

# U N IN RUSSIA

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Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

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**President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev,  
UNESCO Director General Koïchiro Matsuura,  
and ITAR-TASS Director General Vitaly Ignatenko  
at the 10th World Congress of the Russian Press**

## Interview /5

"The increase of the number of new HIV cases has somewhat slowed down in some countries. However, 150 thousand new HIV cases were registered last year in several Eastern European and Central Asian countries", said UNAIDS Executive Director, Dr. Peter Piot, who co-chaired the recent International AIDS Conference in Moscow

## Publications /9

The number of births in Russia has increased and the mortality went down. However, according to authors of *Demographic Policy in Russia: from Reflection to Action* analytic report, there are yet no grounds to believe that the goal of the state to raise the size of population to 145 million persons will be reached

## Society /14

In the past 10 years, the tobacco production in Russia has doubled, while the death rate from diseases related to tobacco consumption has increased from 250 to 400 thousand people, i.e. more than 1.6 times. These alarming facts were released at the IV Russian conference 'Doctors against Tobacco'

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## The UN Secretary-General Message for World Environment Day 2008

Addiction is a terrible thing. Our world is in the grip of a dangerous carbon habit.

Our dependence on carbon-based energy has caused a significant build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Last year, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change put the final nail in the coffin of global warming sceptics.

The environmental, economic and political implications of global warming are profound. Ecosystems – from mountains to oceans, from the Poles to the tropics – are undergoing rapid change. Low-lying cities face inundation, fertile lands are turning to desert, and weather patterns are becoming ever more unpredictable.

The cost will be born by all. The poor will be hardest hit by weather-related disasters and by soaring price inflation for staple foods, but even the richest nations face the prospect of economic recession and a world in conflict over diminishing resources. Mitigating climate change, eradicating poverty, and promoting economic and political stability all demand the same solution: we must kick the carbon habit. This is the theme for World Environment Day 2008. 'Kick the Habit: Towards a Low Carbon Economy' recognizes the damaging extent of our addiction, and it shows the way forward.



While the estimated costs of climate change are incalculable, the price tag for fighting it may be less than any of us may have thought. Some estimates put the cost at less than one per cent of global gross domestic product – a cheap price indeed for waging a global war.

Even better news is that technologies already exist or are under development to make our consumption of carbon-based fuels cleaner and more efficient and to harness the renewable power of sun, wind and waves.

Around the world, nations, cities, organizations and businesses are looking afresh at green options. Earlier this year, the UN Environment Programme launched a climate neutral network – CN Net – to energize this growing trend. Its inaugural members, which include countries, cities and companies, are pioneers in a movement that I believe will increasingly define environmental, economic and political discourse and decision making over the coming decades.

The message of World Environment Day 2008 is that we are all part of the solution. Whether you are an individual, an organization, a business or a government, there are many steps you can take to reduce your carbon footprint. It is message we all must take to heart.

*(Abridged)*

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## Events

# UNESCO Director-General in Moscow: the First Meeting with President Medvedev

From 9 to 12 June 2008, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, paid the eighth visit to the Russian Federation in his capacity as Director-General. As a highlight of the visit, Mr. Matsuura had an extended discussion with Dmitry Medvedev, President of Russia. Preceding that meeting they participated in the opening of the 10th World Congress of the Russian Press.

The anniversary Congress of the Russian Press brought together representatives from over 70 countries. Speaking at the opening ceremony, the Director-General highlighted “the value that UNESCO attaches to addressing the communications and information challenges facing the international community in these early years of the twenty first century.” Mr. Matsuura referred to UNESCO's constitutional commitment to promote “the free flow of ideas by word and image” and emphasized the importance of languages in this regard, in particular as we celebrate 2008 as the International Year of Languages.

During his stay in Moscow, the Director-General also met with Mr. Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mr. Andrey Fursenko, Minister of Education and Science; Ms. Ludmilla Shvetsova, First Deputy Mayor of Moscow;



Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Alexis II and Metropolitan of Smolensk and Kaliningrad Kirill.

During these meetings the Director-General expressed his appreciation of the cooperation of the Russian Federation with UNESCO that he felt had immensely strengthened over the recent years. UNESCO has established close working relations in all areas of its competence not only with the federal, but also with the Moscow city authorities and various regions of the Russian Federation.

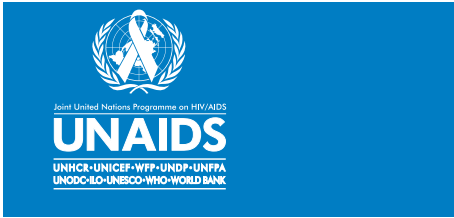
President Medvedev, referring to the G8 Summit organized in St. Petersburg in 2006, in which the Director-General had participated, highlighted the importance for the world leaders to honour their commitment to the Education for All. The President also expressed his appreciation of UNESCO's assistance in restoring the education system in the Chechen Republic.

On 10 June, the Director-General received an honorary doctorate from Professor Philippov, Rector of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, and delivered a lecture on the challenges facing higher education at the beginning of the 21st century to students and professors of the university.

During his stay in Moscow, the Director-General addressed the Round Table of the Children's and Youth Forum ‘Olympic Friendship’ and visited, together with the First Deputy Mayor of Moscow, Kolomenskoye Museum-Reserve, including the World Heritage listed Church of the Ascension.



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Highlights

## Eurovision Stars against AIDS



The opening day of this year's Eurovision song contest, 18 May, coincided with the 25th International AIDS Candlelight Memorial - a civil society movement for AIDS remembrance, awareness and community action. The Eurovision Song Contest was first held in 1956 and since then has become a hugely popular event of a truly international scope.



Network of People Living with HIV to denounce the challenges that people living with HIV face in their everyday life.

“I am proud of this project, which has brought together a group of talented singers from across Europe,” said Sergei Furgal, Director a.i., UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Eastern Europe and Central Asia. “Through their music, songs and their strong personal commitment to improving the lives of youth I know that they will be compelling and eloquent advocates in focusing attention on HIV and making a difference in the AIDS response.”

To mark the occasion, UNAIDS brought together Eurovision participants in Belgrade to draw attention to the issue of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV as part of its 'Stars against AIDS' project.

The singers chosen to represent Georgia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Macedonia at this year's Eurovision joined thousands of people around the world by coming together in solidarity to light candles and remember those affected by AIDS.

Diana Gurtskaya, who represented Georgia and was one of the main catalysts of the 'Stars against AIDS' initiative, spoke of her concern about discrimination against people living with HIV.

“We cannot boost the level of tolerance in the society unless we change ourselves”, said Gurtskaya. “We should do everything it takes to make sure that people living with HIV can enjoy life just like everyone else.”

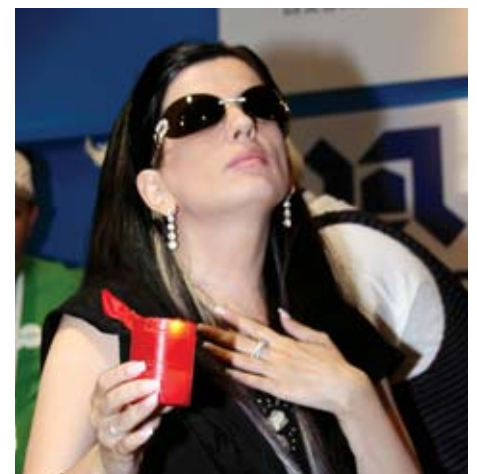


Ani Lorak

“A few years ago I was shocked to learn how pressing the AIDS challenge was in Ukraine,” said Ukrainian singer Ani Lorak. “Then I realized that there was no way that I could stay away from the issue, and I decided that I had to do everything it takes to help.”

“People living with HIV are just like everyone else. By hugging them and shaking their hands I wanted to demonstrate that AIDS is not transmitted through friendship,” Ani Lorak continued.

The artists attended a press conference with the Deputy Ministry of Health of Serbia and Serbian representatives of the



Diana Gurtskaya



The Eurovision participants from Georgia, Bulgaria, Ukraine and Macedonia light candles to remember those affected by AIDS

Interview

## Crude Estimation



"HIV response often covers spheres, where the government does not work and where no mechanisms exist to involve it... Business is also to be involved," says UN Under Secretary-General, Dr. Peter Piot.



Dr. Peter Piot

**A**t the recent EECAAC conference in Moscow, a lot was said about money.

**W**hat can you do? Humanity spends significant amounts of money on this problem. However, these expenses often prove to be ineffective. That is why in response plans, preference is given to crude estimation. If expenses decrease, it will allow to save more human lives through prevention and treatment. Dr. Peter Piot, EECAAC Co-Chair, UN Under Secretary-General, and UNAIDS Executive Director, told *Itogi* magazine about the development of the worldwide HIV response business project and the role of Russia in it. *UN in Russia* publishes this interview by *Itogi* magazine authority.

– Mr. Piot, about two years ago I heard your speech, in which you mentioned a management crisis in HIV and AIDS response. What has changed since then?

**N**ow we finally start seeing what economists would call investments return. It did take some time. But this is normal because outcomes of prevention programmes in response to any infection are usually noticed only 5-7 years later. Three million people are currently receiving antiretroviral therapy worldwide, which is an unprecedented case in international collaboration. Nevertheless, I have to agree that the management in this area could be better.

– Can you give any examples?

**I**n some countries of our region ARV medications cost much more than in Western Europe. This means that tenders are conducted by the government ineffectively. Too many mediators become part of the process, and each of them “nips off” a share. We need to achieve more effective determination of prices for medications. Another example is voluntary HIV testing and counselling.

In some countries this service costs a dollar per person while in others as much as 500 dollars. It is easy to calculate that if medications were twice less expensive twice more people would be able to receive ARV. The same holds true with regard to testing and overall prevention.

– *For a long time figures proving an uncontrolled growth of the epidemic were the principal argument for raising funds for HIV response in the international community. However, data on epidemic decline in some parts of the world has recently been published. Has it become more difficult to raise funds?*

– We are still far from getting the situation under control. The increase of the number of new HIV cases has somewhat slowed down in some countries. However, 150 thousand new HIV cases were registered last year in several Eastern European and Central Asian countries. There are definitely certain difficulties with fundraising. And a paradox emerges: when people see that programmes are bearing result, and positive trends have been set, they might decide that the goal has been achieved, and it is time to move on to a different problem. If on the contrary, they do not notice any progress, they might think that it is pointless to invest funds in an abyss. And they turn to different problems, as there are plenty of them. Meanwhile, AIDS treatment requires more and more money. Even in Russia ARV therapy is received by less than half of those who need it. The problem is that treatment becomes more and more expensive because of medication resistance. Thus, second and third range medications are introduced. Prevention programmes do not work without money

either. We will be in need of funds for a long time. I would be happy to say that HIV response is over, and I am leaving my position because the situation has been resolved. Unfortunately, this is not true.

– *Nevertheless, Dr. Gennadiy Onishchenko, Chief Epidemiologist of Russia, states that now it is time to reconsider our approaches to HIV epidemic. You agreed that in the area of AIDS response it is time to shift from crisis management measures to a long-term strategy. What is it all about?*

– **T**he worldwide success of ARV is obvious nowadays. The same does not hold true of prevention. Today, it is necessary to introduce as many prevention programmes as possible. To increase their effectiveness one has to be pragmatic and try to look at things impartially. Let us talk about drugs issue, for example. I think that in Russia, they need to introduce substitution therapy programmes already working in many countries. It is also necessary to legalize same sex marriages. No doubt, this is a difficult decision both politically and practically. Nevertheless, if this step is not taken, the situation with HIV will keep deteriorating. Another very important and recently developed feature of the epidemic is its feminization. Forty percent of new cases in your region are registered among women. This figure differs drastically from that of five years ago. Meanwhile, the fair sex still thinks that it is none of its problems. And certainly investing in the future one needs to invest in children. Quality educational programmes for school students are absolutely necessary.

– *It was announced at the conference that Russia would become a Global Fund donor. But until now Russia used to be its*

*beneficiary. Shall we be able to cope with HIV on our own?*

– **I** encourage the intention of the Russian Government to put an end to Russia's dependence on foreign assistance. Economic growth facilitates solution of problems, and I am aware that Russia has many problems. As for the government funding, you are able to have enough of it in your country. However, HIV response often touches upon areas, where the government does not work and where no mechanisms exist to involve it. For this reason, I was happy to hear that 30 million roubles had been allocated to NGOs for working in these areas. Business is also to be involved. By the way, what is required of it is not even working for the good of the society with high goals in mind. Everything is much more pragmatic: there are occupations, in which people are much more exposed to the risk of becoming HIV infected, than others, for example, in mining or transportation. Primarily, this applies to the fields with high workforce mobility or a large number of migrants.

**H**ere, private businessmen and not the state should take care of prevention. For businesses, these programmes are simply profitable. And a good businessman will be interested to do it.

– *Can Russia count on business philanthropists' money in HIV response? One of the wealthiest people of the world, Bill Gates, is known to donate huge funds to this cause...*

– **T**here are quite a few Russians among the richest people of the world. I believe that sooner or later Russia will have its own Bill Gates. But it seems to me, this person will not replicate what has already been done by the predecessor and will come into philanthropy field with a programme of his/her own. By the way, if he/she needs some advice as to which priorities to choose, in which problematic areas to invest, give him/her my contact details. Let them phone me.

**Alla Astakhova**



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## 'Youth Village 2008': Act to Be Heard!

Within the framework of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference (EECAAC) held on 3-5 May 2008, UNFPA organized a 'Youth Village', bringing together youth from across the region for a dialogue on HIV/AIDS. The idea of youth's participation in fighting HIV was first developed at the International Conference on AIDS in 2002 in Barcelona. Thus, the 'Youth Village' is another expression of a growing trend toward greater

involvement of young people. With 80 % of cases of HIV infections occurring among people younger than 30 years, as noted by Ms. Bettina Maas, Acting Director of UNFPA's Division for Arab States, Europe and Central Asia, youth participation in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment makes a lot of sense.

'Youth Village-2008' was organized by youth-peer network activists

from 30 regions in Russia with support of UNFPA and UNAIDS. Olesya Kochkina, UNFPA focal point on youth and HIV/AIDS, noted that the objective of the 'Youth Village-2008' was to mobilize youth efforts to fight the HIV epidemic in the region and to share ideas on youth problems in the context of the epidemic. She also stressed the importance of Youth-Adult Partnerships and of providing more opportunities to young people to be involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS.



There were over 300 participants between 16 and 30 years at the Conference representing different regions of Russia and other countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia (e.g. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Lithuania and more than 20 regions of the Russian Federation). The 'Youth Village' brought together volunteers, staff members of HIV/AIDS related organizations, and leading staff of institutions working with youth.

## "To work for youth with participation of youth"



A key event was the encounter with Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, who as early as 2002 in Barcelona, had remarked that "we need to work not only for young people but with young people". Young participants shared with him the concern that parents and teachers commonly opposed information on HIV prevention on the grounds that such youth programs promoted sex and corrupted teenagers. Dr. Piot replied that this was a familiar pattern that he could recall from his own youth. He proposed to ask parents whether they preferred their daughter to become pregnant or to participate in a program on sexual education. He went on to welcome the youth-peer approach developing so actively. There is strong evidence to

show that it works. Mr. Piot added that there are even many experiences world-wide, including those of UNAIDS and its UN partners, of constructive involvement of religious organizations. HIV/AIDS prevention

evidently varies according to countries and cultures. Each requires its own most appropriate approach, which, on the other hand, does not preclude learning from each other's experiences.





Alexey Vorobyov

Another highlight was the show of Alexey Vorobyov, a popular Russian singer, actor and UNFPA/Y-PEER Ambassador, who put on a remarkable performance presenting some of his recent hit songs.

The 'Open Cafe' combined theatre-based peer education with discussions. It was organized and presented by volunteers of Buryatiya HIV Prevention and Treatment Center who are also part of Y-PEER. Then the 'Dance for Life' initiative followed, conveying messages and information through dancing.

Finally, with support from Peter Piot and Conference organizers, the participants of the 'Youth Village' were invited to present at the closing ceremony the final Youth Statement, which incorporated the main outcomes of the discussions from the 'Youth Village' partnership forums.

For the first time in our region youth opinion was voiced at such a high level event. Organizers see this as one of the biggest achievements of the 'Youth Village 2008'.

For more information please visit UNFPA website - [www.unfpa.ru](http://www.unfpa.ru)  
**Xenia Bobrova**

## Youth Statement to the Delegates of the Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference



We, the Young People, gathered at the Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference, representing youth of 27 countries of the region, concerned about the HIV issue and working to address it in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental organizations,

referring to the UN Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS (2001), World Programme of Action for Youth to the year 2000 and beyond (1995), and Universal Access Goals,

and emphasizing the fact that youth is one of the groups most affected by the epidemic,

address governmental officials of the countries participating in the conference and international organizations with the following statement:

*To prevent further expansion of HIV epidemic, especially among young people, the following action should be taken urgently:*

1. Acknowledge diversities among young people and different level of vulnerability and risks towards HIV and AIDS.
2. Better understand realities of life of different youth groups and adjust the response in accordance to their needs.
3. Ensure universal access to information and knowledge on HIV prevention for both urban and rural youth.



The 'Youth Village' participants present their Statement to the 2nd EECAAC delegates

4. Provide youth of our region with wider access to youth friendly services, especially to volunteer testing and counselling, as well as to prevention means.
5. Recognize healthy life style promotion as a priority for youth health programmes.
6. Increase state financial support of prevention programmes among youth.

4. Increase the quality of youth peer education programmes using youth potential and creativity.

**We are ready to act to be heard!  
We are ready to work for positive changes!**

Moscow, 3-5 May 2008

*From our side we are ready to:*

1. Scale up peer education programmes.
2. Involve youth volunteers in design, development and implementation of these programmes.
3. Exchange our experiences through creating a regional youth network.

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# Demographic Policy in Russia: from Reflection to Action

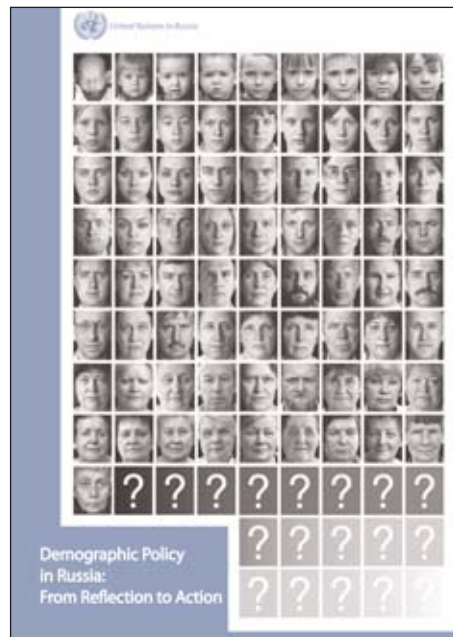
On 28 April 2008 in Moscow, the United Nations in the Russian Federation presented a UN in Russia joint publication *Demographic Policy in Russia: from Reflection to Action* prepared by a group of independent national experts. The presentation was conducted in cooperation with the Center for Strategic Research.

Why was the issue of demography chosen? It is obvious that the demographic situation directly affects the economic development, competitiveness and stability, and in the end, the well-being and prosperity of the population. As Marco Borsotti, UN Resident Coordinator in the RF, pointed out in his welcoming address, "Collectively, we are responding to a topic, which is very important for Russia. And we are using our competence to pose mostly questions..."

Some of the encouraging answers were given in the presentation by Olga Sharapova, Director of the Department for Medical and Social Issues of the Ministry of Health and Social Development of the RF. She cited the preliminary results of measures undertaken by the government for the end of the last year as showing higher fertility, lower mortality, and increased life expectancy. Importantly, since the end of the last year, several programmes have been adopted, including those targeted at decreasing mortality from cardio-vascular diseases and traffic accidents. The state has allocated 10 billion roubles for these programmes, which will be transferred to Russia's regions. The maternity allowances will be increased, and measures are being taken to improve health services for children and pregnant women. Twenty-three new specialized prenatal centres are constructed. However, as Sharapova put it, "the discussion of the report will give a strong impetus in identifying the aspects we should still work on."

Karl Kulessa, UNFPA Representative in the RF, noted that "the demographic decline is a phenomenon that is affecting virtually all of Europe. Russia is not even the worst affected. There are

countries with an even lower decline. Unlike most of its Eastern European neighbours, Russia at present has the necessary financial resources to implement social policies designed to increase fertility levels. But again, as we have seen in some Western European countries, money alone is no guarantee either." In his opinion, "a fundamental worry among



policy makers is that what we are seeing is the emergence of cultural trends moving away from larger families. Couples adjust the number of children to correspond to a set of priorities, where children are only one variable among several." "The Russian government is very sensitive to these demographic trends and the response has been a very generous incentive package combined with a major political drive that emanates from the highest level. The question is whether any population policy even if well funded can achieve its full potential," Mr. Kulessa concluded.

The authors of the report agree that demographic development in Russia to a large extent has much in common with that of European countries. However, certain indicators, such as life expectancy and mortality rates, differ significantly. If these tendencies prevail it may have very negative social and economic consequences for the future of the country. The most disturbing trends are as follows:

- It is already for forty years that fertility in Russia cannot provide for the simple replacement of its population; mortality in men of working age is as high as it was a century ago.
- Since 1992, mortality in Russia has consistently exceeded fertility: the loss of population has amounted to approximately 12 million individuals and was partially compensated for by 5,5 million owing to migration gains.
- Should current reproductive trends (low fertility and high mortality) remain, they could lead to a nationwide population of 125-135 million by early 2025 and as low as 100 mln by 2050.
- The age and gender structure of the population has been severely distorted, which has and will have negative effects on reproduction.
- The ageing of the population continues; as a result, the size of the working-age population will fall by up to 1 mln annually already by 2020-25, thus raising the dependent burden to 670-750 and further to 900-1000 by 2050, which will affect economic growth rate. This will inevitably lead to the increase of the retirement age in the near future.

According to the preliminary data for 2007, mentioned earlier, the number of births increased, and mortality went down. But this does not change the principal evaluation of the situation: a favourable trend may continue for another 5-6 years, and then the decrease will continue. At the moment there are no grounds to believe that the crisis will be overcome, and the size of the population will be stabilized or that the goal of the state to raise the size of population to 145 million persons will be reached.

Valeri Elizarov, Chief Author and Head of the Centre for Population Studies of Moscow State University Economics Department, offered a set of concrete recommendations, which, in his opinion, could have an immediate effect. Among low-cost measures he named the necessity to restore the distorted information collection system, including through civil registry offices, to conduct a demographic expertise of all political decisions, and to improve the knowledge of demographic issues among civil servants and

parliamentarians. Other measures could include tax benefits for those who have more children, development of family and child care infrastructure, and increase of family allowance to the level of developed countries (2-3% of GDP).

On 9 October 2007, the President of Russia issued a decree to adopt the Concept of Demographic Policy till 2025 and instructed to adopt the plan of the programme implementation in 2008-2010 within 3 months. The document gives a detailed description of the principles of the demographic policy, identifies the tasks and the stages of implementa-

tion. However, quantitative indicators for the ambitious goals and tasks, which have been set, make one doubt if they are correct, agreed and realistic. It is obvious that further work is needed to specify the tasks and goals, to give concrete definition to such tasks at different levels of demographic policy implementation (federal, regional, local), estimate required funds and look for financing mechanisms. A number of issues including those related to providing information, legal and scientific support, as well as human resources for the implementation of demographic policy remain outstanding. It is equally necessary to continue analysing the deter-

mining factors and consequences of the current demographic situation as well as factors, that can, in principle, improve it by studying the practices of other countries, which try to address similar problems. Many issues, because of their complexity and scale, are still open for discussion, which must involve all the stakeholders - state authorities, public organizations, socially responsible business and experts in demographic and social policy.

The full text of the report is available at [www.unrussia.ru](http://www.unrussia.ru) and [www.undp.ru](http://www.undp.ru)

**Victoria Zotikova**

## Coming out of Chernobyl Shadow: Small Business as a Hope for the Future

The twenty-sixth of April left an indelible mark on the history as a day of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident. Twenty-two years ago reactor number four exploded, and the consequences of it are still noticeable. According to experts, the aggregate fall-out of radioactive substances totalled 50 million curies, equivalent to the power of 500 atomic bombs similar to the one dropped on Hiroshima in 1945. The Chernobyl accident affected all spheres of human activity as well as people's health. The economy and social sphere of the contaminated territories were seriously damaged. The Bryansk Region - one of the most affected as a result of the accident - has since been in the depressive regions list. Many people left their homes. For those who stayed it was difficult to find a job - plants and factories closed, agriculture enterprises collapsed.

The state provided support to the affected population in a form of a special social allowance but it was not enough. Furthermore, the fear of the irreversibility of the accident consequences, to some extent resulting from the lack of reliable information and the fact that many locals were automatically categorized as disabled, promoted a passive culture of dependency. That was one of the conclusions of the Chernobyl Forum that unites eight UN agencies and representatives of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. The conclusion is based on the results of a comprehensive analysis of the post-Chernobyl situation carried out by a group of international experts two years



*Alexander Vorobiev (left) with a colleague plans to develop his sawmill business*

ago. According to the study, often the key problem of the territories affected by radioactive contamination was not the radiation itself but poverty and the psychological state of the local population. And poverty can be overcome.

How can this be achieved? One of the possible solutions to this problem is to give people a chance to earn money for a decent life contributing to the development of small and medium business by promoting micro crediting. For this purpose, a micro credit fund named New World was created in the Bryansk Region in the framework of the joint project of the Administration of the Bryansk Region and United Nations Development Programme.

The Fund grants loans for the development of personal subsidiary plots and business activities. Dozens of local

residents already received these loans. Here are several stories.

Alexander Vorobiev has been in small business for 15 years. He owns a sawmill in one of the villages of the Novozybkov district and employs 6 people from the village residents. Alexander is proud that these people can have decent source of income at his enterprise taking into account the high level of unemployment in the district. However, the businessman does not receive any serious support from the state. He believes that it is difficult to start a business nowadays - one cannot just wake up a millionaire because people do not have an initial capital, it is difficult for newcomers to compete with established businesses, and taxes are high. In addition, there are no significant privileges and benefits for those operating business in the region.

Alexander read about the fund in *The Bryansk Region* newspaper. The credit conditions suited him, and he immediately contacted the fund. Alexander plans to take up farming. "I am closely following the actions of the government, and I believe that the state renders significant support to agriculture. At the moment, I would like to organize a farmer's cooperative. I know how to revive the village, how to pay decent salaries to the locals. I will do my best to reach this goal," says Alexander. He has taken a loan of 90,000 roubles in New World to buy agricultural equipment and also plans to further develop his sawmill business.

Maria Mizevich has been in retail business for four years. She owns a kiosk shop selling food products and is one of the 3.5 mln individual entrepreneurs of Russia. In June 2007, the New World granted her a loan of 100,000 roubles for business expansion. Several days later she had a serious car accident and was taken to hospital with a brain concussion and fractured feet. The first thing Maria did when she regained consciousness was to phone the fund management. She asked to postpone the regular monthly payment, and to her surprise the fund agreed. After recovery, she went to Bryansk and paid the debt. Maria cannot fully pay the loan at the moment, but the payout period is not over yet. At the same time, the local authorities decided to move the kiosk to another place. Maria is not going to argue this, the new place for the kiosk was found, and she is satisfied with it. However, Maria still needs to find money for the relocation, as this is the responsibility of the owner. When asked how the authorities can support small business, Maria responds unambiguously: "They just should not interfere."



Maria Mizevich

The Topuria breed poultry and have maintained a household plot for several years. They sell eggs and meat to friends and acquaintances, and with down and feather Alla, the wife, makes blankets and pillows – also for sale. The elder daughter married a local guy, and the Topuria help the young family. The second daughter, Luba, 9, abandoned by her parents at the age of three, was adopted by the Topuria. For them, she is like their own child now. To be able to provide a decent future for the children, the Topuria decided to expand the family business and buy more poultry. In May 2007, they took a 100,000 roubles loan in the New World Fund. "Only thanks to the loan we could expand the business. There was no other way as bank interest rates are very high," says Alla. "I am very glad that there is such a possibility for people living in contaminated territories. We purchased both ordinary and Turken chicken. The Turken chicken lay eggs every day, their meat resembles turkey, and eggs contain valuable nutrients," she explains. Now the Topuria business is flourishing: they have 200 chicken, 40 geese, and 50 ducks. Alla wakes up with dawn and goes to sleep with sunset. The whole day is dedicated to the birds. During weekends she allows herself to take a break for not more than three hours, but it is all worth it. The woman told us about her plans for the future: her dream is to breed ostriches. She already knows where she can purchase the birds cheaper, what they eat, and how they should be treated. "I will have to show up in front of them in the same cloths, otherwise they will not recognize me and may kick me, and they weigh 350 kg," laughs Alla. "There is a free plot of land behind our house, which is not suitable for farm-



Alla Topuria

ing. My husband and I are planning to dig a pond and farm carps". Alla is going to request another loan for this purpose in the New World Fund.

Recalling the period after the Chernobyl accident Alla regrets that the people were told so late about it. In spring 1986 she went with her daughter to her parents who lived in Ukraine for May holidays. She still remembers how the trains were washed in Kiev. She could not guess why it was done, but she did not feel well about it. Only several months later she found out what had happened. Now Alla has problems with the joints of her feet. But it is too early to think about illnesses because the family business needs full attention.

The initiative of the Bryansk Region Administration and UNDP gives local entrepreneurs a possibility to receive both financial support and also training and consultations on many aspects of business development. Local mass media are also involved: *The Bryansk Region* newspaper has a special section on private business both in the printed edition and on the web-site. Let us hope that those affected by the Chernobyl accident, the same as the characters of these stories, will find strength to leave this tragedy in the past and to look forward into the future.

**Vitaly Kharkevich,**  
Chief Editor  
*The Bryansk Region newspaper,*  
Project Manager  
Project of the Administration  
of the Bryansk Region and UNDP

# Human Development in Bashkortostan

On 14 May 2008 in Ufa, public hearings on the draft Human Development Report (HDR) of Bashkortostan were conducted. The Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Bashkortostan, the Republican Centre for Social and Political Research, and UNDP in the Russian Federation organised the event.

In his opening speech, Mr. Airat Shammazov, President of the Academy of Sciences of the Bashkortostan Republic, expressed satisfaction with the fact that it was Bashkortostan, which started working on the first regional report on human development. He also noted that the republic is the region with a highly developed socially-oriented market economy. It stands out among the majority of constituent entities of the Russian Federation by a high level of comprehensive development, powerful industrial potential, developed agriculture, and rich natural resources.

Thanks to its consistent policy of sustainable development the Republic entered a top ten of constituent entities of Russia by basic macroeconomic indicators, namely GRP, industrial production, agriculture, fixed capital expenditures, consumer market indicators, housing construction, etc.

Rim Valiakhmetov, Director of the Center for Social and Political Research under the Academy of Sciences of Bashkortostan Republic and the project coordinator, reminded that the idea of producing this report originated from the

*The Republic of Bashkortostan is among the most highly developed subjects of the Russian Federation with per capita GRPs close to the national average. The region is industrialized and diversified; their industrial make-up includes export-oriented sectors such as the oil and chemical industries along with a developed food industry and machine building. Male life expectancy is close to the national average (58-59 years) in the Republic of Bashkortostan and stands at 60 years.*

**(National Human Development Report for the Russian Federation 2006/2007)**



publication of the National Human Development Report 2006/2007 'Russia's Regions: Goals, Challenges, Achievements'. "The national report is valuable for us, primarily, by its regional focus and detailed analysis of regional specificities of human development. The elaboration of the Human Development Report for the Bashkortostan Republic is a logical continuation of cooperation with the UNDP in the Russian Federation in the research of specificities of human development in a particular Russia's region."

In an interview to BashInform information agency, R. Valiakhmetov underlined that the report is a comprehensive analysis of socio-economic, demographic, ecological, educational and other issues not only in Bashkortostan as a whole, but also in its regions. Three thousand respondents were interviewed all over the Republic. They were questioned about their social well-being,

*According to the Human Development Index, Bashkortostan is traditionally among the first ten subjects of the Russian Federation, with the exception of the last National Human Development Report, which positioned the republic at the eleven place. At the same time, the Human Development Index in Bashkortostan is above the average among the regions of Russia. By this indicator, the republic occupies the third place in the Privolzhsky federal district.*

**(BashInform Information Agency)**

financial status, and everyday concerns. R.Valiakhmetov emphasized that this unique study will make it possible to draw a social portrait of the Republic and to make a comparison of human development in its regions.

The HDR authors produced an overview of the main challenges and achievements in human development in Bashkortostan. In this respect, experts from Lomonosov Moscow State University, who already have a vast experience in working on NHDRs, provided the HDR authors with invaluable support.

Representatives of the Presidential Administration, the State Assembly (Kurultai), Centre of Strategic Research under the President of Bashkortostan Republic, key ministries, State Committee on Youth Policy, higher education and scientific institutions attended the event. The presentations of the HDR authors and Moscow experts were followed by a vivid discussion among the participants. Comments and proposals of the speakers will be incorporated in the Human Development Report of Bashkortostan to be launched in the autumn of 2008.

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UN Information Centre

## People

# "Soft Power" of Cartoons

For the second year, World Press Day on 3 May is marked at the United Nations Information Centre in Moscow with an exhibition dedicated to political cartoons.

There is a natural symbiosis between mass-media and political cartoons, as together they can enjoy a self-sustained



existence. By proposing his own point of view - the one that can be paradoxically witty, ironic or even sarcastic - a cartoonist appeals to people's minds and senses. The role of mass-media here is to bring this message to the attention of public at large.

However, in the past years the press and cartoonists found themselves in the centre of public debates and even political scandals, which sometimes become so heated that the UN cannot afford to be a passive bystander. Is it inevitable that a cartoon should always contain a kind of provocative charge? Can it promote education and give rise to a new knowledge? Finally, where is that

border, beyond which irony becomes inappropriate? What should a cartoonist's sense of proportion be based on?

Getting to the heart of the matter, it is all too obvious that islamophobia, anti-Semitism and any kind of political or religious fundamentalism have common roots. In order to defeat these one should first defeat ignorance that feeds them. Thus, a cartoon always suggests an ironic attitude towards egocentrism and arrogance, which are basically nothing but a manifestation of ignorance. And the other way round - the ability to laugh at oneself has always been a sure sign of inner power and freedom of personality and of a whole nation.

Many of those who attended a soirée at UNIC on that day noted



that a skilful cartoon can show in its own way the real price of war, hatred and feeble mind. Thereby it lets us feel the price of peace and shows all the benefits that come from a compromise and open



mind. A cartoonist's message easily overcomes different barriers - linguistic, cultural, and ethnic. And if a cartoonist is really talented, then the sense of proportion is inherent in him as naturally as the sense of humour. He realizes that his creations have their own inner power, which from time to time can turn destructive.

The exhibition featured the works by Sergey Tyunin, who is known as one of the most prominent Russian cartoonists. Sergey began drawing cartoons as a schoolboy and became famous quite early. In the 1970s and 1980s, Tyunin's cartoons were published by major printed media. He was awarded dozens of prizes at international cartoon contests and festivals of humour. Sergey Tyunin's works are exhibited in museums in Ukraine, Bulgaria, Poland, Italy, Switzerland, USA, and France. Many other countries hosted his personal exhibitions.

This time the exhibition at the UNIC featured the cartoons drawn by Sergey Tyunin for the Russian Newsweek within the last several years. All pieces of the collection are undoubtedly talented and have one more thing in common - they are all kind. They make people smile thus helping them become more tolerant, gentle, and better understand each other.

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World Health Organization

Society

# Youth under Attack of Tobacco Industry

“Tobacco consumption is a leading preventable cause of death and diseases among citizens of the Russian Federation,” said Dr. Luigi Migliorini, Head



Dr. Luigi Migliorini addresses the IV Russian conference ‘Doctors against Tobacco’

of WHO in Russia, at the IV Russian conference ‘Doctors against Tobacco’. “Destroying health of thousands of people smoking affects the well-being of the country as a whole, damaging human potential, undermining economy and destroying families.”

The IV Conference ‘Doctors against Tobacco’ was held in Moscow on 29-31 May. It was organized by the Ministry of Health and Social Development, together with the Russian Scientific Research Institute of Pulmonology and with the active support of WHO office in the Russian Federation.

The forum became a real response to the appeal of the World Health Organization to protect 1.8 billion young people in the world by the prohibition of all kinds of tobacco products advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

WHO issued this appeal on the eve of the World No Tobacco Day marked on 31 May. This year’s anti-tobacco campaign focuses on preventing tobacco companies from attracting young people to addictive tobacco products through sophisticated marketing worth billions of dollars.

Recent studies testify that the more tobacco advertising influences young

people, the higher the risk that they will start smoking, while today, only 5 percent of the world population benefit from the total ban on tobacco advertising, promotion, and sponsorship. Meanwhile, the tobacco companies continue to entice young people imposing a false association of tobacco consumption with romanticism, vigour and sexual appeal.

“In order to survive, the tobacco industry needs to replace those who quit or die with new young consumers,” said WHO Director-General, Dr. Margaret Chan. “It does this by creating a complex ‘tobacco marketing net’ that ensnares millions of young people worldwide with potentially devastating health consequences. A ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is a powerful tool we can use to protect the world’s youth.”

As majority of people start to smoke before 18, and almost a quarter of them are younger than 10 years old, tobacco industry offers its products, where advertising catches the eye of young people more often: in cinema houses, on the Internet, in fashionable magazines and in music and

seen advertising of cigarettes on billboards, and 20 % admitted owning a product with a logo of a tobacco brand.

Tobacco industry uses an aggressive strategy in order to get young people hooked to tobacco consumption. Even in this environment, the total ban on advertising is very effective because it reduces tobacco consumption by 16 percent in the countries, where this measure has already been adopted.

Because of the growing pressure against smoking in developed countries the basic targets of the tobacco companies are developing countries, where over 80 percent of the world’s youth live. Young women and girls are exposed to an extra risk due to the fact that tobacco companies seek to weaken the opposition to tobacco production from national cultures and customs in the countries, where women traditionally do not smoke.

Another target of tobacco companies is new members of the global market. Major producers move manufacturing facilities to the territory of Eastern Europe and Russia.

Tobacco companies admit that they particularly focus on the former USSR market, “as sale of tobacco products in Russia and the CIS is growing, while in Western Europe and Japan demand is decreasing or remains at the same levels.”

What are the main consequences of this last “highest wave” of tobacco expansion? During the period from 1996 to 2006, the consumption of tobacco products in the Russian Federation saw a one and a half time increase to 375 billion pieces per year. Russia is the third major manufacturer of tobacco products after China and the USA.

Over the last 10 years, tobacco production in the country has doubled reaching 413 billion pieces a year. Over the last 20 years, the number of smokers in Russia has increased by 440 thousand people, primarily, due to increased consumption among young people and women.



sports venues. A WHO research conducted all over the world among schoolchildren aged 13-15, more than 55 percent of pupils said that within the past month they had

Today, 40 percent of young men and 17 percent of girls aged from 15 to 19 - overall almost three million teenagers - are smokers. Young people smoke 12 cigarettes and girls - 7 cigarettes per day.

The death rate from diseases related to tobacco consumption has increased from 250 to 400 thousand people, i.e. more than 1.6 times over the last 10 years.

Where is the way out of this deadly tobacco smog? The main direction is identified in the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) adopted at the 56th session of the World Assembly of Public Health on 21 May 2003.

The convention offers a set of priority measures for the development of an effective legislative and socio-economic framework for the prevention and overcoming of negative effects of smoking. The convention provides for the introduction of national and international epidemiological monitoring programmes to study the effects of smoking; development and coordination of research programmes in the area of fight against smoking and treatment of nicotine addiction; as well as regular collection and exchange of research, socio-economic, commercial and legal information in the spheres defined by the convention.

A number of countries that ratified the convention already adopted certain measures.

At the conference in Moscow, Ms. Christina Mayer-Stender, WHO Regional Programme Coordinator, presented an overview of positive results reached



Mrs. Christina Mayer-Stender

in the European Union countries after the ratification of the convention.

She spoke in detail about successful anti-tobacco policy implementation in the countries of the European Union that allowed for considerable improvement of the population health. For example, Ireland, Norway and Spain adopted a total ban on smoking in public places.

The attack against smoking is going ahead in other regions of the world, too. Addressing the Moscow forum, head of WHO Office in Turkey a.i, Mr. Mehmet Yavus Kontaz, made a comprehensive presentation about the anti-tobacco campaign in Turkey. India introduced a total ban on tobacco advertising; Australia, Brazil, Canada, Thailand, and Singapore introduced images showing harmful effects of smoking on cigarette packs.



Russia also takes part in this process. On 24 April 2008, the Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the law 'On joining by the Russian Federation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control' ratified by the State Duma on 11 April 2008 and approved by the Federation Council on 16 April.

Commenting on this, Dr. Luigi Migliorini, Head of WHO Office in the Russian Federation, said: "The fact that Russia joined the convention shows that the government of the Russian Federation will actively pursue a policy aimed at fighting against smoking."

A time framework is established and the main principles for the implementation of FCTC statements are formulated. The countries that ratified the convention must place a warning on tobacco products to inform about harmful effects of tobacco consumption within three years. Within five years, a total ban on advertising, promotion, and sponsorship will be introduced.



Nikolay Goncharuk

Russia has the seam timeframe, but because of the deadly statistics, the country cannot wait and should move forward.

Mr. Nikolay Goncharuk, Head of Biosafety and Human Well-being Department at the Ministry of Health and Social Development, presented a regional strategy of fighting against smoking. "The regional strategy is developed as part of the national strategy on the struggle against tobacco, which is also based on the main principles of Framework Convention taking into account the current legislation of the Russian Federation," said Mr. Goncharuk.

Representatives of all Russian regions actively participated in the work of the forum. They discussed proposed amendments to regional legislations aimed at implementation of an effective tobacco control strategy. Regional specialists also discussed effective ways to help smokers, who decided to quit, as well as the main principles of the prevention action.

*Azam Buzurukov,  
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## UNHCR Priorities in the Chechen Republic

Since 1995, UNHCR has provided assistance to the displaced population in the North Caucasus. As result of hostilities, hundreds of thousands of people had to flee Chechnya and seek temporary shelter in neighbouring republics or other regions of Russia, while many abandoned the country.

As Chechen residents started to return to their homes UNHCR expanded its activities in the republic. Currently, it addresses the needs of many groups of the affected civilian population. UNHCR assists the displaced population by way of legal counselling, distribution of construction materials for rehabilitation of partially destroyed private houses of Chechen civilians, and, to the extent possible, in building permanent housing, thus facilitating the reintegration of these people in the Chechen Republic and integration in the Republic of Ingushetia.

Legal protection activities are not visible like food distribution and medical services, yet they are equally important. After returning to places of

permanent residence the displaced people have the right to restitution of housing lost as result of armed hostilities and to compensation for other property, which cannot be physically returned.

It should be noted that issues related to the housing legislation and to compensations are especially acute in the Chechen Republic because of the consequences of the conflicts, such as the absence of archives in the republic, as well as violations in the implementation of legislation by relevant authorities and individual citizens. Republican courts review a lot of cases related to housing conflicts, where several citizens claim the ownership of the same household.

Under the programme of legal counselling and legal aid, the lawyers from counselling centres provide free legal advice in the process of preparation of petitions to judicial authorities and in referring certain cases to law enforcement or administrative structures. These counselling centres,

financially supported by the European Community Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) are operated by UNHCR implementing partners - Vesta, Nizam and Memorial NGOs - and are staffed by professional lawyers with extensive experience.

The lawyers provide nearly seven thousand consultations annually; they help prepare over four thousand claims, complaints and petitions to courts, law enforcement and administrative structures. They also provide field consultations in temporary accommodation centres and compact settlements.

In Chechnya, eight legal counselling centres located in Grozny, Shali, Urus-Martan, Gudermes and Sernovodsk, render legal assistance to the local population.

Key issues of concern for people in the Chechen Republic relate to contradictory housing problems, compensation payments, passports and submission of documents for obtaining housing certificates. Some people come for assistance in connection with criminal cases. The cases referred to courts mostly relate to restitution of documents and activity or inactivity of the authorities.

The Russian branch of the Dutch non-governmental organization Stitching Russian Justice Initiative assists in preparation of claims related to human rights violations to the European Court of Human Rights. Some claims have already been positively resolved by ECHR, others are still pending.

In the Chechen Republic, UNHCR closely cooperates with the Ombudsman's Office and the Department of the Federal Migration Service, as well as with the Ministry of National Policy, Press, Information and External Relations.

In October 2007, UNHCR organized the workshop International and National Mechanisms of Legal



At a counselling center of the interregional non-governmental organization Vesta in Grozny



Protection of the Displaced Population in the Russian Federation for 25 judges and 15 lawyers from Ingushetia, Chechnya, and Dagestan.

The situation of protracted displacement in the North Caucasus is improving, mostly as result of the new policy of local authorities on repatriation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and overall stabilisation in the Chechen Republic. While maintaining constructive cooperation with local authorities UNHCR seeks the observance of key legal principles in the process of IDPs' return: the return must be voluntary, carried out in safety and dignity, and returnees must have full information about the place of return.

Since access for UNHCR staff to the territory of the republic is still restricted by security requirements UNHCR carries out its projects in the Chechen Republic through its implementing partners - the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Vesta, Memorial, Nizam and others.

UNHCR also provided assistance to some Chechen returnees from abroad. In 2003-2007, 459 refugees returned from Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan and other countries with the assistance from the Russian Government or UNHCR offices in these countries.

UNHCR conducts all operations in

coordination with the Russian Government and complements government efforts. UNHCR intends to continue its activities related to legal protection and construction of permanent housing in the region for various categories of displaced population, which still need such assistance.

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Regions

## From Humanitarian Assistance to Supporting Sustainability

In mid-May 2008, Maria Calivis, UNICEF Regional Director for Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, visited the North Caucasus region of Russia, where she looked at UNICEF projects in North Ossetia, the Chechen Republic, and Dagestan.

Ms. Calivis noted a marked shift of UNICEF's programmes since 1999 from humanitarian assistance to supporting development and sustainability.

“These are not just projects, these are investments for change. I often meet with top government officials, usually to ask or request something but during this visit I mostly express my gratitude for all the good work done for the benefit of children,” said Ms. Calivis.

During her visit, she held talks with the heads of the three republics: Taymuraz Mamsurov, Ramzan Kadyrov, and Mukhu Aliev.

Since 1999, UNICEF in the North Caucasus has addressed the vital needs for children's health, safety and education. It has worked on fostering peace and tolerance. Projects worth over US\$ 55 million have been implemented in

the region in partnership with local governments, as well as international and local NGOs.

While originally focused on meeting the basic necessities of internally displaced persons in Ingushetia through provision of essential services and supplies, today, UNICEF is actively involved in six distinct areas: education, health, promotion of children's rights, mine action, psycho-social recovery, peace and tolerance. These projects are implemented in

five republics of the North Caucasus - Chechnya, Ingushetia, North Ossetia, Dagestan and Kabardino-Balkaria.

UNICEF is now focusing on ensuring the sustainability of projects. The family centre for social rehabilitation Binonta, where children play together with family members under surveillance of professionals will soon be run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development of North Ossetia.



At the family centre of social rehabilitation Binonta



*A new school is opened!*

“Sustainability is needed to ensure continuity of certain activities in the future,” said Ms. Calivis.

**Ms.** Calivis visited inclusive education classes at schools in all three republics. Inclusive education envisages 'including' disabled and other vulnerable children into mainstream edu-

cation. Speaking in one of the schools, she noted that UNICEF's job “throughout the world in each and every country is to ensure that all children, whatever their background, whatever their physical condition, have the same right to a good education.” In two schools, in North Ossetia and Chechnya, Ms. Calivis attended the opening ceremonies of such classes. In Dagestan, an inclusive school has been successfully operating for several months.

**A**nother indicator of the region's move in the direction of peaceful coexistence is UNICEF peace and tolerance projects. Some of them sprang up as a result of previous years' summer peace camps, which bring together children of different ethnic backgrounds in one team. Maria Calivis attended the opening of one of them, a peace club, in Vladikavkaz, North Ossetia. A network of such clubs is planned across the region. In 2005, a Peace Theatre was also established with UNICEF assistance in the Chechen Republic and is now touring the republics of the North Caucasus with impressive shows of talent promoting peace and tolerance.

**P**ursuing the idea of sustainable protection of children's rights in the region, UNICEF supported the introduction of a new course on the Convention of the Rights of the Child in the curriculum

of the Dagestan State Pedagogical University and hopes that it will expand to other regions.

**A**t the same time, UNICEF continues to address humanitarian needs, where they are most acute. Maria Calivis visited Maternity Hospital No. 2 in Grozny to see the equipment purchased by a European Union/UNICEF project.

“More babies surviving is the best indicator that things are improving,” said Ms. Calivis. “I hope this will be the first officially baby-friendly hospital in the Chechen Republic.” She also praised the fast pace of Grozny rebuilding noting that it had completely changed since her last visit two years ago. “The same energy that goes into infrastructure and beautifying the city should go into multiplying good projects to build human capital,” she said.

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*Maria Calivis (3rd from the left at the 2nd row) among young talented actors of the Peace Theatre*

# 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 / The UN Secretary-General Message for World Environment Day 2008

The UN Secretary-General spoke about the world's dependence on carbon-based energy, which had caused a significant build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, leading to climate change. "The message of World Environment Day 2008 is that we are all part of the solution. Whether you are an individual, an organization, a business or a government, there are many steps you can take to reduce your carbon footprint. It is message we all must take to heart," the Secretary-General underlined.

## UNESCO / UNESCO Director-General in Moscow: the First Meeting with President Medvedev

From 9 to 12 June 2008, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, paid his eighth visit to the Russian Federation. As a highlight of the visit, Mr Matsuura had an extended discussion with Dmitry Medvedev, President of Russia. Preceding that, they participated in the opening of the 10th World Congress of the Russian Press.

## UNAIDS / Eurovision Stars against AIDS

The opening day of this year's Eurovision song contest, 18 May, coincided with the 25th International AIDS Candlelight Memorial. As part of its 'Stars against AIDS' project, UNAIDS brought together Eurovision participants in Belgrade to draw attention to the issue of stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV.

## UNAIDS / Crude Estimation

Dr. Peter Piot, UN Under Secretary-General, UNAIDS Executive Director, told *Itogi* magazine about the situation with the worldwide business project of HIV response and about Russia's role in it. *UN in Russia* publishes this interview.

## UNFPA / Youth Village 2008: Act to Be Heard!

Within the framework of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference (EECAAC) held 3-5 May 2008, UNFPA organized the Youth Village, bringing together youth from across the region for a dialogue on HIV/AIDS. There were over 300 participants between 16 and 30 at the Conference.

## UNFPA / "To Work for Youth with Participation of Youth"

A key Youth Village event was the encounter with Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director, who as early as 2002 in Barcelona had remarked that "we need to work not only for young people but with young people".

## UNFPA / Youth Statement to the Delegates of the Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference

Young participants of the Second Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference held in Moscow on 3-5 May 2008 addressed its delegates with a statement, appealing for urgent and concrete action to prevent further expansion of HIV/AIDS epidemic, in particular among the youth.

## UNDP / Demographic Policy in Russia: from Reflection to Action

On 28 April 2008, the United Nations in the Russian Federation presented the joint publication *Demographic Policy in Russia: from Reflection to Action* prepared by a group of independent national experts. The authors conducted a thorough analyses of the many demographic problems, which Russia is facing, and formulated some solutions.

## UNDP / Coming out of Chernobyl Shadow: Small Business as a Hope for the Future

According to experts, the key problem of people living in the territories affected by the Chernobyl accident is not radioactive contamination but poverty and psychological passivity. The New World fund established in the Bryansk region with the support of UNDP gives people a chance to earn their living by providing micro credits.

## UNDP / Human Development in Bashkortostan

On 14 May 2008, the capital of Bashkortostan hosted public hearings of the first regional Human Development Report organized by the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Bashkortostan, the Centre for Social and Political Research of the Republic and UNDP in the Russian Federation.

## UNIC / "Soft Power" of Cartoons

For the second year in a row, the World Press Day on May 3 was marked at the United Nations Information Centre in Moscow with an exhibition dedicated to political cartoons. The exhibition featured the works by Sergey Tyunin, one of the most prominent Russian cartoonists.

## WHO / Youth under Attack of Tobacco Industry

The Doctors Against Tobacco conference was held on 29-31 May 2008 in Moscow on the occasion of the World No Tobacco Day marked on 31 May. The forum was also a response to the WHO's appeal to protect 1.8 billion young people in the world by introducing a comprehensive ban on advertising of tobacco products, marketing and sponsorship.

## UNHCR / UNHCR Priorities in the Chechen Republic

UNHCR has assisted the displaced population in the North Caucasus in various ways since 1995. Providing legal assistance through a network of eight counselling centres in the republic remains one of its top priorities.

## UNICEF / From Humanitarian Assistance to Supporting Sustainability

On 12-17 May 2008, UNICEF Regional Director for CEE and CIS, Maria Calivis, visited UNICEF projects in North Ossetia, the Chechen Republic, and Dagestan. Speaking of a marked shift in UNICEF's programmes from humanitarian assistance to supporting development and sustainability since 1999, she noted: "These are not just projects, these are investments for change."

*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 |