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Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

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Over 26 million children aged from 0-17 are reported in Russia. In 1995, the child population in Russia stood at about 38 million / 9

Interview /3

In his interview to *UN in Russia*, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Dr Denis Broun, speaks about the role and objectives of UNAIDS in the region and shares his views on the most effective ways to combat the epidemic

Publications /10

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights released recently the second renovated and corrected edition of *the Handbook for Civil Society: Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme*. Dirk Hebecker, Senior Human Rights Advisor to the UN Country Team in Russia, presents the book

Opinions /12

For 2010, the UN forecasts that the global economy is on the mend, but recovery is fragile and uneven. As far as economies of the CIS countries are concerned, UN experts have come up with a cautiously optimistic scenario, warning against excessive expectations and singling out their remaining institutional weakness

B HOMEPE

UN

Secretary-General's Message
on World Day of Social Justice **2**

UNAIDS / Interview

Dr Broun's Formula for Combating AIDS **3**

UNFPA / Highlight

Youth: Partner in Combating AIDS **6**

UNICEF / People

Children in Russia **9**

OHCHR / Publications

Human Rights and Civil Society **10**

UNIC / Opinions

Global Economy:
What to Expect in 2010 **12**

UNDP / Society

'Save the Energy of Our City!' **14**

UNHCR / Regions

Promoting Best Standards
and Practices Together
with Local Institutions **15**

UNA Russia / Events

Ted Turner Gives Lecture at MGIMO **18**



Secretary-General's Message on World Day of Social Justice

On the World Day of Social Justice, we recognize the importance of tackling poverty, exclusion and unemployment, in order to promote solidarity, harmony and equality of opportunity within and between societies.

On this day, which is being marked for only the second time, we reflect on the importance of social justice in our efforts to forge a more stable, equitable and secure world.

The pursuit of social justice for all is at the core of the United Nations' mission to promote development and human dignity. The Social Protection Floor Initiative, launched in 2009, is a UN system-wide effort to promote common priorities and solutions, to ensure basic social guarantees for all.

Social justice is based on the values of fairness, equality, respect for diversity, access to social protection, and the application of human rights in all spheres of life, including in the workplace. As we face the consequences of the global financial and economic crisis, which has led to significant increases in unemployment and



poverty and is straining social integration, these principles are more important than ever.

The world's major economies are beginning to emerge from this global downturn. We must ensure that the world's people do so too. The Millennium Development Goals are one of the UN's key means of bringing social justice and development together to benefit the poorest and most vulnerable. We are two-thirds of the way towards the deadline and we are planning a major push this year, centred on the MDG summit in September, to get countries back on track to achieve these vital goals.

Let us take this opportunity on the World Day of Social Justice to renew our commitment to this important cause and to recognize that while progress has been made, much more needs to be done. Lack of social justice anywhere is an affront to us all.

20 February 2010
Ban Ki-moon

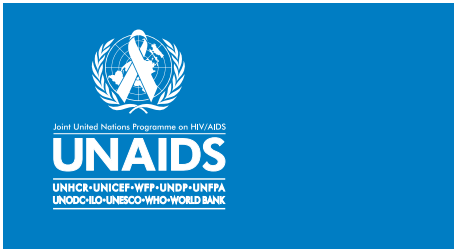
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Interview

Dr Broun's Formula for Combating AIDS



UNAIDS Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Dr. Denis Broun, gave an exclusive interview to *UN in Russia*.



– *What is your vision of UNAIDS role in Europe and Central Asia?*

– UNAIDS is a reference centre. It's a place to get accurate and verified information. UNAIDS is a safe platform, where anyone can share opinions in a secure environment. I think, this is important for the region. We think that winning the battle against HIV in this region takes effort. It means change and sometimes painful change. It is about helping people change their attitudes and behaviours, promoting human rights, and advocating for the rights of people living with HIV (PLHIV). There are no two ways about it – PLHIV have the same rights as other people. UNAIDS is at the forefront of supporting people living with HIV and asserting their rights.

– *How will the HIV epidemic develop in Russia?*

– I think, the epidemic will be growing in the near future. More cases of infection are now registered, and the only way to stop that would be through an effective and aggressive prevention programme. And that is not taking place at the moment. So there is not much to be enthusiastic about in this sphere. Russia has been successful in delivering treatment and prevention of mother to child

transmission, but going out to people at high risk, preventing transmission of HIV among injecting drug users, men having sex with men, is not which is done in the strongest possible manner. And we should not forget that the infection is spreading largely due to injecting drug users.

– *What is the hardest issue to deal with in the region?*

– The hardest issue is injecting drugs. It's a major problem putting at risk a lot of young people. And when people start injecting, it is absolutely essential to make sure that there is reduction of harm that they do to themselves. And that they don't get infected by HIV. Most countries of the region do not have what is called harm reduction programmes providing substitution of injecting drugs by opioid that may be taken orally. Young people do not receive the psychological support they need. So, probably, that is the greatest challenge doing it right. And to reach out to drug users governments must work with civil society organizations as it is a difficult task for medical staff. Funding of NGOs working with injecting drug users is another problem, as it is not stipulated in the budget. This is another challenge for us.

– *What are UNAIDS priorities and challenges in the region in the next two years?*

– This region is the only one, where the prevalence keeps increasing relatively rapidly. Everywhere else in the world the

HIV epidemic is more or less under control, or at least is no longer growing. So, what we need first is the real engagement of governments at the highest level. HIV response is effective when you ensure good prevention. You stop the transmission and you don't have more people in need of treatment tomorrow. And people who need treatment are going cost for the society. So it is important to make sure that investments of today will reduce the costs of tomorrow. And preventing HIV is humane; it makes sense economically and strategically. It is essential to implement a much more aggressive approach to prevention but not a more repressive approach.

– *AIDS has been known for more than 25 years, and there is no magic formula for success in combating HIV. What ingredients are vital?*

– There is no magic formula, and each HIV epidemic is different. We don't have epidemic in Russia, which we have in Central Asia, or the same we would have in Africa, or even in Western Europe. Every time, one has to know the epidemic and understand how it develops. One has to analyze figures and then decide on the best policy. There is one thing that works – prevention. This is definitely part of the formula. There is no vaccine against HIV. The only vaccine is social and behavioural.

In the region, the epidemic is mostly spreading through injecting drug users. Therefore prevention must be targeted at

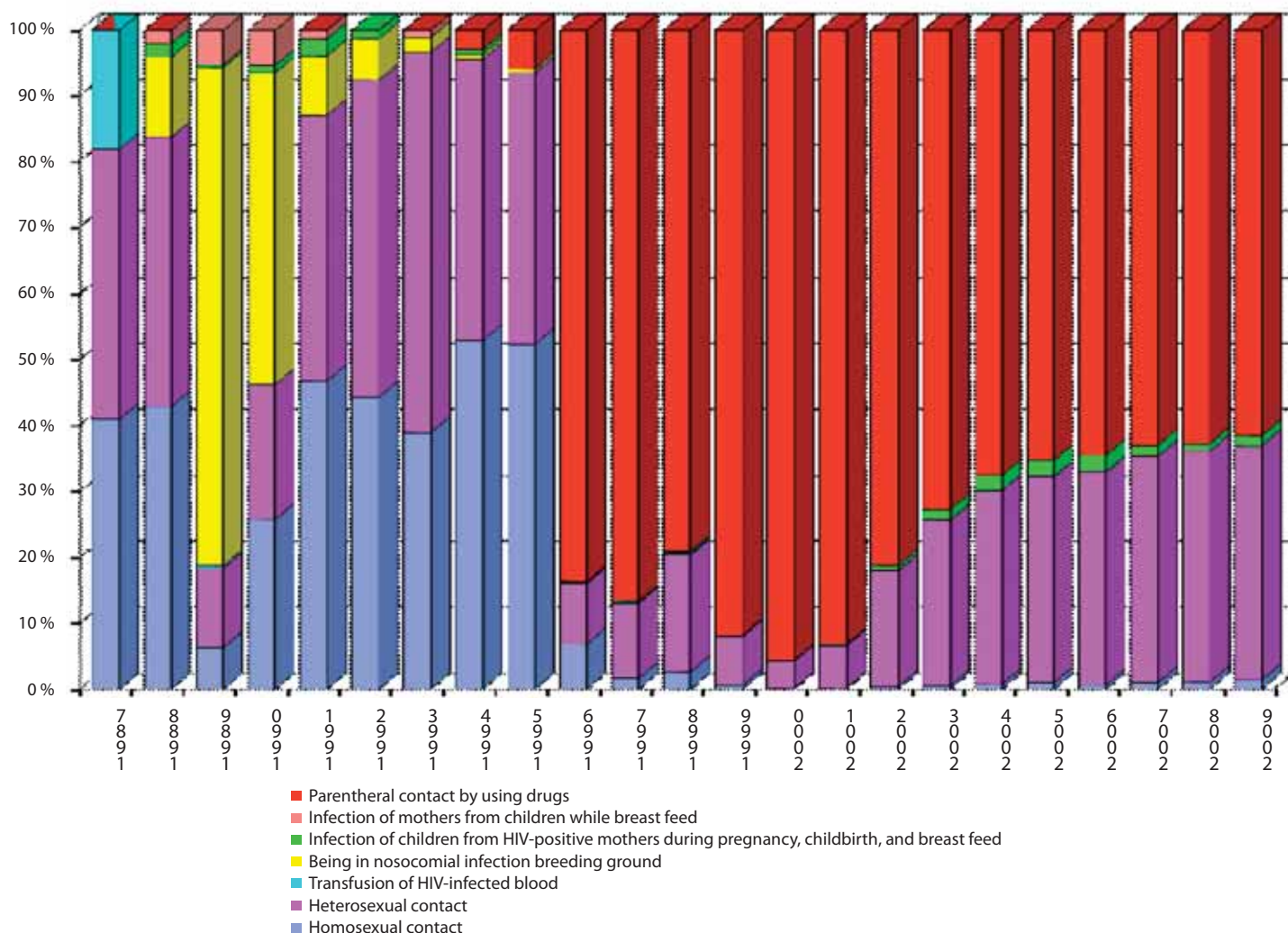
Dr Denis Broun

Director, UNAIDS Regional Support Team for Europe and Central Asia

Dr Denis Broun is a medical doctor who specialized in tropical diseases and epidemiology at Paris University. He holds a degree from the Paris Institute of Political Sciences. After working in health economics in France, Dr. Broun has been senior health specialist in the World Bank from 1991 to 1996, Chief of the health section of UNICEF, based in New York from 1996 to 1998, and Director of Resource Mobilization of WHO from 1998 to 2000. From 2000 to 2005, Dr Broun was Director of Management Sciences for Health in Europe. Before occupying position of Chief of the Partnerships Division at UNAIDS in Geneva, he served as UNAIDS Country Coordinator in India from 2005 to 2008.

Dr Denis Broun is a national of France. In addition to French, he speaks English, Spanish, and Russian.

Distribution of people living with HIV by major reasons of infection, 1987-2009



this group. You are not going to prevent car accidents by regulating the way boats are sailing. One has to prevent among drivers. You need prevention among the drivers of the epidemic, injecting drug users. Comprehensive prevention includes prevention among families of drug users; it requires doing things right at a large scale.

– You have been working for the UN system since 1991 in different capacities and different countries. Can you name outstanding UN achievements in the health sector? What are the priorities for today?

– Life in the UN is a permanent struggle for the improvement of what we have achieved and healing whatever crises are happening. Speaking about health sector, let us look at what happened in Haiti. Yes, there was a lot of work done indeed for development of the health sector in Haiti, but now everything is destroyed, and what we do in the UN is different. When I finished my medical studies, smallpox was eradicated. That was a type of thing we all thought was an incredible

success for UN and it was a great achievement. And then we had a major HIV epidemic advancing at an extremely rapid pace. We had the first cases in the early 80s. We had projections of 50-60 million people living with HIV. A lot has been done by the UN. There are 33 million people living with HIV today, and it would have been more without the UN efforts. UNAIDS is cosponsored by 10 UN agencies. And their work including advocacy, speaking with governments, people living with HIV, business community and many others has helped a major mobilization of leadership, funds and knowledge to fight AIDS. And HIV has stopped growing. I consider that a success of the UN. Look at children's immunization rates and see how they have progressed. Look at the progress we have made in maternal mortality and access to essential drugs. You will find that in many countries things in healthcare have improved significantly compared to 20 years ago when I started working at the UN. Yes, there are things, which didn't work. This is life.

– Partnership with government, PLHIV networks, civil society, mass media, business community is one of the core principles of UNAIDS. How do you see the development of partnership with the key actors in the region?

– Governments play an important role in this region. They still control a major part of economy, and they have a more direct role in fighting the epidemic, as they employ most of the people in the health sector who work in the area of HIV. So, governments play a bigger role in this region than in Western Europe, and they are our major partners. Then there are associations of PLHIV and civil society organizations. It is fantastic see how active and how competent these organizations are in the region. When we think of what it was 20 years ago, and we look at what it is today, it is really breathtaking. They are also our partners, and they are extremely responsible partners. We have in many part of the world activists who are shouting from the rooftops and are sometimes imprudent in their activism. The level of maturity and responsibility of the regional NGOs is particularly commendable.

Then we need to closely work with people involved in getting better results here, those who work in education and pharmaceutical industry, as we need to get better prices and better conditions for the fight against HIV. There has been some work undertaken with employers and companies to prevent discrimination in the workplace. There has been progress, but you still have so many stories of people who are tested before employment without their knowledge, without proper counseling, and sometimes against their will. We need to work to protect human rights with everyone involved. The private sector and church organisations are our major partners. All confessions need to be involved. They have been remarkable partners in supporting people living with HIV spiritually and very often supporting them socially in their families, in dealing with the disease. And in dealing with their own lives.

– You are a medical doctor. Were there any situations in your life in the United Nations when your medical skills were more required than others?

– During the first 5 years when I was employed by the UN, I could barely take a plane without somebody asking: “Is there a doctor on board?” I have done 14 medical interventions on planes, and once delivered a baby during a flight. So, at that time medical skills were useful. I must say that now they are much rusted, I haven’t practiced for 20 years. So when they ask for a doctor on board I raise my hand very timidly: “Look, I am the last help if you don’t find anyone else”.

– You moved to Moscow recently. What are your plans for exploring Russian culture?

– I am a musician. My immediate plan is to get a piano in my apartment. I also go to concerts as often as possible. And this is

very important for me. I don’t think I could find a better place for music. Now I also try to reread Russian poetry which I read in my youth. I still understand a bit but I also take lessons to be able to communicate in Russian in my day to day life. The vocabulary associated with HIV is not always found in Pushkin.

Anna Chernyakhovskaya

The editorial board thanks the Federal Service for Supervision of the Protection of Consumer Rights and Human Welfare for providing the statistic data for the interview.

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Youth: Partner in Combating AIDS

Youth Village 2009 - youth community dialogue space - was organized under the initiative of Y-PEER Russia in the framework of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference (EECAAC) 2009 with the support from UNFPA, UNAIDS, and UNESCO. The motto of Youth Village 2009 was "Act together!"

Its overall objective was to draw attention to the special needs of youth in the context of HIV infection, as well as to increase participation of youth in development and implementation of HIV prevention programmes in Eastern Europe and Central Asia through a dialogue partnership platform for young people and decision makers in the field of HIV/AIDS at the EECAAC 2009.

Youth Village 2009 saw as many as 600 participants and visitors, of which 300 were young people aged from 16 to 30. Most of them were volunteers and young members of AIDS service organizations, and leaders of organizations working with youth from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Ukraine,

Belarus, Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Austria, and more than 15 regions of Russia.

The Youth Village activities were prepared and carried out by the Youth Village Organization Committee, which consisted of Y-PEER Russia members. The Youth Village programme included a wide variety of activities designed to help young delegates of the conference exchange experience, build partnerships and networks.

Alexander Goliusov, Head of HIV/AIDS and Viral Hepatitis Surveillance, Federal Service on Surveillance in Healthcare and Social Development of Russian Federation, opened the Youth Village,

inviting participants to engage into sharing their experience on HIV prevention and building partnerships. He did it jointly with Karl Kulesa, UNFPA Russia Representative, who underlined that the Youth Village clearly shows that young people not only have a vision and knowledge to fight HIV/AIDS, they have the capacity to turn ideas into action for change.

The Youth Village programme included the following sessions:

- Partnership forum 'Preventive work with most-at-risk young people' – sharing experience on how to work with vulnerable youth. This included presentation of a manual on peer education approach among most at risk groups,



which was developed and published with the support of UNFPA Russia;

- Round table 'Business and Youth: A search for ways of cooperation on HIV prevention'. Here ways of involving business structures in HIV prevention were analyzed and regional business organizations presented their experience of implementing HIV prevention programmes;
- Round table 'The role of churches and religious organizations in HIV prevention among young people' with participation of representatives of Orthodox and Jewish confessions. Here the importance of involving FBO organizations (and young people from these organizations) in HIV prevention was discussed;
- Theatre-based peer education performance aimed at HIV prevention, prepared during the three days of the EECAAC by an interregional Y-PEER team from five countries;
- Presentation of international Y-PEER network experience (15 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia) with the participation of the International Training and Research Centre PETRI (Sofia, Bulgaria) and international Y-PEER coordinator, Ivica Chekovski. Here young people could exchange



experience and learn about with new technologies and approaches.

Among the Youth Village highlights was a press conference on the importance and effectiveness of peer education programmes with Thea Fierens, UNFPA Regional Director, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, who stressed that only in strong partnership with governmental and non-governmental organizations it would be possible to respond effectively to the HIV epidemic. Vadim Pokrovsky, Director, Federal Research and Methodological Centre for AIDS Prevention and Control, warned against dangers of reducing funding for HIV prevention and treatment. Lidia Bardakova, UNFPA Assistant Representative in Russia, presented the results of a research on the effectiveness of peer delivered programmes conducted in three Russian regions. The findings showed that the programmes changed knowledge and attitudes of young people, as well as contributed to the acquisition of life skills to prevent HIV infection. Ivica Chekovski, one of Y-PEER network international coordinators, summed up the experience of international Y-PEER networks and noted that the network was set up to coordinate peer education in the countries.

Some key policy makers working in the field of HIV/AIDS visited the Youth Village. They expressed appreciation of the

work done by young people and their support of youth initiatives.

In his informal conversation with 'residents' of the Youth Village, Michel Kazatchkine, Executive Director of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, emphasized the fact that civil society participation in the work of the Fund is constantly growing and that there are opportunities for more active involvement of youth in the discussion of the work the Fund is doing, in particular at the forthcoming regional meeting in Sofia.

Gennady Onishchenko, Co-Chair of GEECAAC 2009 Organization Committee, responded to young people's questions and reassured the participants that he would continue supporting peer education programmes.

Among visitors the Youth Village were Vladimir Posner, journalist and television anchorman, and Luiz Loures, Director of UNAIDS Executive Office. The guests encouraged participants of the Youth Village to fight with those who believe that HIV/AIDS issues should not be discussed with young people, saying: "This is your life, it is your freedom!"

The Youth Village concluded with a Youth Statement from young people of the region at the closing ceremony of

the Conference. In the statement, they reminded the participants of the conference that youth are an equal partner in the HIV/AIDS response and are ready to turn the decisions taken at the Youth Village into reality.



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Children in Russia

How big is the child population in Russia? Where do Russian children live and study and how do they spend their leisure time? What is their health status? Do they have access to specialized medical services? How many parents in Russia are deprived of parental rights? What are the living standards of families with children? Is there any kind of assistance that they get from the state?



The cover of the statistical handbook *Children in Russia – 2009*

You can find answers to these and many other questions in the statistical handbook *Children in Russia – 2009*, which was released jointly by the Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

This is the first ever collection of statistical data in Russia, which brings together information on eight principal spheres of children's life, including child health, education, social protection of families with children, economic activities of adolescents, juvenile delinquency, criminal offences against juveniles, children's leisure activities. The data in the handbook refers to both federal districts and Russia's regions. Prior to the publication of the statistical handbook, the above data used to be included into various statistical manuals on specific areas of the government statistics, which impeded their search and use.

The materials included in the statistical handbook *Children in Russia* can be used when preparing the next fourth/fifth periodic report of the Russian Federation to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, conducting a review of the situation of children in Russia, drafting the National Plan of Action with regard to children and relevant government reports and documents on issues concerning social policies for children.

Data for the end of 2008:

- Over 26 million children aged from 0-17 are reported in Russia. In 1995, the child population in Russia stood at about 38 million.
- In 2008, due to a considerable reduction in infant and under-five mortality rates, the possibility for Russian children to see their fifth birthday increased more than twofold as compared to 1995.
- About 714,000 children were without parental care, with over 136,000 children living in residential care.

You can download an electronic version of the statistical handbook *Children in Russia – 2009* on the UNICEF web-site, section Press-Centre/ Publications.

- There were 74,000 children whose parents were deprived of their parental rights (this number has increased 2.3-fold since 1995).
- Over 506,000 children were disabled.
- Over 126,000 minors have suffered from criminal abuse (in 2000, child victims of criminal abuse numbered 104,000).

Yana Negreeva

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United Nations
Human Rights

Office of High Commissioner
for Human Rights

Publications

Human Rights and Civil Society

The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has recently issued an updated and revised second edition of the handbook *Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme: A Handbook for Civil Society*. Dirk Hebecker, Senior Human Rights Adviser to the United Nations Country Team in the Russian Federation, joins *UN in Russia* correspondent in a conversation about this publication.



“It is my hope that this Handbook will be used to facilitate civil society actors’ understanding of and access to the United Nations human rights system”

Navanethem Pillay, *United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights*

– *What is the new handbook about and whom it might be useful to?*

– This publication, which is addressed to the civil society actors focuses on the United Nations human rights bodies and mechanisms and explains how NGOs can engage with the United Nations human rights system. It provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about the United Nations human rights programme as well as information on how to use the system to address human rights abuses and to enable more people to enjoy and make claim to their fundamental rights. The handbook has been translated into Russian, French, Spanish, and Arabic for a wide distribution among key civil society constituents including human rights NGOs and defenders, national human rights institutions,

unions and social movements, schools, universities, research bodies and other actors, as well as organizations contributing to the promotion, protection, and advancement of human rights.

– *How does the new edition differ from the old one?*

– The new edition contains detailed information on the changes made within the UN human rights system. First of all, this concerns the Human Rights Council, which is the principal United Nations body responsible for human rights. It replaced the Commission on Human Rights. Other important information concerns the new UN mechanisms responsible for respecting and protecting human rights. Namely, a special section of the Handbook covers the universal periodic review (UPR), through which the Human Rights Council reviews, on a periodic basis, the fulfilment by each United Nations Member State of their human rights obligations and commitments. A State presents its national report to the UPR, OHCHR prepares information on the State under review as well as a summary of information submitted by other stakeholders (e.g. civil society actors). The review itself takes place in Geneva in the Working Group on the UPR in a form of an interactive dialogue between the State under review and the 47 observer States of the Council. This results in the adoption of an outcome document, which includes conclusions and recommendations as well as the State’s support or disagreement of such. During the two-week sessions, the Working Group reviews 16 States. These sessions are held three times a year – a total of 192 Member States over four years.

– *Does the Handbook provide information on other human rights protection tools from the UN arsenal?*

– Of course. There is a chapter on ‘special procedures’ – a general name given to the mechanisms established to address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. The key feature of the special procedures is their ability to react immediately to information on human rights violations in any part of the world, at any time. By the way, the chapter on special procedures is included in the new Handbook edition for the first time.

Civil society oriented funds and grants information is another novelty. These funds and grants are aimed directly at non-governmental organizations, professional associations, and individuals (e.g. Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations or United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability). These can provide financial support for civil society activities in certain human rights areas.

– *This Handbook must be useful to the Human Rights Masters programme students in Russia’s three universities who started studying in 2009.*

– Yes. Basically, it’s their principle learning material on the international



Dirk Hebecker, Senior Human Rights Adviser to the UN Country Team in the Russian Federation, presents the Handbook

human rights mechanisms within the United Nations. We have handed out this Handbook, together with other OHCHR publications, to the students and to the recently founded Inter-University Resource Centre for Human Rights Master's Studies.

– *What can the Handbook offer to people and organizations that have little to do with the UN, but are interested in human rights?*

– First of all, they'll learn about the UN human rights system. Secondly, they can find information on where to send their complaints. This includes the above-mentioned special procedures. This also includes human rights treaty bodies (their addresses are provided in the Handbook), meaning committees of independent experts who monitor the Member States' compliance with their human rights treaty obligations, including committees on human rights, economic, social and cultural rights, elimination of racial discrimination, against torture and the prevention of torture, elimination of discrimination against women, rights of the child, protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families, rights of persons with disabili-

ties. However, there are certain 'buts'. Firstly, the complainant must have exhausted all available domestic remedies. Secondly, if a person (e.g. with disabilities) has trouble with asserting his/her rights on his/her own, this person must provide proof of authorization (power of attorney) of a person or organization representing him/her. Thirdly, the State in question must have accepted the competence of the specific human rights treaty body to accept complaints. And, finally, it takes one to three years, on average, for a final decision to be taken on a complaint.

– *Surely Russia's civil society will appreciate the Handbook?*

– In order to help our Russian colleagues, we have organized a series of presentations of the Handbook, particularly among human rights activists and their representative organisations, experts, and other organizations active in the field of human rights.

Main presentations with participation of human rights NGOs and academia took place at the UN Information Centre, Citizens' Watch NGO in St-Petersburg, Moscow International Book Fair 2009, and the Public Chamber of Russia. Con-

sidering the fact that the majority of civil society organisations admitted not knowing how to establish cooperation with the Office or how to engage with the UN human rights mechanisms, the Handbook could be a useful instrument to bridge this gap and facilitate in return greater engagement of these organizations with OHCHR and the UN Human rights system.

– *Where can one find the Handbook or take a look through its contents?*

– Russian language copies are available at the OHCHR Office in Moscow. To receive hard copies, please, contact Rachid Alouach, OHCHR Programme Officer, by email rachid.alouach@undp.org.

You can also view and download the handbook from the OHCHR website http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/ngohandbook_ru.pdf.

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Presentation of the Handbook for Civil Society: Working with the United Nations Human Rights Programme at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation



UN Information Centre

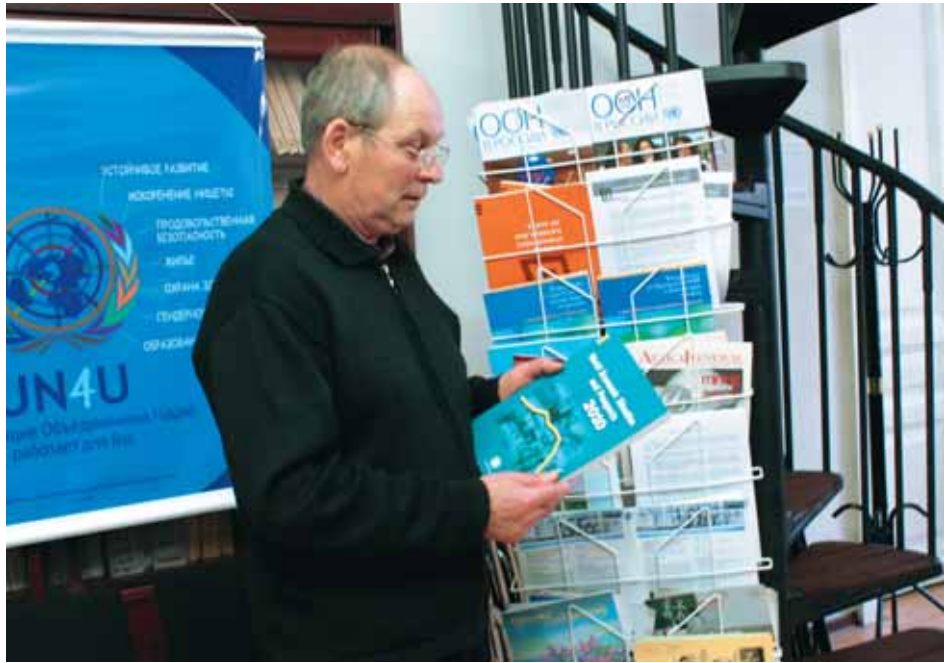
Opinions

Global Economy: What to Expect in 2010

Traditionally, in January the UN publishes the annual report, World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP). The publication has proved itself valuable analytical material and an authoritative source of information for scientists, economists, and the media alike.

In addition to the UN Headquarters in New York, WESP-2010 was launched in a number of the world's major cities, including Moscow. It is noteworthy that this year, the report was issued at a time of continuous decline of the global economy and against the background of yet to be deciphered trends, which may as well carry opportunities of a new growth. For example, as far as economies of the CIS countries are concerned, UN experts have come up with a cautiously optimistic scenario, warning against excessive expectations and singling out their remaining institutional weakness and their restricted access to the world capital markets.

According to the report, in 2009, industrial output across the CIS has sharply declined for quite a number of reasons. In



the Russian Federation, initial drawbacks resulting from the country's inadequate access to international financing were complicated by a drastic reduction in global raw material prices. Russia's economic downturn negatively affected economic indicators across the whole CIS, with Ukraine and Armenia showing the worst economic performance. Less exposed economies with adequate financial resources, such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, continued to grow, despite the global recession. Other economies, for example Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, managed to somewhat offset the crisis thanks to growing gold prices and positive outcomes of reviewed gas export treaties with the Russian Federation.

This year, the launch of WESP-2010 at the UNIC Moscow was held on 25 January in a format of a meeting over a cup of tea, or less formally than before. That said, a great deal of an effort was made for the dialogue to be informative and useful enough for experts and journalists to benefit from it in their professional work.

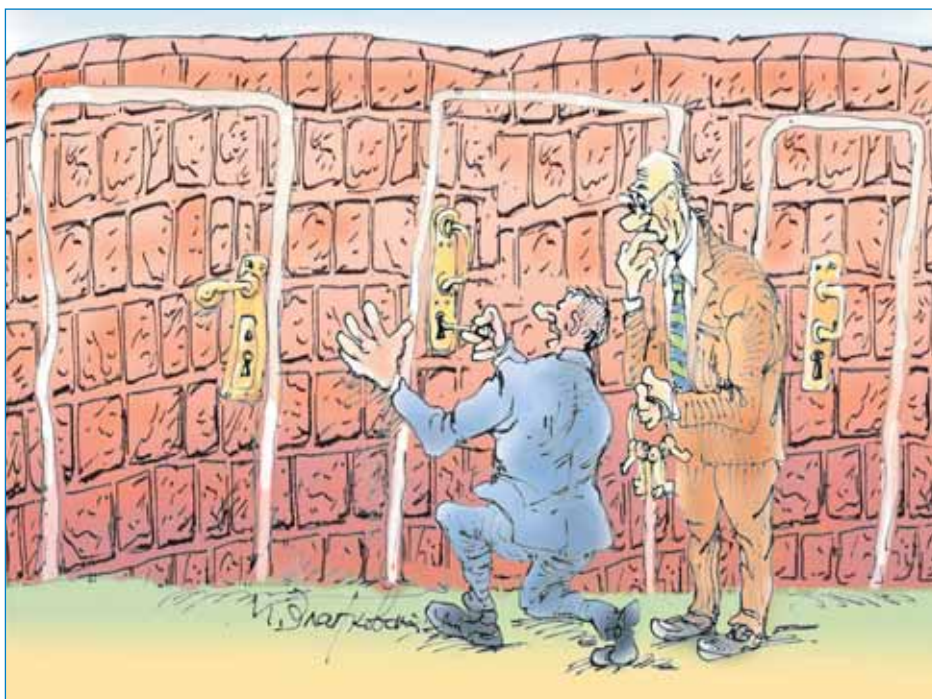
Opening the briefing, Alexandre Gorelik, UNIC Director, made an overview of the survey, placing an emphasis on some of its major conclusions and recommendations: the global economy is on the mend, but recovery is fragile and uneven; the adverse impacts on poverty and human development could be long-lasting; and, finally, strengthened policy coordination at the international level is



needed, along with progress on the global economic governance reform. In addition, Alexandre Gorelik made some comments on the analysis of developments in the Russian economy and the CIS countries offered in the publication.

Taking the floor after him, Dmitry Birihevsky, Head of Division at the

Department of International Organizations, MFA Russia, spoke on the main trends described in the WESP (against the backdrop of recommendations made by the UN Commission on financial crisis, as well as by the G-20) and explained how the Foreign Affairs Ministry viewed Russia's emerging role as a donor.



© A cartoon of the caricaturist Mikhaïl Zlatkovsky from *Novye Izvestia* newspaper

In the Q&A session that followed, predictably, most of the questions were related to the regional angle of the report, particularly, the situation in Russia and its neighbours. Several reporters also inquired about the report's proposals regarding the reform of the international financial architecture.

The Report can be downloaded at: <http://qwww.un.org/esa/policy/wess/wesp2010files/wesp2010.pdf>

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UN Development Programme

Society

'Save the Energy of Our City!'

Fuel and Energy Department of the Moscow Government with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and Intel Corporation organized a photo exhibition 'Save the Energy of Our City!' Partners of the exhibition were Mosenergo, Mosenergosbyt, the People's Initiative Foundation, Energosvet, Greenpeace, IFC, as well as major international manufacturers Rockwool, Philips and Autodesk.

The photo exhibition dedicated to the need for rational use of energy resources opened in Izvestiya Publishing House press-centre. The exhibition included 44 photos provided by partners. The exhibits reflected in different ways the effect of energy production and consumption on people's life, separate ecosystems and the planet as a whole. The authors vividly demonstrated the detrimental consequences of climate change and call for more rational energy use.

Today Russia has wide opportunities for more rational use of fuel and energy resources and introduction of energy saving technologies and materials. Taking advantage of these opportunities can significantly contribute to the increase of competitiveness of the national economy. That is why the implementation of energy saving projects is of high importance in all spheres of life and in the housing and communal services sector in particular. As Moscow Mayor, M.Y. Luzhkov, noted speaking at the extended session of the State Council of the RF on energy effectiveness, "almost over half of energy saving and alternative energy use opportunities are in the communal and housing sector".

Speaking about the exhibition, Head of the Moscow Fuel and Energy Department, Evgeny Sklyarov, said, "Today, reducing energy consumption is one of main ways of increasing energy effectiveness. Among other things, it is achieved through forming public opinion and better understanding by people of benefits and value of such behaviour. Our event is yet another effort to attract the attention of Muscovites to this topical issue."

"There are few things of the same importance as the environment we live in. Rational use of energy is a major element of environmentally responsible behaviour. Caring about environment is caring about our future. If we unite our efforts we will make the world safer. There is no time to lose," said Kamil Isayev, Marketing Director, Intel Russia and CIS.

Natalia Olofinskaya, Head of UNDP Russia Environment Unit, thanked the Moscow Government for its initiative to hold an exhibition, "UNDP is happy to support this important event held by the Moscow Government. It is not accidental that Moscow has been selected for imple-



mentation of two major projects by UNDP and the Global Environmental Facility aimed at increasing energy effectiveness of buildings and facilities to be launched in 2010. Moscow has always been a leader in this area, and provides an excellent platform for demonstrating modern energy effective technologies and promoting energy saving".

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Promoting Best Standards and Practices, Together with Local Institutions

National legal and judicial capacity-building in the context of UNHCR global activities is understood as providing assistance and support to States in their efforts to develop structures and operational systems, which will enable refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, returnees, and stateless persons to benefit from effective national protection. It also aims at strengthening skills, knowledge and capacities of governments, other local institutions, and non-governmental partners in this area.

Activities in support of national legal and judicial capacity-building require a broad range of experience and expertise, which may not be found in a single organization. Thus, in providing support to national authorities in this sphere, UNHCR cooperates with relevant United Nations agencies, international organizations and NGOs, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Council of Europe (CoE), European Council for Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), European Court for Human Rights (ECtHR), International Association

for Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and some others.

Capacity-building goes beyond basic concepts, it is about attitudes, relationships and institution building; it is dependent on getting to know and respect a country, its legal and administrative traditions. Capacity building is also a two-way process: UNHCR colleagues need to be fully in tune with existent national systems in order to shape and plan according to the requirements. Our first skill therefore is listening and joint planning with national government partners. For this reason, in 2009, UNHCR's capacity-building activities in the Russian Federation (a series of seminars, workshops and study opportunities) concentrated on various partners: government officials, primarily from the Federal Migration Service of Russia (FMS) and its territorial departments; judges and prosecutors; non-governmental organizations and mass media. Events and consultations took place in Central Russia and the North Caucasus, the regions

where the highest numbers of UNHCR persons of concern live.

Capacity building in the institutional sphere

During the past year, UNHCR Moscow, together with FMS, organized three seminars on international refugee law, international standards, national legislation and implementation arrangements, RSD procedure and readmission and other issues targeting migration authorities and heads of FMS territorial branches from over 40 regions of the Russian Federation that receive the biggest number of asylum-seekers. The national asylum legislation still needs some substantial amendments to reach international standards on reception and integration of asylum-seekers and quality improvement of refugee status determination. However, there is unequivocal support from the migration authorities to bring up the standards of the existing national asylum procedure to international standards.

Another joint UNHCR/FMS seminar was held in Saint-Petersburg and focused on reception conditions, inclu-



The public prosecutors from the republics of the North Caucasus participate in the workshop organized by the UNHCR jointly with the Council of Europe

ding the management of reception centres, accommodation, access to social welfare, health care, and education. Involvement of several UNHCR partners helped present best practices by UNHCR, the Saint Petersburg and German Red Cross Societies, with support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent and the International Organization for Migration, as well as the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration.

UNHCR long-term partnership with ECRE, on the one hand, and FMS of Russia, on the other hand, provided an opportunity to expand capacity building efforts to migration bodies of CIS countries during the fifth annual International Refugee Law Course also held in St. Petersburg. The event was attended by 75 participants and supported by the Federal Migration Service of Russia, as well as UNHCR offices in respective countries.

Capacity building in the judicial sphere

In 2009, UNHCR attached particular importance to enhancing the capacity of judges and prosecutors and their knowledge base in the area of temporary asylum as a form of complementary protection in the Russian Federation, extradition, burden of proof at the court hearing, the existing ruling of the European Court on Human Rights (ECtHR) on asylum cases and its impact on the court practice in Russia as well as the nexus between Human Rights and Refugee Law in general.

With the support of judges from the ECtHR and the International Association of Refugee Law Judges (IARLJ), UNHCR facilitated a seminar in Moscow for federal judges of different levels engaged in the assessment of asylum cases in Russia. Deputy Chair of the RF Supreme Court introduced participants to the seminar topic.

In 2009, UNHCR jointly with the CoE organized two high profile legal fora (both in Kislovodsk) for judges and public prosecutors from Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan, and North Ossetia-Alania.

Case-law in the field is still inadequate in the North Caucasus, and judges needed additional training on international standards and international experience as regards the European Convention on Human Rights. Judges participating in the first seminar searched for a fair balance between the demands and the general interest of the community and the requirements of the protection of individual fundamental rights through the interpretation of relevant provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights. They had an opportunity to discuss the patterns of individual complaints of human rights violations in the North Caucasus, to ensure that in future, when dealing with such cases, the judges apply European and other international standards efficiently. The event was successful owing to excellent attendance of participants,

the quality of contributions and questions and answers sessions. The Supreme Court played an important role in this seminar event, which involved judges from the North Caucasus and was organized by UNHCR, while the participation of a Supreme Court judge was beneficial for the methodological objective of the event.

Another high profile forum for practitioners from the North Caucasus brought together public prosecutors from the North Caucasus republics to discuss legal mechanisms and standards applicable to the protection of refugees, displaced persons, and stateless persons at the national and international levels. The practical value of the event and its relevance for refugees, displaced and stateless persons is the fact that the Public Prosecutor Office prerogatives include the competence to supervise observance of human rights on the territory of the Russian Federation by all subjects of law. At the same time, UNHCR has also developed and wanted to share its extensive legal opinions on issues related to public prosecutors' prerogatives. All participants of the forum benefited from the presence of international experts, and respected Russian academicians who approached relevant human rights treaties from a doctrinal point of view.

Among reviewed and discussed topics was a standard of non-penalization of foreigners illegally crossing national boundaries if they are in need of international protection. The participants evaluated an exhaustive list of circumstances, in which states may detain an individual seeking asylum. Special attention was devoted to extradition of foreigners at risk of violation of their fundamental rights in a requesting country.

Promoting international links

In addition to conducting in-country seminars, UNHCR actively promoted participation of partner organizations in international capacity building events abroad. Thus, in 2009, two Russian judges from the Moscow City Court participated in the seminar 'Refugee Status Determination – the Role of the Court' in Poland, organized by the Warsaw Regional Administrative Court, UNHCR Budapest and UNHCR Warsaw, and supported by UNHCR offices in Moscow, Baku and Athens, the IARLJ, the ECtHR and the International Centre for Migration Policy



The public prosecutors from the republics of the North Caucasus at the workshop organized by the UNHCR and the Council of Europe



The workshop for the judges from the republics of the North Caucasus in Kislovodsk (June 2009)

Development (Ukraine-based project). The information exchange among judges representing their countries respective practices was of great value.

The study visit of the Head of the Citizenship Department of the FMS Asylum Unit, representatives of the 'Memorial' Human Rights Centre, and UNHCR Moscow to the UK and Finland within the framework of the EU-funded Regional Protection Support Project (RPSP) and ECRE-funded border monitoring project 'Monitoring safe and dignified return and conditions of detention' had a specific objective. It was to further increase the capacities of responsible authorities and civil society to develop fair and efficient asylum systems in accordance with international and European standards, and to ensure that asylum-seekers have access to territories and fair RSD procedures.

Supporting non-governmental initiatives

The 'Memorial' Human Rights Centre, a UNHCR's NGO partner, benefited from the migration law practice seminar funded by UNHCR Moscow, together with FMS. The seminar took place on the occasion of the annual meeting of its network

and was focused on passport withdrawals, participation in voluntary relocation schemes, amendments to the citizenship legislation, and access to the asylum procedure. The event provided an opportunity to lawyers from different regions to interact with FMS officials and highlighted the need for UNHCR and Memorial to coordinate their efforts in the regions.

Raising media awareness and interest

Traditional semi-annual UNHCR workshops for journalists from the Central and Southern Federal districts conducted since 1998, together with ARS Press (Alliance of Head Managers of Russian Regional Mass Media), have a major significance for UNHCR as they provide an opportunity to maintain a network of like-minded journalists in the target regions for promoting UNHCR's mandate in the Russian Federation and informing public at large about UNHCR's activities and partners. In 2009, they brought together nearly 60 journalists from major regional publications, thus strategically broadening the partnership in the regions. The facilitators covered most pertinent and crucial issues, which were later highlighted in dozens of media out-

lets. The agenda included UNHCR strategy and practical activities related to persons of concern in the Russian Federation, raising awareness on the statelessness situation, various aspects of refugees' human rights protection and integration. Special attention was given to activities related to promotion of tolerance and combating xenophobic attitudes towards refugees and other displaced people.

Deepening the knowledge of international legal instruments and standards, strengthening response capacity of national governmental and non-governmental partners, promoting laws and policies, ensuring the proper handling of refugee and asylum issues, reception and care of refugees, and tolerance towards UNHCR persons of concern shall remain in the focus of UNHCR activities in the Russian Federation in 2010.

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United Nations Association of Russia

Events

Ted Turner Gives Lecture at MGIMO

On 2 November 2009, the UN Association of Russia, together with the UNESCO department and MGIMO Student Union, organized a lecture of the UN Foundation Chairman, American businessman and philanthropist, Ted Turner.

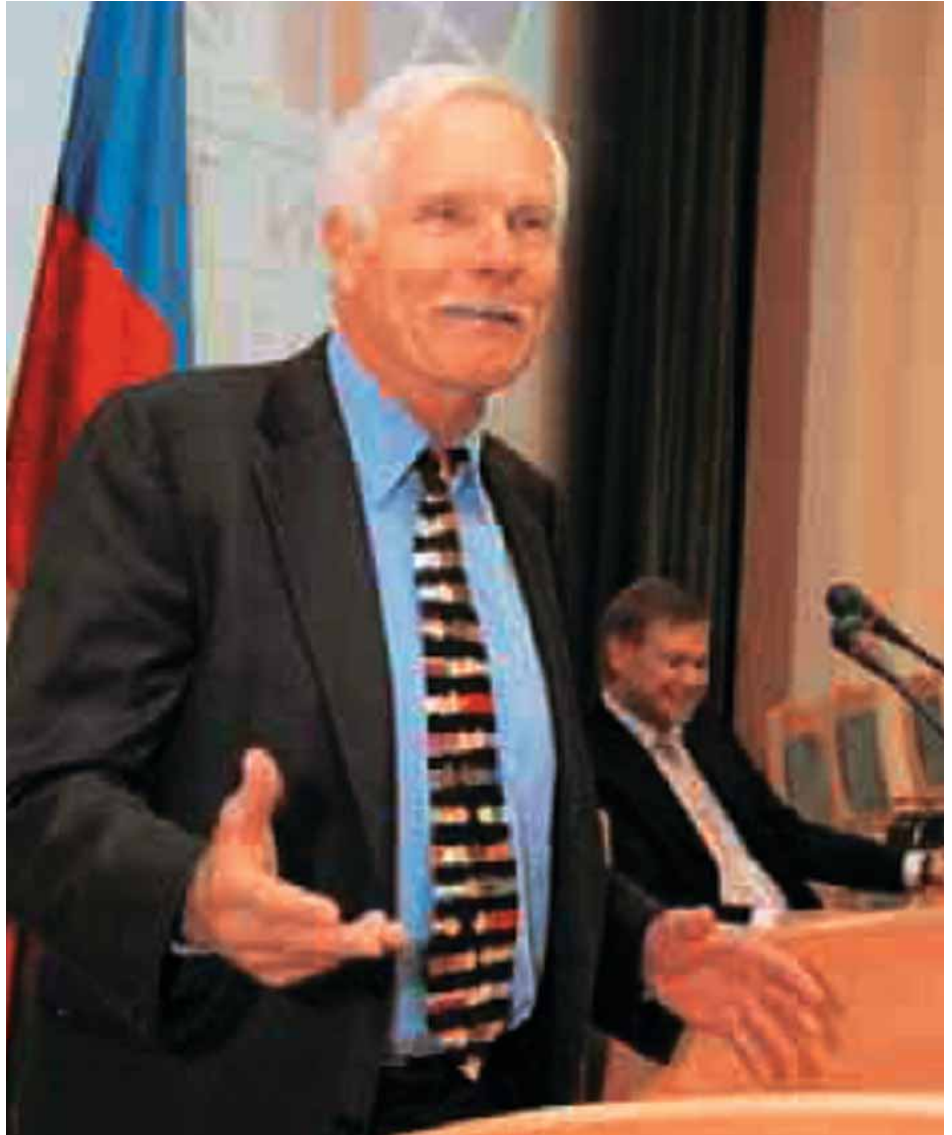
Hundreds of Moscow students gathered at MGIMO to pose their questions to a man, who not only made his 'American dream' come true, but also managed to stay socially responsible. And to be fun! "Call me Ted," he asked the audience right at the beginning to make everyone feel at ease.

The general excitement about Turner's visit was more than understandable. As a businessman he is known as a founder of the cable television network CNN, the first 24-hour cable news channel. In addition, he founded WTBS, which pioneered the superstation concept in cable television. As a philanthropist, he is known for his US \$1 billion donation to support UN causes, which allowed creating the United Nations Foundation, a public charity to broaden support for the UN.

After a brief introduction made by UNA-Russia Chairman Alexey Borisov Turner told the audience about his activities at the UN Foundation and soon moved to the question and answer format of discussion. Students were interested in a wide range of subjects, such as foreign policy issues, the future of the United Nations, and some general matters.

While discussing the Russian-American relations, Turner expressed much optimism about Barak Obama's administration and the nuclear disarmament programme. He underlined the importance of public diplomacy and encouraged Russian students to establish more connections and develop cultural exchanges with Western countries. "If you have at least one friend in a foreign country, you would never want to go on war against this country," this is how he summed up this complicated idea of global partnership in simple words.

As for the United Nations, Ted Turner predicts upcoming changes. Indeed, the Security Council reformation is an important task on the current agenda.



Ted Turner: "Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise"

Turner proposes to enlarge the SC up to 10 permanent members including countries of Africa and South America.

Future journalists were interested to hear Turner's ideas about mass media prospects. He called print journalism "an obsolete way of distributing information" and put a great hope on the online media.

In addition, students learnt that the philanthropist likes to listen to Frank Sinatra and hates being in a boring company. Turner concluded by sharing with the stu-

dents his motto: "Early to bed, early to rise, work like hell and advertise". Hopefully, this motto will encourage them to live their lives at the utmost like the UN Foundation Chairman Ted Turner is doing!

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Summary

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

UN / Secretary-General's Message on World Day of Social Justice

This year, World Day of Social Justice is marked for the second time. In his message on this occasion, the Secretary-General speaks about the importance of tackling poverty, exclusion and unemployment, in order to promote solidarity, harmony, and equality of opportunity within and between societies.

UNAIDS / Dr Broun's Formula for Combating AIDS

In his interview to *UN in Russia*, UNAIDS Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia, Dr Denis Broun, speaks about the role and objectives of UNAIDS in the region and shares his views on the most effective ways to combat the epidemic.

UNFPA / Youth: Partner in Combating AIDS

Youth Village 2009 was organized on the initiative of Y-PEER Russia in the framework of the Eastern Europe and Central Asia AIDS Conference 2009 with the support of UNFPA, UNAIDS, and UNESCO. Its main objective was to draw attention to the special needs of youth in the context of HIV infection and to involve more young people development and implementation of HIV prevention programmes in the region.

UNICEF / Children in Russia

A new UNICEF statistics collection *Children in Russia 2009* released in cooperation with the Federal Service for State Statistics (Rosstat) covers eight areas related to children, including child health, education, social protection of families with children, economic activities of adolescents, juvenile delinquency, criminal offences against juveniles, and children's leisure activities.

OHCHR / Human Rights and Civil Society

Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) issued the second updated and revised edition of the guide entitled *Working with the United Nations*

Human Rights Programme: a Handbook for Civil Society. Senior Human Rights Advisor to the *UN in Russia*, Dirk Hebecker, tells *UN in Russia* correspondent about the new publication.

UNIC / Global Economy: What to Expect in 2010

In January, *World Economic Situation and Prospects*, a reputable annual UN publication, was launched in several world capitals, including Moscow. The UN Information Centre in Moscow hosted an informal discussion of the report with participation of media and MFA officials.

UNDP / 'Save the Energy of Our City!'

The Fuel and Energy Department of the Moscow Government with the support of the United Nations Development Programme and Intel Corporation organized a photo exhibition 'Save the Energy of Our City!' calling for rational use of energy resources.

UNHCR / Promoting Best Standards and Practices Together with Local Institutions

In 2010, UNHCR priorities include sharing expertise in the area of international legal instruments and standards, strengthening response capacity of national governmental and non-governmental partners, promoting laws and policies, ensuring proper handling of refugee and asylum issues, reception and care of refugees, and tolerance towards UNHCR persons of concern.

UNA Russia / Ted Turner Gives Lecture at MGIMO

Ted Turner, a prominent American businessman and philanthropist, gave lecture at MGIMO University. The event was organized by the UN Association of Russia, together with the UNESCO Department and the Student Union of MGIMO. With his US\$1 billion contribution to support UN causes Ted Turner created the United Nations Foundation, a public charity to broaden support for the 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:

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