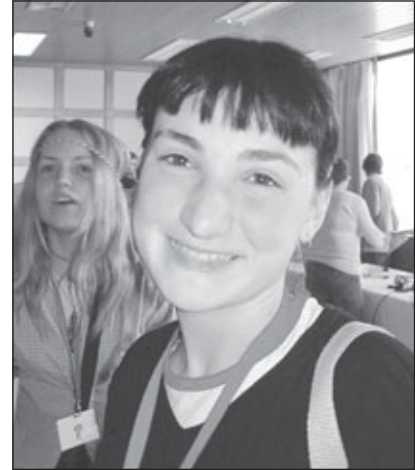
Katya Tsvetkova shared her impressions concerning the Conference:

“Strong participants, willing to work, gathered in our group, “Violence against children”. So interesting it was to exchange views and experience. That’s why we got very efficient results. And I think the children’s opinion was listened to and taken into consideration – at least, in my group. For the first time in my life I got a chance to communicate with so many children from different countries. And I was glad to make friends with some of them.”

The children’s opinions and voices must be listened to – this slogan turned from declaration into reality at the Sarajevo Conference.

*(To be continued on p. 12)*

*The young Conference participants:*



*Nino Dedalamazishvili (Georgia)*



*Rudolphs Praulins (Latvia)*



*Masha Sirotkina (Russia)*



(Continued from p. 11)

Stanislav Nikonov said:

“This Conference gave me an opportunity to meet people from different countries. I liked our evening talks, when we compared pluses and minuses of different methods how to work with teenagers, and came to some conclusions. I also liked to discuss various kinds of children’s discrimination. After two days of preparations, every group presented their draft project how it was possible to solve the problems proposed by the group participants. I was glad to realize, that the children’s voice was heeded. And I was very glad to participate in working out solutions of the problems connected with children.”

The young participants had the courage enough to express their views authoritatively and competently, basing on the working experience they had got in their youth organizations.

Maybe the adult participants of the Conference were not delighted sometimes with that courage of their young colleagues. But the children made their best to convince the elders of the truth of their words. As a result of these joint efforts the debate’s quality as well as the conclusions’ final wordings just took a turn for the better.

The Conference participants adopted the final document, saying in particular:

We, the participants of the Second Intergovernmental Conference on Making Europe and Central Asia Fit for Children (Sarajevo 13–15 May 2004), while welcoming progress achieved during the last three years:

Solemnly re-affirm our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and our commitments as contained in the Berlin Commitment of May 18<sup>th</sup> 2001 and in the UN Special Session on Children outcome document *A World Fit for Children* of May 10<sup>th</sup> 2002, and pledge ourselves in particular to:

a. provide leadership in adopting national plans of action by May 2005 and take concrete steps

toward the implementation of their goals, ensuring monitoring and evaluation of these Plans, with the involvement of children;

b. take measures to establish or strengthen national structures and mechanisms for the implementation of children’s rights, including, where appropriate, independent children’s rights institutions;

c. make significant increases in investment in and for children, redirecting resources towards reducing child poverty, prioritising social equity and building physical and social capital for children;

d. monitor progress towards making Europe and Central Asia ‘fit for children’, both as an input into national policy and as a basis for the report to the UN General Assembly in 2007 by the UN Secretary General;

e. strengthen the use of international cooperation mechanisms to protect children moving across borders, and where possible to prevent such movements that are not in the best interest of the child, and provide full protection to children found across borders, including support and reintegration in cases of return;

f. take concrete action to ensure that education is compulsory, free and of good quality and that social exclusion is addressed in education systems, both to improve the

quality of education within schools and to take decisive action to tackle exclusion arising outside the school, with particular attention to the situation of children with disabilities, children of minorities and school leavers;

g. initiate and support actions aimed at ensuring state accountability to protect children from all forms of violence, including violence as a result of conflict, in the home, in the media and other technologies, through inter-alia, the adoption of appropriate legislation, education and awareness raising campaigns, the provision of confidential child protection services and the strengthening of monitoring and reporting mechanisms;

h. contribute actively to the United Nations Secretary-General’s in-depth study on the question of violence against children at both national and regional levels;

i. encourage local authorities and communities to make their cities ‘child friendly’ in respect to infrastructure, access to services, safe living environments and involvement of children in local decision-making;

j. create an environment, processes and structures to facilitate the participation of children and young people in all areas affecting their lives.

**We recommit ourselves to this task, because a world fit for children is a world fit for everyone.**

*For your UN file* 

## International Days

<b>May 31</b>	World No-Tobacco Day
<b>June 5</b>	World Environment Day
<b>June 12</b>	World Day Against Child Labour
<b>June 17</b>	World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought
<b>June 20</b>	World Refugee Day
<b>June 26</b>	International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Drugs Trafficking
<b>First Saturday of July</b>	International Day of Cooperatives
<b>July 11</b>	World Population Day
<b>August 9</b>	International Day of the World's Indigenous People



(Continued from p. 3)

and discrimination they face from the health care system.

According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) and the Russian Federal AIDS Centre's estimations, the number of persons in need of ARV treatment in Russia was around 50,000 at the end of 2003 and will be sharply growing in the following years. At the same time the minimum annual cost of WHO-recommended antiretroviral treatment is one of the highest in the world – 5 thousand US Dollars per patient. To solve these and other problems hampering access to ARV for those who are in need technical assistance from WHO to countries, including Russia, can make a difference.

“WHO will play a crucial role in the years to come to ensure that increased resources are turned into lives saved”, Professor Richard Feachem, Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria says.

WHO is working closely with all partners, including national health officials, treatment providers, community organizations, people living with HIV/AIDS and other stakeholders to design national treatment scale-up plans and begin their implementation. Political commitment and national ownership of programmes are essential. The streamlined funding mechanisms developed by the Global Fund are enabling countries to access funding and expand AIDS treatment and prevention programs faster than ever before that can provide a great opportunity for scale-up in Russia.

### Prevention and treatment go together

Scaling up treatment can support and strengthen prevention programs. Where treatment has been

made available, this has led to overwhelming demands for testing and counseling. Motivating communities to learn their HIV status in a context of access to antiretroviral treatment is altering community responses to HIV, encouraging greater openness and helping to reduce stigma and denial that still exists to large extent in Russia.

### Action in Countries

As new funding flows in, technical resources and trained staff must be ready to ensure its effective use. Countries often need technical assistance in implementing programmes on the ground, and have requested clear guidance on treatment delivery and programme management. The Report emphasizes the role of WHO making a fundamental contribution by providing such guidance.

To help accelerate the treatment initiative, WHO has developed a simplified set of antiretroviral drug regimens, testing and treatment guidelines that are consistent with the highest standards of quality of care. The guidelines are intended to be used at all levels of the health system, as well as in the community to monitor and promote adherence to treatment. Because these regimens make it possible for even the poorest areas to start treating those who need it, they ensure that rollout of treatment programs can be done equitably.

WHO has also designed streamlined guidelines for training health workers in a wide range of skills, from HIV counseling and testing and recruitment of patients to treatment delivery, clinical management of patients and the monitoring of drug resistance.

### Towards Health for All

The report says that the global HIV/AIDS treatment gap reflects wider patterns of inequality in health and is a test of the international community's commitment to tackle these inequalities. Beyond working to save millions of lives under immediate threat, WHO and its partners are confronting a broad range of health problems that afflict poor communities and keep them poor, viewing HIV/AIDS treatment expansion and the Millennium Development Goals as steps on the road to Health for All.

The report makes it clear that the treatment initiative will not end in 2005. Ahead lie the challenges of extending treatment to many more millions of people and maintaining it for the rest of their lives, while simultaneously building and sustaining the health infrastructures to make that huge task possible. "The ultimate aim is nothing less than to reduce health inequalities by building up effective, equitable health systems for all," the report says. This is a historic opportunity Russia among other countries cannot afford to miss and we should join our efforts to work for it.

The World Health Report 2004 – Changing History is available on the WHO web site, at [www.who.int/whr](http://www.who.int/whr)



*These three infants are being cared for at a small clinic in the Orechovo-Zoejevo Hospital, Moscow region. The clinic provides a home for HIV-positive children whose mothers have died or are unable to look after them*

Photo from the World Health Report 2004



## Training on the Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Immunization



*A lively discussion among the training participants*

From April 21 through the 28<sup>th</sup> a training in the important field of immunization safety has been introduced for the first time for the specialists from Russian speaking countries at a course hosted by the National Institute for Standardization and Control of Medical Biological Preparations named after L.A. Tarasevich in Moscow.

The training is collaboration between the World Health Organization and the above mentioned Institute, which is the vaccine regulatory authority for the Russian Federation. This Institute has a long experience in vaccine safety surveillance in the Region and it was logical to have this course led by its Director Academician Nickolai Medunitsyn and Deputy Director Professor Taguir Bektimirov.

The WHO's Global Training Network (GTN) developed the course to guide and assist countries in setting up or improving on their surveillance of adverse events following immunization (AEFI). The GTN started in 1996 and includes 14 training institutions worldwide. The network's goal is to train nationals from vaccine manufacturers, national regulatory authorities

and national immunization programme staff in all six regulatory functions, one of which is AEFI surveillance.

The AEFI course aims to train participants on surveillance of vaccine field performance, the monitoring of vaccines that have been administered and their AEFI in order to detect programmatic error of product deficiencies. Training is also given in how to deal with the media especially when adverse events are reported.

The seven-day course in Russia from April 21 – 28 is the 11<sup>th</sup> since the launch of the AEFI training in Cape Town, South Africa in 1999. Since Cape Town was established as a training center, 154 staff have been trained around the world.

and national immunization programme staff in all six regulatory functions, one of which is AEFI surveillance.

On the Moscow course, a total of 25 staff were trained from the following eight countries: the Russian Federation, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The WHO GTN coordinator Dr Dianliang Lei, said "The training is to ensure that all vaccines used in national immunization programmes are of assured quality. Therefore, there is a real need for active surveillance systems on AEFI".

Denis Maire, Responsible Officer for the safety of immunization at the WHO European Office, added: "Several Russian speaking countries will be launching measles immunization campaigns this year and we believe the AEFI training given in Moscow will be beneficial for EPI managers and National Regulatory staff in preparing for these campaigns to ensure that all systems are in place".

**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**

www.who.int and www.who.dk (European Region)  
WHO office in Russia: 28, Ostozhenka 119034 Moscow  
Tel: +7 095 787 21 17 Fax: +7 095 787 21 19  
e-mail: m.vienonen@who.org.ru  
Special Representative of the Director – General in Russia –  
Dr. Mikko Vienonen.



## Impact of Transitions on Mental Well-being

The social and economic transitions of Russia and other CIS and Eastern European countries can be a burden on the mental well-being of people. This applies especially to men who may have lost their traditional roles both in working and private lives. This was one of the conclusions of a WHO meeting of mental health experts in Moscow 3-5 June.

Although transitions bring better life to many, large segments of populations are subjected to extraordinary societal stress, which contributes to increased occurrence of depression and also to substance abuse, aggression and violence. Certain vulnerable groups in society may get an even more disadvantaged lot. Societies in transition favour the young, well trained and strong but may leave homeless children, long-term mental

health patients and many older people worse off.

Statistical indicators of health problems are most worrying for men. For example, in Russia, the male life expectancy fallen by almost 10 years, to 58.5 years - a drop of unseen magnitude. Suicides and alcohol-related causes explain a large proportion of these dramatic changes.

The WHO European Region is organising a European Mental Health Conference in Helsinki in January 2005. This will be a ministerial conference of mental health policy addressing a broad range of issues of mental health and mental health services. The main conference is preceded by seven pre-conferences of experts focusing on selected priority themes. The pre-conference in Moscow on societal stress and mental

health was the fourth in the series. About 60 experts – two-thirds of whom were from Russia – reviewed the evidence and experiences.

There are no simple or single key solutions. Actions should be taken both at the level of whole populations and especially to protect the most vulnerable groups. Mental and general health services should join efforts with other actors of the public sector, such as education and social work as well as with workplaces and voluntary organisations.

Countries in transition should not postpone to a later and hopefully better days their actions to promote and protect mental health, since good health and good mental health of the people are an important key to desired social and economic development.



## Time for the Worldwide UNEP Photo Competition!



Photography can be a hobby. It can also be an art. It could also become a means of changing the world for the better.

The fourth International Photographic Competition on the Environment, organized by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), is already upon us. It is also the first whose opening was officially announced in Russia, where there is now an organization authorized to formally collect submissions for the competition – the UNEP Moscow Office at 28 Ostozhenka St.

In the Russian capital, the launch of the photo competition was marked on June 4 by a meeting of representatives of the world of photography, ecologists, and journalists. It was organized by the UNEP Representative Office and the UN Information Centre in Moscow.

Sharing their thoughts with those assembled on the role of civil society in environmental protection and the importance of photography in educating people to care for nature were UN Information Centre Director Alexandre Gorelik; UNEP Representative in Russia Alexander Gudyma; Sabina Sabirova, representing the Canon company, the competition's sponsor; and Sergei Kuraev, representing the Russian Regional Ecological Centre. Andrei Baskakov, Chairman of the Russian Union of Photographic Artists, set forth his colleagues' point of view. Those present received a set of informational materials and were able to review the photographic works of the previous competition winners.

For information: The Fourth International UNEP Photo Competition is now open to both amateur and

professional photographers of all ages the world over. Entries may be submitted from June 5 through October 24, 2004. The main theme is the photographer's personal view of the world, and the problems associated with nature and man's place in it. The basic criteria for judging the photographs is how well they visually express the theme of the competition. The winners will be awarded gold, silver, and bronze medals in the General, Youth, and Children's categories. **The cash prize for the General category is \$20 thousand.** The contest's judges will consider color, black-and-white, printed, and digital photos on an equal basis. Full information on the competition can be found at the UNEP website [www.unep-photo.com](http://www.unep-photo.com).

*UN Information Centre  
in Moscow*



## Moscow International Model UN-2004



From April 5 through the 9<sup>th</sup>, the UN Association of Russia (UNA-Russia) together with the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) organized the fifteenth annual Moscow International Model UN under the aegis of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

Some 600 students from more than 90 Russian and foreign universities and high schools took part in the Model UN-2004.

The opening ceremony was highlighted by the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's address to the participants and guests of the Model UN-2004. In this cordial greeting, Mr Annan expressed his firm belief, that the practice of Model UNs should be continued and promoted. He also said – to the delight of the female part of the audience – that perhaps a future Secretary-General was in that hall now, and “she” would look back fondly on her experience.

Addressing the participants and guests, the UNA-Russia Chairman and Rector of the MGIMO Anatoly Torkunov emphasized that this event assumed ever greater importance in the students' life; and that is why Model UN would be included in the institute's curriculum as an optional subject the next academic year.

The students took an active part in procedures of all the Model UN's

working bodies, discussing and adopting resolutions on the most topical problems of the present:

- Support of the United Nations' system to the governments' efforts towards developing and strengthening the new-born or restored democracies (the General Assembly);
- Peace, security and reunification in the Korean Peninsula;
- The Palestinian-Israeli conflict (the Security Council);
- Implementation of decisions of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty fourth Special Session of the General Assembly (the Economic and Social Council);
- Liechtenstein vs Germany: some issues of ownership (the International Court);
- The rights of nations to self-determination (the Human Rights Commission).

Finally, all the Model UN's working bodies adopted the resolutions that precisely answered the aims and principles of the UN Charter.



**UNDP** – (095) 787-21-00, fax: (095) 787-21-01  
**e-mail:** [office@undp.ru](mailto:office@undp.ru); <http://www.undp.ru>  
**UNFPA** – (095) 787-21-13, 787-21-38 fax: (095) 787-21-37  
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**WHO** – (095) 787-21-16, fax: (095) 787-21-19  
**UNAIDS** – (095) 232-55-99, fax: (095) 232-92-45  
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**UNIC** – (095) 241-25-37, fax: (095) 230-21-38  
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**UNA-Russia** – (095) 200-42-50, 280-80-67, fax: (095) 280-33-58  
**e-mail:** [office@una.ru](mailto:office@una.ru); <http://www.una.ru>