

# UN IN RUSSIA

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Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

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**People in around  
100 countries stepped out  
in Global Walk to stamp out child hunger /3**

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Economic growth contributed to almost halving of the poverty rate in Russia. However, the higher the income level, the higher income inequality in a region tends to be. This is one of the main findings of the Human Development Report in the RF for 2006/2007, 'Russia's Regions: Goals, Challenges, and Achievements'

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Tim Thomas, Director of "MTV/Staying Alive", speaking at the Istanbul workshop for youth organized by UNFPA: "Many adolescents think that the first time you have sex you cannot be infected with HIV. This is a big mistake, infection can happen during any unprotected sexual contact: to the virus it makes no difference"

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The recent changes in laws on the Employment of Foreigners has caused many employers to simply fire their refugee employees in order to avoid the possible costs and complications of employing foreigners of any category, Mr. Douglas Carman, UNHCR Associate Protection Officer, says

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## UN Secretary-General's Message on World Environment Day

Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are causing our world to get warmer. Concentrations of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are higher than at any time for the past 600,000 years, and the rate of increase is accelerating.

The most dramatic evidence of climate change is found in the Polar Regions. The Arctic is warming twice as fast as the global average. The extent and thickness of permanent Arctic sea ice is diminishing; areas of permafrost, frozen for centuries, are thawing; and ice caps in Greenland and the Antarctic are melting faster than anyone anticipated.

For the people and ecosystems of the Arctic, the implications are profound. Retreating sea ice is reducing habitat for vulnerable Arctic species. The changes will also affect Arctic indigenous communities who depend on the natural world, not just for food, but for their cultural identity.

However, this is not just a polar issue. The theme for World Environment Day 2007 -- "Melting Ice: A Hot Topic!" -- reflects the impact that climate change is having in all regions. As sea levels rise, inhabitants of low-lying islands and coastal cities throughout the world face inundation. The world's insurance companies are paying out more and more each year to com-



pen- sate for extreme weather events. As glaciers retreat, governments are casting an increasingly anxious eye at future water supplies. And for the one-third of the world's population living in drylands, especially those in Africa, changing weather patterns linked to climate change threaten to exacerbate desertification, drought and food insecurity.

Society's dependence on fossil fuels is jeopardizing social and economic progress and our future security. Fortunately, there are many policy and technological options available to avert the impending crisis, but we need increased political will to use them. Developed countries in particular can do more to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage energy efficiency. They can also support clean development in fast-growing economies such as Brazil, China and India, as well as adaptation measures in those countries that face the greatest hardships from climate change.

On this World Environment Day, let us recognize the need to slow the momentum of the dramatic environmental changes we are seeing at the poles and around the globe. And let each of us pledge to do our part to fight climate change.

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World Food Programme

## Events

# Global Walk to Stamp out Child Hunger

On 13 May 2007, hundreds of thousands of people in around 100 countries step out with the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) to call for an end to child hunger. The Walk gathered participants from across the spectrum, including children who had to face hunger, as well as heads of state, royalty, Olympic champions, famous artists, students, scouts, and grassroots activists.

Now in its fifth year, 'Fight Hunger: Walk the World' was organized by WFP and its corporate partners, TNT\* and Unilever\*\*, around the globe. Among the Walk's many supporters were hundreds of volunteers, as well as private companies, charitable organizations and other organizations such as the International Olympic Committee, the World Organization of the Scout Movement, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

Walk the World in Moscow was strongly supported by the Presidential Council for Development of Civil Society Institutions and Human Rights chaired by Ella Pamfilova. She and her colleagues from the Council, Lada Kulbich and Sergei Kurinov, together with the chairman of the public movement 'Solnechny Krug' Oleg Solovyev, did their best to promote the Walk in Moscow and make it happen at the Vorobyevy Gory viewing point.



Once again this year the Walk was actively supported by the Young Peace Keepers Movement chaired by Valery Gergel. Just before the Walk a poster competition 'Say No to World Hunger' supported by UNIC was conducted in 40 Moscow schools involved in the movement. Three best posters were printed and used for decoration of the Walk. An award ceremony also took place during the Walk.

TNT, Rostik's and Unilever sponsored WFP Walk in Moscow. The Walk was also supported by the State Duma deputy, Ms. Nina Ostanina, EC Ambassador, Mr. Mark Franco, USAID/Russia Representative and Health Office Director a.i., Ms. Betsy Brown, Deputy Chairman of the UN Association of Russia, Mr. Alexey Borisov, senior officer of the Emercom Agency, Mr. Alexander Chekryzhov, and many other representatives of government agencies and NGOs.

“We are proud that Russia has also joined recently, not only in terms of funding, but also in terms of technical assistance,” said Inge Breuer, WFP Representative and Country Director in

Russia, addressing the Walk's participants. "You are the hope for millions of disadvantaged people worldwide."

After the Walk there were speeches, performances, including from pop stars Panaiotov and Gomon, all coordinated by Igor Gmyza, a well-known Russian TV presenter.

In all 24 time zones, from East Asia to the Pacific, people took to their feet to draw attention to an unacceptable fact: 18,000 children die of hunger daily on a planet that produces more than enough food to feed its every inhabitant. Through a simple act of walking in unison on one day of the year people raise awareness and resources to eliminate this scourge.

In 2006, over 700,000 people walked around the world to raise awareness and funds to provide WFP school meals for 100,000 children for a year. Initial reports (see [www.FightHunger.org](http://www.FightHunger.org)) indicate that this year's Walk was equally – if not more – successful.

The Pope, for a second year running, acknowledged the importance of the Walk. Yesterday, while on a visit to Brazil, he said, "I remember in a special way those brothers and sisters who suffer from hunger. I want to mention the Walk against Hunger promoted by the World Food Programme, the United Nations agency responsible for food assistance." Brazil, which last year saw a massive turnout of 200,000 walkers, is expected to



exceed that figure in several locations across the country.

The King of Swaziland participated in the Walk in Lobamba and released four doves to symbolically banish hunger from the four corners of his country. He was joined on the walk by around 5,000 people.

President Museveni of Uganda walked a full eight kilometres. "Good exercise for a noble cause," he said, leading some 5,500 people in Kampala. Walks took place in five other locations in Uganda, with an estimated 48,000 internally displaced people taking part in war-torn Pader, northern Uganda. Ahead of the walk, Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize winner, sent a letter to South Africans urging them to join the Walk in Johannesburg.

The Walk even took place in the virtual world, as players of the popular on-line game Second Life walked and danced the night away in another dimension.

Recent video on Walk the World 2007 is available from [jonathan.dumont@wfp.org](mailto:jonathan.dumont@wfp.org), and photos from [rein.skullerud@wfp.org](mailto:rein.skullerud@wfp.org)



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\*TNT is a global leader in mail and express delivery;

\*\*Unilever is one of the world's largest consumer goods companies



UN Development Programme

## Publications

# Russia's Regions: Which is Best for Living?

On 15 May 2007, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Russian Federation launched the Human Development Report in the RF for 2006/2007 'Russia's Regions: Goals, Challenges, and Achievements'. It is the eleventh publication in a series of national human development reports started in 1995 by UNDP in cooperation with the Government of the Russian Federation.



scientific studies show deterioration of human potential in Russia over the last 15-20 years. The negative trend can be seen across the board, from education levels and qualifications to health and life expectancy. This entails a decline in living standards of our people and undermines prospects for economic development – the basis for solving social problems.”

Authors of the Report make an attempt to analyze the situation and offer solutions for its improvement. The main findings of the Report are as follows:

In 2003-2004, the Human Development Index (HDI) improved in the vast majority of Russia's regions; however, HDI in more developed subjects of the RF grew faster, so the inequality between regions increased. Apart from Moscow and the Tyumen Oblast autonomous districts, Saint-Petersburg and the Republic of Tatarstan reached the level of developed regions (with HDI over 0.800) according to international HDI standards. Only about a quarter of the country's population lives in the regions with HDI above the national average. These regions have their own resources for social development and are more active in implement-



ing social policies. Least developed regions experience critical problems, but their residents constitute only six percent of the country's population and support from the federal centre is sufficient to give them a substantial leg up provided that it is used more efficiently. However, it remains unclear how to advance human development in numerous regions of the vast 'middle zone', with two thirds of the country's population and scarce resources for development. Mere redistribution of funds from the federal centre will not improve the situation as long as institutional mechanisms for stimulating regional development, including human potential, remain inactive.

Regional MDG indicators show a complex balance of social development

The new Report further elaborates the topic of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adapted for Russia and covered in NHDR 2005 and offers a comparative analysis of current human development issues and indicators used for their assessment. The Report emphasizes the diversity of regional development priorities and opportunities for the improvement of the quality of life, and provides examples of the most successful government programmes implemented in the regions that contribute to the achievement of the MDGs adapted for Russia at the regional and national levels.

In his message to the Report's readers Sergei Mironov, Chairman of the Federation Council, Federal Assembly of the RF, wrote that "in today's world economy many countries base their competitive advantages on the quality of human capital. However, objective indicators and



Mr. Marco Borsotti, UNDP Resident Representative, UN Resident Coordinator in the Russian Federation (left) talks to Mr. Alexander Komuzin, Director of the International Organizations Department of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs



successes and problems in the regions. Economic growth contributed to almost halving of the poverty rate in Russia and improvement of regional indicators: while in 1999 only four percent of regions had poverty rates below 20 percent, by 2005 the share of such regions reached 40 percent. Income deficiency of the poorest strata decreased dramatically: in most regions it is only five percent of total income, although it still exceeds 10 percent in the five least developed regions. However, the higher the income level, the higher income inequality in a region tends to be: the income of the wealthiest 20 percent in Moscow exceeds 20 times the income of the poorest. This is a result

of the low quality of economic growth and unbalanced benefits distribution.

**M**odernization of reproductive behaviour and growth of budget spending on maternity and infant healthcare contributed to the reduction of infant and maternal mortality. Today, in about one third of the regions the level of infant mortality is less than 10 cases per 1,000 new-borns (2005) with regional disparity decreased. However, life expectancy in Russia remains low with growing regional polarization in life expectancy indicators. Life expectancy in the most developed regions, Moscow (71) and the Tyumen Oblast autonomous districts (68), is much higher than the country's average (65). In the least developed regions life expectancy indicators remain very low: the Republic of Tyva – 56, Chita, Amur and Pskov oblasts – 59-60 years. An extremely high level of mortality among men – an acute gender issue in Russia – is the major reason for low indicators in this area.

**T**he dynamics of social diseases also have little dependence on economic growth. Decline in tuberculosis incidence rates is registered only in the European part of Russia where this problem is much less critical than in Siberia and the Far East, the regions with the highest levels of TB incidence and mortality in Russia. Here these indicators continue to grow due to social degradation (higher poverty and marginalization rates, high concen-

tration of penitentiary institutions) and unfavourable climatic conditions.

**T**here is an inverse dependence between HIV prevalence and the level of economic development: HIV is widespread in wealthy regions, particularly those with high incomes (Samara, Irkutsk, Sverdlovsk oblasts, Saint-Petersburg, Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Area), rich in natural resources and lacking well-developed social infrastructure. Income growth so far has had little influence on adoption of a healthy lifestyle in the regions.



*Natalia Voronkova is responsible in UNDP for preparing National Human Development Reports*

**G**ender inequality remains evident in politics and income distribution. Higher income levels in a region tend to entail a larger gap between average wages of men and women and, vice-versa, this differentiation is minor in regions with lower income levels. Another problem is an extremely low representation of women in government: only one region in ten has a level of female representation in the parliament above 20 percent, while in about a quarter of regions this indicator is less than five percent or none. As a rule, there are more women in the parliament in bigger and wealthier regions.

**MDG**-based assessment of social development in Russia's regions demonstrates that social and regional differentiation in the country is growing. To tackle this problem the federal government needs to work more effectively in close cooperation with regions, local governance agencies, business and civil society. The major task of social modernization in Russia's regions requires mobilization of all resources and increased interaction between state and society.



# The Earth's Climate Is Our Common Concern

On 22 May 2007 in Moscow, the United Nations Development Programme and United Company RUSAL signed a memorandum of understanding for the implementation of joint efforts aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions. UC RUSAL is the first company in Russia to join UNDP in its effort to create a global network of projects driven by the goal of addressing the challenge of climate change.

UC RUSAL, the world's largest producer of aluminium and alloys, announced today a new initiative entitled 'Paving The Way To a Safer World', which includes measures to reduce harmful impact on the environment and minimise climate change risks. Signing of a memorandum with UNDP is the first step of the company's carbon reduction initiative.

"The climate change initiative of UC RUSAL marks a new stage in the development of Russian business and underscores the need for further commitment to sustainable development principles and, ultimately, a safer future for the planet. I hope that this initiative and the agreement we have signed today will create additional momentum, urging other Russian companies to implement large-scale measures to reduce emissions and minimise climate change risks," said Marco Borsotti, UNDP Resident Representative in Russia.

This initiative is part of UC RUSAL's wider strategy to secure its dynamic



development as an energy and metals corporation based on the principles of sustainable development.

According to the recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), most likely registered rising trends in the Earth's average temperatures are due to increased concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere produced by human activity.

Since 2000, the companies now comprising UC RUSAL have invested over US \$1 bln in environmental protection projects. RUSAL has allocated US \$1.4 bln for operations reconstruction programmes focused on environmental protection to be implemented in the period from 2007 till 2013. This will allow for the reduction in pollutant emissions by almost 1.5 times by 2015. The larger-scale

modernisation programme will bring all of UC RUSAL's smelting facilities to a single environmental standard.

"As a global company, we believe that UC RUSAL must take an active leadership role in global issues. We realize that leadership is first and foremost about tak-



ing responsibility – responsibility for the environment in the countries where we operate, responsibility in terms of the highest international safety standards and responsibility for the lives of people around us. I believe that the threat of climate change can and should be avoided through practical steps focused on reducing GHG emissions. I hope that the Environmental Care Programme that we are implementing – and that is based on the use of clean energy and modern technologies – as well as the new initiative announced today will become a powerful call for the joint action," said Alexander Bulygin, UC RUSAL CEO.



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## International Child Protection Day Marked in Russia

Can musicians and singers bring health, love and attention to more than 100,000 street kids who drift from one city to another looking for a better life?

Perhaps not, but their music can help shake up the hearts of adults, swaying public consciousness of the plight of these children.

On 1 June 2007, International Child Protection Day, a Great Charity Concert 'Classics & Jazz' gathered popular Russian and international singers and musicians to break down the wall of incomprehension, fear and dislike towards street children. They reminded us of the problem which, to much regret, still exists in Russia.

The starring artists are world-renowned opera soprano Maria Gulegina, legendary jazz, rock and pop singer Larissa Dolina, and virtuoso piano player Denis Matsuev. Maria Gulegina performed a duet with a talented young vocalist from Belarus, Yuri Gorodetsky, to the accompaniment of talented pianist Dmitry Mayboroda, who at 12 is already well-known in the musical world. The concert was accompanied by the 'New Russia' state symphony orchestra. It was an outstanding performance of world-famous classical and popular songs.



The idea of a charity concert was strongly supported by Maria Gulegina. Following her initiative, all participants donated their concert proceeds. Money received from sales of tickets, as well as donations from individuals and companies, will be invested in the United Nations Children's Fund's (UNICEF) Child Protection Programme in Moscow.

The Moscow Government provided great assistance to UNICEF in the organization of the concert. Financial aspects of the concert were covered by UNICEF corporate partners – Amway and Nokia.

The concert was given under the open sky in the famous architectural masterpiece Kolomenskoye. Pianist Denis Matsuev and TV presenter and UNICEF supporter Oksana Fedorova conducted the event.

Over half a century experience and stainless reputation of UNICEF serve as a guarantee for effective investment of donations to the benefit of children.

### Children in the North Caucasus Celebrate Their Day

The UN Children's Fund together with the republican governments organized a series of events devoted to celebration of the International Children's Day in four republics of the North Caucasus – Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia and Dagestan. Over 1,000 children had an opportunity to celebrate this day and demonstrate their solidarity with children living in other parts of the world. "As a child centered organization, UNICEF supports all initiatives aimed at promotion of the best interests of children as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child," says Dr. Rashed Mustafa, Head of UNICEF Office in the North Caucasus. "International Child Protection Day is the best opportunity to bring forward children's agenda."





**UNICEF** partners, Offices of Ombudsmen and NGOs in each republic organized concerts, puppet performances, as well as contests in drawing, dancing, singing, and poem-citing for local children. Children also got presents and souvenirs.

### **Chechnya**

On 25 May, UNICEF through its partner, the Department of Mother and Child Protection at the Office of the Human rights Ombudsman of the Chechen Republic, organized a festival 'Peace to Children of Earth' devoted to International Child Protection Day. More than 300 children took part in the event which included a concert, a puppet show, and a performance by the popular Chechen children's dance ensemble 'Nokhcho'. Competitions were conducted for the best song, drawing, dance, and 'a live microphone' contest took place, when children could come to a microphone to ask question or express an opinion. "Today, I learned that there is a special day to help children understand that they have rights," said 12-year-old Amina Dzhantaeva from Chechnya who attended the event.

### **Ingushetia**

On 31 May, Genesis NGO, a UNICEF partner in Ingushetia, in cooperation with the regional administration, organized the event 'World Without Tears'. The event, held in a boarding school in Sunzheskii region of Ingushetia, was devoted to International Child Protection Day and organized with the



financial and technical support of UNICEF. Sixty children, most of them from vulnerable families, watched a theatre performance and received presents.



### **North Ossetia**

On 1 June, a public discussion 'My Rights and Responsibilities' was organized in the central park of the

republican capital Vladikavkaz. There was a microphone set up in the park, and Child Rights Ombudsman of North Ossetia and volunteers – law students – answered children's questions. Also, a contest for the best asphalt drawing on the topic was conducted. The winners were awarded prizes.

### **Dagestan**

On 5 June, the Child Rights Ombudsman of Dagestan, with the support from UNICEF, organized a conference devoted to International Child Protection Day. The event was entitled 'Dagestan – a Territory Where Children's Rights are Protected'. It was attended by scientists, representatives of public organizations, prosecutor's office, ministries and departments working in the area of children's issues. The participants received brochures and other printing materials with information about children's rights. On the occasion of International Child Protection Day over 500 children received presents and participated in a contest for the best drawing to illustrate the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The best drawings will be published in 400 calendars which will be then given to young artists.



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UN Information Centre

Society

# Human Rights and Poverty Through the Eyes of Children

“Children are always the most vulnerable and, unlike some grown-ups, they are absolutely innocent of all the bad things that are happening to them,” this is the opinion of Maria Gorbacheva, a Moscow schoolgirl who participated in a writing contest for children and youth ‘Human Rights and Poverty’ organized by the United Nations.



Maria Gorbacheva

The United Nations has a special interest and special responsibility for promoting human rights all over the world. However, focusing on the protection of human rights in a narrow sense, outside the broader context of security and development issues, means overlooking fundamental elements of human dignity.

Guided by this reasoning, the UN Department of Public Information and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights announced the contest last October. On the occasion of International Human Rights Day, the best writing entries were to be chosen.

The UN Information Centres network worldwide was closely involved in the dissemination of information about the event. The UNIC in Moscow also contributed to this process. The UNIC staff

disseminated information about this new creative competition directly to its potential participants at regular meetings with university students, schoolchildren and teachers. Our long-time partners – Young Peacekeepers Movement, the UN Association in Russia, Street Children municipal centre, UNESCO chairs, Moscow English Grammar School – helped raise awareness about it.

Why did organizers select ‘Human Rights and Poverty’ as a theme of the contest? As is known, over one sixth of the world population live in poverty – that is, in accordance with the UN criteria, on less than US \$1 per day. But poverty is not only about having no money. It is also about having no resources to meet basic needs of a person and not being able to enjoy basic human rights. The UN views the fight against absolute poverty as an obligation, as a duty of those capable to improve the situation, rather than a charity.

Poverty is often both a consequence and a cause of human rights abuses. Without access to such things as employment, basic healthcare, education and essentials like food, clothing and water, many poor people lack the means to change their lives for the better.

What can be done to reduce poverty? Every university student or school pupil participating in the contest had a chance to offer his or her solution. They were supposed to pick one article from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and use an example from real life to illustrate how a violation of that right had become a consequence or a cause of living in poverty.

Three winning compositions were chosen from each of the six regions of the world, including Russia and the CIS. We at the UNIC were pleased to see that there were two winners from Russia – more than from any other country. Maria Gorbacheva (her observation opens the article) and Julia Savenko are both students of Promom school. Besides, entries of three other participants – Vladimir Bobychev, Anastasia Kucherova and Sergey Lygin – were specially noted by the jury.

On 17 May, a celebration was organized at the UNIC Moscow to honour the winners. Speaking at the award ceremony, Maria Gorbacheva emphasized that from her point of view, the most intolerable human rights violation was that of the rights of children. “Unfortunately, children’s rights are violated, as it seems to me, in many countries of the world, Russia included,” Maria wrote in her composition. She came to such a conclusion while visiting the Moscow orphanage and the Filimonkov orphanage patronized by her school. The essay of this 12-year-old girl is filled with pain and concern about the future of orphans rare at her age. Maria believes it is possible to help them not just by means of developing charity, but also, and in the first place, by simplifying the procedure of establishing guardianship and by making orphanages more accessible to those willing to help.

In line with an established tradition, the award ceremony was held in a friendly atmosphere over a cup of tea. It included a short concert, when young peacekeepers from the choir of the Arensky music school sang, and young talents recited their poems.

**Marina Shirshova**  
UNIC Moscow



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UN Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization

## People

# World Press Freedom Day and Journalists' Destiny

World Press Freedom Day is celebrated annually on 3 May on UNESCO initiative.

This year's theme is violence against media professionals considered by the global community a major threat to freedom of expression.

In his message on the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director-General, said: "In many countries around the world, media professionals are harassed, attacked, detained and even murdered. Being a journalist has never been more dangerous."

The issue of journalists' safety was discussed at the opening ceremony of the 'Eurasia. Social Portrait' photo exhibition in the Central House of Journalists in Moscow. The aim of the exhibition was to show that freedom of expression is a fundamental human right and a prerequisite for finding ways to solve social problems both in Russia and CIS countries.

The exhibition was opened by First Deputy Minister of Culture and Mass Communications, Mr. Lev Nadirov.

At the opening ceremony, the head of the jury, a well-known journalist, Yuri Rost, noted: "This event is not just an opening ceremony but another proof that art can draw attention to social problems."

Mr. Boris Reznik, Deputy of the Russian State Duma, reiterated the importance of UNESCO's policy on press freedom and mentioned the dangers journalists face while conducting their professional duties. He also added that UNESCO press freedom support is significant and reminded that the 2007 laureate of the UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was Anna Politkovskaya, the late Russian Novaya Gazeta columnist. The UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize is awarded annually on World Press Freedom Day. Established in 1997 by UNESCO's Executive Board, it honours a person, organization or institution that has made an outstanding contribution to the defence and/or promotion of press freedom anywhere in the world, and especially when this has been achieved in the face of danger.

The opening ceremony was wrapped up by Mr. Viktor Zubrin, Deputy Director of the Federal Service of the Russian Federation for Drug Traffic Control. "To



© Andrey Radkevich

Andrey Radkevich was awarded first prize for his photo 'Poverty will not spoil childhood'

struggle against such evils as poverty, drug addiction and AIDS is the task of both government agencies and professional journalists. That's why the exhibition 'Eurasia. Social Portrait' is a form of fighting social problems in CIS countries," he said.

Best photos selected during the contest organized by International Journalist Union's Confederation ([www.ru.j.ru](http://www.ru.j.ru)), Eurasia Media Centre ([www.eurasia-media.ru](http://www.eurasia-media.ru)) and International Television and Radio Academy ([www.interatr.org](http://www.interatr.org)), with the financial support of UNESCO, were displayed at the exhibition.

A total of 135 photo and TV journalists from 17 European and Asian countries submitted 250 photos and 26 TV programmes for the competition.



© Said Hussein Tsarnaev

Said Hussein Tsarnaev was awarded third prize for his photo 'Cycling through'

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Highlight

# Pop Culture Helps to Fight AIDS



The United Nations Population Fund, the Staying Alive Foundation and MTV International Networks organized the first workshop on youth pop culture, media and HIV/AIDS. Experts, journalists, celebrities and youth from 12 countries gathered in Istanbul to explore more effective ways of using youth pop culture for the promotion of healthy life styles and HIV prevention. Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Tajikistan, Moldova, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey and Morocco were represented by country teams.

“Young people of today have never lived in a world without AIDS,” says Aleksander Bodiroza, UNFPA Programme Specialist. “HIV is their everyday reality, though people tend to forget about it. We have been fighting HIV for more than 20 years now, but it is still one of the fastest spreading infections, especially in Russia and Ukraine. We need new strategies and broader coverage. We started working with MTV and celebrities because teenagers trust them.”



Russia was represented by a young singer Aleksey Vorobyov, the winner of the Russian television talent show ‘Secret of Success’. “I took part in this initiative because HIV is about my generation, it concerns my friends and people who listen to my songs,” says Aleksey, who is 19 years old. “Today the official statistics

tells us that over 360 thousand people are living with HIV in our country, while in reality it could be more than one million. Just imagine that more than 80 percent of them have not had their thirtieth birthday yet! Many governmental and non-governmental organizations are working to prevent the disease, but even this is not enough. I think we need to start speaking openly about HIV, not frightening youth, but telling them how to protect themselves, showing a positive example. I myself am ready to do everything I can so that my friends and fans always stay healthy.”

During four days young trainers from the Y-PEER network of peer-educators, supported by UNFPA, conducted activities and discussions to help celebrity participants better address their audiences on youth health issues. The main slogan of the workshop was: “Ask, don’t be afraid, don’t ignore.” During the workshop many questions were asked and as many common myths about HIV were debunked. Tim Thomas, Director of the MTV Staying Alive Foundation, gave an example: “Many adolescents think that you cannot be infected with HIV the first time you have sex. This is a big mistake, infection can result from any unprotected sexual contact – it makes no difference to the virus.”



In future, celebrities and journalists will work together not only to prevent HIV but also to address stigma and discrimination. Kevin Moody and Raul Fransen of the international network of young people living with HIV, Young Positives, spoke about their lives and current work. They shared their experience of working with people who live with HIV. For many of the journalists this was the first time they could discuss these issues so openly. Participants also discussed the line between being tactful and tactless and the kind of approaches that can be hurtful to people living with HIV. The speakers stressed that media campaigns and other activities addressing HIV are best developed with the involvement of people liv-



ing with HIV. On the other hand, they should have an opportunity to decide themselves to what extent they want to be involved.

Each open discussion can help save one more life. Therefore, during their stay in Istanbul, the participants spent a lot of time trying to develop preventive approaches that are attractive to youth and, at the same time, make them think. Theatre, dance, music, games and internet are increasingly used in HIV prevention efforts in Russia and world-wide.

The workshop participants decided to develop two year national action plans to fight HIV/AIDS, with involvement of celebrities and journalists. But some are ready to act right now. Aleksey Vorobyov is already planning to organize a charity concert and to use each interview he gives as an opportunity to raise awareness about HIV. "I am convinced that we are shaping our own future," says Aleksey. "Art helps us become more confident, which in turn helps us to be healthy and successful. I will do my best to

make sure that HIV does not spoil my generation's dreams about the future."

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Photos: UNFPA, Turkey

**Note by the editor:**

Established in 2001, Y-PEER is a comprehensive approach to the promotion of health and well-being of young people in the Arab States, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and East Africa through strategic and innovative communication and partnerships. Its primary focus is prevention of HIV and promotion of sexual and reproductive health, and gender equality. The Y-PEER initiative takes its origins in grassroots movements and continues to be directed and implemented by young people from countries all over the world.

Staying Alive is an Emmy award-winning global HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention campaign for young people. MTV is an unparalleled worldwide cultural phenomenon, a leader of global cultural trends, with a devoted following of youth viewers, providing for an unrivalled opportunity to communicate health related messages to young people around the globe and produce an effect on youth culture and social norms internationally. MTV is the world's most widely distributed and most-watched television network, reaching more than 482 million households in 171 countries and territories. It is a part of Viacom International, Inc. The latest component of the Staying Alive campaign is the Staying Alive Foundation, established in 2004, which presents twice yearly Staying Alive Awards in support of young people around the world who are working to prevent the spread of HIV among their peer groups and in their communities.



# Drop of Blood – Drop of Life



On 14 June 2007, World Blood Donor Day was celebrated for the fourth time throughout the world to recognize the special role of voluntary non-remunerated blood donors in saving millions of human lives.



The theme of this year's celebrations was 'Safe Blood for Safe Motherhood' to highlight the importance of safe donor blood for the lives and health of thousands of mothers and their newborns. Every year, more than 500,000 mothers worldwide can be saved with sufficient and safe blood products that do not contain human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), hepatitis viruses and other blood borne infectious agents.

Blood safety issue is critical for many countries, in particular for Russia with its progressing HIV epidemic and remunerated donorship.

The World Health Organization (WHO) pays special attention to blood transfusion safety mechanisms since transfusion-related transmission of HIV can and should be controlled.

Another evidence of that attention is implementation of the WHO-EC

joint project 'HIV/AIDS Prevention and Combating in the Russian Federation, Phase II'. That covers four pilot areas: Kaliningrad Oblast, Irkutsk Oblast, St. Petersburg and Leningrad Oblast, and Krasnodar Kray. The project specialists regard the Blood Safety (BS) component as a set of measures aimed at improving standards for collection, testing, processing, storage, and distribution of human blood and blood components when destined for transfusion in order to assure the highest level of quality and security. The project provides training for medical personnel working in blood service; modern equipment for blood transfusion stations (BTS); it supports development of blood safety standards at the national level and promotes principles of voluntary non-remunerated donorship through regional mass-media.

Within the framework of the project WHO, together with the Russian Union of Journalists, launched the National Media contest 'Donor of Russia' for journalists covering the aspects of donor blood safety in the context of HIV epidemic. Despite quite a narrow topic, the issue got a wide response from different regions of the Russian Federation. The jury of the contest had to consider over 100 publications, articles, notes, video and audio

materials. The main prizes went to journalists from Volgograd (Rostov Oblast), Irkutsk and Kogalym (Tyumen' Oblast).

The contest award ceremony, along with the press-conference timed to World Blood Donor Day, was held

### From the article 'Drop of Blood – Drop of Life':

«...voluntary donors come to the blood transfusion stations inspired by the noble idea to save someone's life and thus to do his human duty to help people around. Voluntary donors are not interested in fees or rewards; in some cases they might think it could do good for their health. Right here, within this donor group the risk to get infected with HIV or hepatitis viruses is significantly lower. Regular and non-remunerated donorship is the best option accepted throughout the world and promoted by the World Health Organization...»

**Lubov' Sukharevskaya,**  
*Baykalskie Vesti*  
2nd Award Winner,  
'Donor of Russia'  
National Media Contest



on 8 June in Moscow in the House of Journalists.

Representatives of research institutes, governmental and non-governmental organizations, the European Commission, international agencies and mass-media were invited to the event.

In her opening speech, Dr. Corinna Reinicke, WHO HIV/AIDS Programme Coordinator, stated that development of voluntary and non-remunerated donorship in the Russian Federation is one of the most important steps to achieve blood transfusion safety and contain the spread of HIV/AIDS epidemic. Dr. Reinicke also stressed that this initiative should be considered together with other important elements of WHO integrated strategy for blood safety, including establishment of a nationally-coordinated blood transfusion service; multi-level testing of all donated blood, as well as effective clinical use of blood, and the use of simple alternatives to transfusion, where possible.



Speaking about positive changes in Russian transfusiology, Prof. Evgeny Zhiburt, Chief Transfusiologist of the National Medical Surgical Centre, mentioned dramatically increasing volumes of plasma placed in quarantine (the country average of 20-25 percent) and use of advanced technologies for plasma viral inactivation.

Speaking about results of the 'HIV/AIDS Prevention and Combating in the Russian Federation,



Phase II' WHO-EC project, Dr. Igor Baranov, WHO specialist on blood safety, noted that the main achievements of the trainings include increased commitment of the specialists towards pronounced responsibility for blood quality control for more effective prevention of HIV and other blood borne infections, and incorporation of key management quality principles into everyday practice.

Dr. Vladimir Sapsay, Chief Doctor of Irkutsk Regional Blood Transfusion Station, spoke about achievements in the Irkutsk Oblast and made an overview of available methods used for effective donor selection and control of donated blood and blood products.

The issues covered by the conference raised keen interest of the journalists invited to the event.

This year, the Donor Day was marked in many other cities of the Russian Federation. In the regions covered by the project TV spots promoting blood donation appeared on local TV channels; leaflets and other information materials were distributed among specialists and donors at blood transfusion stations; streets were decorated with colourful posters and banners.

Thanks to the efforts and high commitment of numerous specialists, each year new volunteers join the All-Russian Donor Movement. Strengthening positive trends and ensuring sustainability of the imple-

mented activities constitute the main goals of 'HIV/AIDS Prevention and Combating in the Russian Federation, Phase II' WHO-EC project, which will be finalized at the turn of the year 2007.

**Natalia Shapovalova**  
HIV/AIDS Communication  
Officer WHO Moscow  
'HIV/AIDS Prevention and Combating  
in the Russian Federation,  
Phase II' WHO-EC project

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

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# Health in Emergencies

**WHO**, in close cooperation with other UN organizations, ICRC and relevant NGOs, organized the third Public Health Pre-deployment Training (PHPD). The training took place from 15 to 28 April 2007 in Moscow and Noginsk with the financial support of the Russian Ministry of Emergency (EMERCOM).

The aim of the two weeks training course was to familiarize public health professionals with WHO work in humanitarian emergencies, to prepare participants for future emergency operations (including a 2 days simulation exercise), and to create a roster of experts to be deployed on behalf of WHO in health crises and emergencies in the future.

The PHPD course is an important step towards improving the capacity of the international humanitarian community in emergencies. The course is designed to provide health and other professionals with professional, personal, and operational skills they would need to work as part of public health response teams in emergency settings. The course provides information on humanitarian reforms and new coordination mechanisms, including the United Nations Health Cluster approach, which has been developed to improve coordination on the ground.

The Moscow course was organized by the WHO Department for Health Action in Crises with the collaboration of the WHO Regional Office for the European Region (EURO), and the WHO Office in Moscow and was co-sponsored by the Government of the Russian Federation.

Thirty-three participants from all over the world representing donor organizations, governments, ministries of health, the UN system, WHO included, attended the course.

They were joining forces to learn more about humanitarian action in crises and to act efficiently in international teams under extreme stress situations. Experts from WHO and other UN organizations,

Moscow, was, undoubtedly, a major element of the training. The participants had to implement their knowledge in a simulation of an earthquake under almost real field conditions. Fortunately, the weather was fine that night, so the overnight stay in army tents was a pleasant adventure.

The results of the performance of each participant were analyzed so that the best could be included in the deployment



including UNICEF and OCHA, gave interactive lectures covering themes of human rights and protection issues, communicable diseases and immunization, nutrition, maternal, newborn and child health, mental health, information technology and communication, and security in emergencies.

A two-day simulation exercise in Noginsk, an EMERCOM training centre near

roster. After the registration, the person can be asked to depart to an upcoming emergency in any part of the world on a short notice (24 hours) for assisting in restoration of the public health system and improving the capacity of the international humanitarian agencies working in the area.

**WHO** would like to thank EMERCOM and the UN agencies that helped to make this training a success.



## Opinions

# Refugees and New Legislation on Employment of Foreigners



Douglas Carman

Article 17 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees provides that "The Contracting State shall accord to refugees lawfully staying in their

territory the most favourable treatment accorded to nationals of a foreign country in the same circumstances, as regards to engage in wage-earning employment." Refugees in the Russian Federation, however, face significant difficulties in exercising this right to work due to real and perceived inconsistencies between the current refugee law and the legal procedures for foreign citizens to obtain registration

and work permits. These difficulties have intensified due to the recent increase in attention to and enforcement of laws affecting foreigners in Russia. This article describes some of the fundamental problems faced by asylum seekers and refugees in the labour force and how UNHCR Moscow and its implementing partners are actively engaged in developing solutions for people of concern to the UNHCR.



In the past, individuals with refugee or temporary asylum status under Russian law and UNHCR mandate refugees were generally free to work in a variety of industries due to the informal approach of the authorities to enforcing labour and migration laws. Though the status of some people of concern to UNHCR under Russian law was not entirely clear, refugees recognized by UNHCR were generally not prevented from working by the authorities. In the past year, the Federal Migration Service (FMS) resources and professional capacity have been greatly increased in order to accomplish the challenging task of regularizing migration controls in the Russian Federation. However, this positive development has led to problems for those foreigners whose legal status is not adequately defined under current law. Due to some contradicting legislation in the area of asylum law, the rights and responsibilities of people of concern to UNHCR in the Russian Federation are currently not entirely clear.

The most important problem for many of our mandate refugees is the lack of clarity with regard to their right to employment. Article 8 of the Federal Law on Refugees provides that refugees recognized under the national procedure of the Russian Federation are entitled to work in any capacity, just as Russian citizens. In fact, the FMS interprets the Law on Refugees to also allow asylum-seekers whose application for refugee status or temporary asylum is still pending permission to work. The application of this federal law provides asylum-seekers and refugees an important means of support for themselves and their families. One significant problem many UNHCR mandate refugees have faced, is that unless they are recognized by the national authorities, they would fall out of the scope of Law on Refugees and the rights provided to recognized refugees. Because of this, only a positive interpretation of UNHCR mandate status by the FMS would supply adequate grounds to issue a permission to work to refugees recognized under UNHCR's mandate.

Further complicating the employment prospects for refugees are the recent changes in laws affecting permission to work in specific economic spheres. On 15 November 2006, the Russian Government issued Regulation No. 683 'On the Establishment in 2007 of the Permitted Quota of Foreign Workers Employed by Economic Entities Operating in the

Sphere of Retail Sales on the Territory of the Russian Federation', which represented a major change in legislation concerning the labour activities of foreigners in Russia. Among other provisions, this regulation established a 40 percent quota on the number of foreigners permitted to work as sellers in retail markets from 15 January 2007, with the quota reduced to 0 percent by 1 April 2007. A number of categories of labour were excluded from this quota, for example, loaders, cleaners, and duty guards, among others. Properly documented foreigners may still be engaged in these categories of labour, but the consequences of this restriction have affected all retail market employees.

Introduction of the new regulations caused a great deal of concern in the refugee community as many refugees work in retail markets in a variety of capacities. First of all, the new laws greatly restrict the varieties of jobs a refugee is permitted to perform consequently reducing job opportunities available. Furthermore, the implementation of these laws has caused many markets to lose enough retailers to have a significant negative impact on revenue generated. With markets operating at a reduced capacity or, in some cases, completely shutting down, a lot of the positions refugees could fill, such as loaders or retailer assistants, are actually no longer available. Consequently, refugees in Russia, who already struggle on a daily basis to provide food and shelter for their families, are facing a dramatic loss in opportunities for employment. Unfortunately, UNHCR does not have the resources to offer long-term financial support for such individuals and their families, so a more durable solution should be developed with the support of our implementing partners and the Russian government.

In addition to regulation concerning the ability of foreigners to work in retail markets, on 18 November, 2006, the Code "On Administrative Violations," was amended to greatly increase the fines for employers without a permit for employing a foreign work force and the fine for employers hiring foreign workers who do not have a work permit. The fine for a violation of the former is up to 20,000 rubles and the maximum fine for the latter is up to 5,000 rubles. Furthermore, employers can be prosecuted under the Criminal Code, as Article 322 of this code establishes penalties for organizing the illegal entry of foreigners into the country, with a

penalty of imprisonment for up to 5 years. Stories in the mass media in the past year have many references to prosecutors considering applying this Article, and even if such prosecutions are carried out against only the most egregious offenders, the publicity surrounding such arrests is enough to cause great apprehension in employers to hiring any foreigners at all. A comment to this Article explains that it does not apply to individuals who have arrived in Russia to apply for asylum, but not all employers know the law well enough to understand this distinction, or they are not confident enough that this distinction would be observed by law enforcement authorities. This has caused many employers to simply fire their refugee employees in order to avoid the possible costs and complications of employing foreigners of any category. The new employment laws have been widely covered in the press, but specific reference to the status of refugees has been absent from FMS public information campaigns. One solution to this problem would be to cooperate with the FMS to provide employers with information about the implications of the new laws, and include clear, unambiguous information about how these laws affect refugees.

Currently, UNHCR is working on a variety of legal and social solutions for people affected by the new laws discussed above. The legal solutions involve working with the FMS and other relevant agencies to clarify the rights of refugees and asylum seekers under Russian laws. At a recent roundtable, UNHCR offered possible amendments to the Law on Refugees, including the provisions on the right to work. On the social side, our implementing partner Equilibre-Solidarity provides education services to refugee families, including language and computer skills training, to raise their qualifications and employment prospects. UNHCR Moscow continues to take various measures to alleviate the difficulties many refugees and persons of concern are experiencing at this challenging time of transition.

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United Nations Association of Russia

## A Lesson in Diplomacy

On 9-13 April, Moscow State Institute of International Affairs (University) hosted the Moscow International Model UN, a major role play in Europe and Asia based on simulation of UN sessions. It is held by the United Nations Association of Russia and MSIA-University under the aegis of the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

During five days, participants of the role play took part in discussions in Russian and English in the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOS, International Court of Justice, and the Human Rights Council.

“Sixteen years ago, when the Model UN was created, nobody presumed that it would be so popular and would be held not only in New York and Geneva, but also in Beijing, Delhi, Yaroslavl and Nizny Novgorod,” MSIA Rector

Ambassador Anatoly Torkunov noted at the grand opening. “This year students of 67 Russian and 40 foreign universities representing 24 countries are among the participants.”

The Model demands from participants to do a lot of preparatory work: a delegate should study the history and foreign policy of the country he or she represents and to know well its



However, the Model UN is not just a role play, it is a school of real diplomacy. Here the most acute problems of the modern world are discussed: international terrorism, fighting poverty, climate change, status of women, etc. High level guests speak about the status of the Conference. Russian MFA Vice-Minister, Mr. Alexander Yakovenko, UN Resident Coordinator in Russia, Mr. Marco



position according to the agenda. In just a few days, participants acquire knowledge and necessary skills of running negotiations, finding mutually acceptable solutions, and talking to the audience. Every spring, about 800 participants from different towns and cities of Russia and CIS, as well as other countries including the USA, France, UK, China, and Germany come to Moscow.



Borsotti, Chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, Mr. Konstantin Kosachev, made speeches at the opening of the Model UN. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon sent a welcome message to the participants.

“In today’s world, the role of multi-lateral diplomacy is growing,” stressed Alexander Yakovenko. “And the Model UN programme corresponds to the reality of modern diplomacy.”

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# Summary

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

## UN/ UN Secretary-General Message on World Environment Day

"The theme for World Environment Day 2007 – 'Melting Ice: A Hot Topic!' – reflects the impact that climate change is having in all regions," the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon writes in his message on the Day's occasion. "And let each of us pledge to do our part to fight climate change."

## WFP/ Global Walk to Stamp out Child Hunger

On May 13, hundreds of thousands of people in around 100 countries stepped out with the United Nations World Food Programme, to call for an end to child hunger. In all 24 time zones, from East Asia to the Pacific, people took to their feet to draw attention to an unacceptable fact: 18,000 children die of hunger daily on a planet that produces more than enough food to feed every inhabitant.

## UNDP/ Russia's Regions: Which is Best for Living?

Economic growth contributed to almost halving of the poverty rate in Russia. However, the higher the income level, the higher income inequality in a region tends to be. This is one of the main findings of the Human Development Report in the RF for 2006/2007, 'Russia's Regions: Goals, Challenges, and Achievements.'

## UNDP/ The Earth Climate Is Our Common Concern

UC RUSAL, the world's largest producer of aluminium and alloys, and the United Nations Development Programme signed a memorandum of understanding regarding a preparatory project designed to accelerate greenhouse gas emissions reduction efforts among industrial companies.

## UNICEF/ Russia Celebrates International Child Protection Day

On 1st June, 2007, International Child Protection Day, a big charity concert 'Classics & Jazz', initiated by UNICEF, brought together popular Russian and international singers and musicians to assist street children. Meanwhile, a series of events to celebrate the International Children's Day was organized in four republics of the North Caucasus.

## UNIC/ Human Rights and Poverty through the Eyes of Children

"Unfortunately, children's rights are violated, as it seems to me, in many countries of the world, Russia included", – a Moscow schoolgirl Maria Gorbacheva wrote in her composition, which won her the victory in a writing contest for children and youth 'Human Rights and Poverty' organized by the United Nations. Maria and other winners and laureates were honored at the UN Information Centre in Moscow.

## UNESCO/ World Press Freedom Day and Journalists' Destiny

This year, the World Press Freedom Day's theme is the problem of violence against media professionals. Violence against journalists has been also discussed during the opening ceremony of the photo exhibition 'Eurasia. Social portrait' unveiled in the Central House of Journalists in Moscow. The exhibition was dedicated to freedom of expression – one of the most important human rights.

## UNFPA/ Pop Culture Helps to Fight AIDS

The United Nations Population Fund, Staying Alive Foundation and MTV International Networks have organized the first workshop on Youth Pop Culture, Media and HIV/AIDS. Experts, journalists celebrities and youth from 12 countries: Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Tajikistan, Moldova, Serbia, Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey and Morocco gathered in Istanbul.

## WHO/ Drop of Blood – Drop of Life

On 14 June 2007, World Blood Donor Day was celebrated for the fourth time throughout the world. To mark the date, WHO, together with the Russian Union of Journalists, awarded the winners of the National Media contest 'Donor of Russia' for the journalists covering the aspects of donor blood safety in the context of HIV/AIDS epidemic.

## WHO/ Health in Emergencies

From 15 to 28 April 2007, WHO organized the third Public Health Pre-deployment Training in Moscow and Noginsk. The course became an important step towards improving the capacity of the international humanitarian community in emergencies. The results of the performance of each participant were analyzed, and only the best will be asked if they are willing to be registered in a deployment roster. Those in the roster shall be ready in 24 hours to depart to an upcoming emergency in any part of the world and to assist there in restoration of the public health system.

## UNHCR/ Refugees and New Legislation on Employment of Foreigners

Further complicating the employment prospects for refugees are the recent changes in laws affecting permission to work in specific economic spheres. This has caused many employers to simply fire their refugee employees in order to avoid the possible costs and complications of employing foreigners of any category.

## UNA-Russia/ A Lesson in Diplomacy

On April 9-13, the Moscow International Model UN was conducted in Moscow State Institute of International Affairs. It is the biggest role game in Europe and Asia, imitating sessions of UN bodies. This year, students from 67 Russian higher schools and 40 higher schools of other countries took part in the Model UN.

*United Nations*



## Millennium Development Goals

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

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

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