

U N IN RUSSIA

Translating economic growth into sustainable human development with human rights

No.4 (71)

July-August
2010



Published by
the United Nations Office
in the Russian Federation



About 20,000 delegates
from 193 countries took part in the largest
international conference on HIV/AIDS in Vienna / 3

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"In the Russian Federation, 70% of HIV-infected were diagnosed between the age of 15 and 30. Over 43% of new HIV cases in 2008-09 were registered among women of child-bearing age," says Bertrand Bainvel, the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) Representative in the Russian Federation

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The exhibition of graphic posters conducted by UNHCR in Moscow was inspired by the theme of the 2010 World Refugee Day "They took my home but they cannot take my future". It was preceded by a contest among students of art colleges and graphic designers who were to express the theme through various creative meanst

Regions /17

In the framework of the Year of the Teacher, Yakutsk hosted an inter-regional research and practice conference Educational Space of the Arctic: Development Through Dialogue and Cooperation. During the conference the Teachers of the Arctic project was officially launched

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UN Secretary-General's Message on World Humanitarian Day

On World Humanitarian Day, we renew our commitment to life-saving relief efforts -- and remember those who died while serving this noble cause.

People who have lived through terrible events are often left with nothing.

No family; no food; no shelter; no job.

Not even a passport or ID paper.

Nothing.

Humanitarian workers help them get back on their feet to restart their lives.

Aid workers are the envoys we send to show our solidarity with suffering.

They represent what is best in human nature. But their work is dangerous.

Often, they venture to some of the most perilous places on earth.



And often, they pay a heavy price. Harassment and intimidation. Kidnapping and even murder.

January's earthquake in Haiti was a humanitarian catastrophe for the country.

It also had a devastating impact on aid workers.

The United Nations lost some of its most dedicated staff on that day.

On World Humanitarian Day, let us remember those in need ?

Those who have fallen while trying to help them ?

And those who continue to give aid, undeterred by the dangers they face - for the sake of building a safer, better world.

*19 August 2010
Ban Ki-moon*

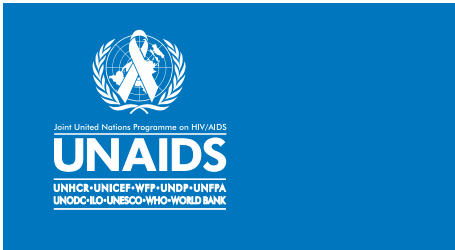
UN in Russia
Published once in two months
Circulation: 2,000 copies

www.unrussia.ru
www.undp.ru

Founder:
United Nations Office
in the Russian Federation

Editor-in-Chief: Victoria Zotikova
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Highlight

XVIII International Conference on HIV/AIDS



About 20,000 delegates from 193 countries took part in the largest international conference on HIV/AIDS held in Vienna in July. The conference was held under the theme "Rights Here, Rights Now" and was mainly focused on the HIV epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The choice of Vienna as the venue for the AIDS 2010 Conference reflected the important role of the city in maintaining links between Eastern and Western Europe. The international conference was held in the situation of general decline in public spending on health and social programs in many countries of the region.



pected flash mobs and mini-performances. One of them urged the international community to take action to save the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. "Doctors" – the United Kingdom, Spain, and the USA tried to do everything possible to save the "patient". In the play the "patient" was saved, but time will tell how this story will end in real life.

The program of the XVIII International Conference was devoted to the latest scientific knowledge and provided a unique opportunity for intensive dialogues on critical issues in the global response to the epidemic. The sessions of different formats – from meetings to workshops, inter-disciplinarily and plenary sessions, as well as other program activities such as the Global Village, satellite meetings, exhibitions and other related events – contributed to professional growth of participants and development of cooperation.

One of the public highlights of the Conference was Human Rights March. The March went through the main streets of Vienna with the slogan "HIV and Human Rights". More than 15 000 people, including government leaders, advocates and people affected by HIV, participated in it. Singer, songwriter, HIV activist and UNAIDS Goodwill Ambassador, Annie Lenox, addressed the participants and presented her campaign SING.

The work of over 2,000 journalists in the press centre of the Conference was time to time interrupted by unex-

Scholars, practitioners and human rights activists from around the globe appealed to the world leaders to provide not less than US\$20 billion to the Global Fund at the meeting in October 2010. The level of replenishment approved at this meeting will determine the size of the Fund's grants for 2011-2013.



Flash mob: "doctors" – "Great Britain", "Spain", "the United States" – try to save the "patient"



Women representing Middle East and Northern Africa were among 15 thousand people who marched across Vienna streets

Civil society organizations, initiative groups and activists addressed the Board of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria with a request to extend the financing of antiretroviral therapy in Russia. A letter of appeal describing the current situation was supported by President of the International AIDS Society, Julio Montagnier, by UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibe, as well as the Eurasian Harm Reduction Network, the Russian Union of PLHIV, the European AIDS Treatment Group, the All-Ukrainian Network of PLHIV, and others.

During the conference, Michel Sidibe, UNAIDS Executive Director, met with journalists from Russia and the CIS. Mr. Sidibe stressed that the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia would become his personal priority. He expressed hope and confidence that there will be a different picture of CIS governments' participation in the next international AIDS conference in Washington in 2012.

Along with numerous presentations and speeches at the plenary sessions, UNAIDS Regional Director of in Europe and Central Asia, Dr. Denis Broun,

answered questions of journalists from Russia, the CIS countries, and Voice of America, Radio Austria and Radio Canada correspondents.

A New High-level Prevention Commission headed by two Nobel Laureates – Professor of Medicine

Francoise Barre-Sinoussi and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu – was launched at the Vienna conference. In addition to well-known scientists there are many prominent politicians and opinion leaders from different sectors of society and countries, such as Jacques Chirac and Mustafa Mohamed ElBaradei (former Head of IAEA). Using member's authority and based on scientific evidence and international experience in prevention, the Commission will lead changes in social and political foundations of prevention programs in the world.

Eastern Europe region is represented in the Commission by famous TV journalist Vladimir Pozner and Ukrainian business lady, founder of the ANTI/AIDS Foundation, Elena Franchuk.

Two Russian State Duma deputies, members of Parliamentary Working Group on HIV/AIDS and other socially significant infectious diseases (PWG), Mikhail Grishankov and Valery Zubov participated in the Vienna conference.

Speaking at the session “Drug Policy that Works for Public Health and Rights in Eastern Europe and Central Asia” Valery Zubov underlined that “the HIV epidemic in Russia began ten years later than in the rest of the world and we could use the experience of other countries but we didn't do that”.



Mikhail Grishankov, who also attended the session, encouraged civil society organizations to unite efforts and conduct the dialogue with the government and politicians more proactively.

The session gathered leaders from politics, public health and civil society, to discuss drug policies crucial for HIV prevention and treatment, and how these can be moved forward in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia and other countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.



One more PWG member, State Duma deputy and Chair of the Scientific Committee, Valery Chereshnev, partici-



The UNAIDS Executive Director Michael Sidibe meets the journalists from Russia and CIS countries

ipated in the conference. He met with representatives of the international scientific community and leading experts. Mr. Chereshnev and Mr. Zubov together with GBC staff had a formal meeting with UNAIDS Executive Director, Michel Sidibe.

The Vienna Declaration, the final document of the conference, was prepared by a group of international experts. The Declaration calls on the international community and national governments to review drug policy decriminalize and change it to a more

rational and scientifically sound for more effective HIV prevention. It was signed by over 16,000 people.

You can view the text of the declaration and sign it here: <http://www.viennadecclaration.com5>

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Compassion and Care Key to HIV Prevention



Eastern Europe and Central Asia are the only places in the world where the HIV epidemic is still growing, noted the scientific community at the XVIII International HIV Conference in Vienna this month. Host to an estimated 1 million population living with HIV and the number of new cases growing at 8% annually, the Russian Federation cannot ignore such a wakeup call.



The article's author, Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative in the Russian Federation

Beyond any doubt, Russia can pride itself for having halved the rate of HIV transmission from mother to child (PMTCT) and brought care and treatment to almost every child born with the virus. As the epidemic continues to grow, maintaining such coverage for both PMTCT and pediatric care means, however, supporting more women and children exposed to the virus, including support and services to drug-dependent pregnant women. In its report "Blame and Banishment: The Underground HIV Epidemic Affecting Children in Eastern Europe and Central Asia" launched at the Vienna Conference, UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, makes it clear that it is young people who pay the highest price. In the Russian Federation, 70 percent of those infected were diagnosed among those aged 15 -30. Over 43 percent of new HIV cases in 2008-2009 were registered among women of child-bearing age.

The very denial of uncomfortable social realities lies at the root of children's high vulnerability to the HIV infection and continues to be a major barrier to addressing the real needs of children and their families. Over the past two decades the economic transition exposed many families to economic hardship, unemployment and crumbling social safety nets. These pressures, combined with widespread alcohol or drug abuse, made it difficult for many families to make ends meet, and for some to effectively protect their children. The number of children separated from their biological families – traditionally in all societies, the best line of support for a child – has not significantly decreased, exceeding 710,000 over the last 5 years. Most of these



children will be deprived of love, care and support essential throughout childhood to ensure that a child develops his or her own full potential, and later to lead a productive life as an adult. Whether we like it or not, drug injection in the Russian Federation is much more widespread than in most European countries, with an estimated 1.8 million injecting drug users. Studies among them demonstrate a very disturbing tendency: a large proportion of injecting drug users started in their teenage years.

A consequence of our denial and our failure to care for and support those most in need, HIV is also a driver of exclusion. HIV positive mothers are more likely to abandon their children upon birth, with very few chances to be adopted or find a foster family in future. Although prohibited by the legislation, HIV affected children (whether they are living with HIV, or are HIV negative living with HIV positive parents) are often rejected from kindergartens and schools. Judgmental attitudes among health and social workers often discourage adolescents from seeking prevention information and treatment. It is the associated stigma and discrimination that people often fear the more than the disease.

Many initiatives and actors in the Russian Federation aim to develop and bring a more caring and integrated support to families, children and adolescents vulnerable to the epidemic because of their personal and social vulnerabilities. In partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Development, sub-

jects of the Russian Federation, and the Foundation for Children in Difficult Circumstances UNICEF develops planning tools and guidance for Russian regions to help them provide a better and timely support to families in difficult situations, and thus prevent child separation and abandonment. With the Ministry of Health and Social Development and University of Saint-Petersburg, more than 100 youth-friendly services, more attuned to the needs and expectations of adolescents, based on trust and care rather than blame and stigma, have been opened across the country. The Saint-Petersburg Republican Clinical Hospital of Infectious Diseases headed by Dr. Evgeny Voronin saw half of its abandoned HIV positive children adopted over the past two years.

However the success of these and other initiatives will remain limited if we do not break from the past. It will be critical to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to effective HIV prevention programmes, including by integrating HIV prevention activities into ongoing



ing support for vulnerable families, and programmes for at-risk popula-



tions such as injecting drug users. We do not need policies, services and

a society that are discriminating, blaming and excluding vulnerable families, their children and people living with HIV. Those would further drive the epidemic underground, fuel it and make it increasingly more difficult to control. Reversing the epidemic requires from all of us the courage to face realities and to care, respect and protect the most vulnerable among us.

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UN Development Programme

Society

“We speak the same language with our patients...”

On 12 August 2010, the United Nations Development Programme and the Russian Association of People Living with HIV organized a round table discussion on topical issues of the institutionalization of peer counselling on HIV/AIDS in Russia.

People living with HIV (PLHIV) are in need of medical and psycho-social support. In view of the current level of HIV prevalence in Russia medical support is provided to the majority of people living with HIV. However, psycho-social support, which is guaranteed by law, is short in supply as the state system of social support to PLHIV is not developed.

To obtain this support PLHIV appeal to non-governmental organizations, which apply the adapted international methodologies. One of them is the so called ‘peer counselling’, which is in fact a confidential dialogue between two people living with HIV, one being a consultant and another –a client. The peer consultant is supposed to have successful experience of living with HIV infection and possess knowledge and skills required for counselling. Peer counselling aims to assist a person living with HIV to cope with stress and make informed decisions about life with HIV.



The discussion was called upon by the results of the first in Russia sociological survey on peer counselling on HIV/AIDS. According to Tamara Glushakova, General Director of Ri-Vita Consulting, which conducted the research commissioned by UNDP, the term ‘peer counselling’

is not yet understood by everyone. Therefore one of the main objectives should be the increased information sharing about the role, meaning, and possibilities of this methodology, particularly among people living with HIV and health care personnel in AIDS centres.



As the meeting was attended by various stakeholders, including federal entities, such as Rospotrebnadzor, regional AIDS centres, the PLHIV Association and peer consultants, the topic was addressed from various angles. Peer consultants from Yekaterinburg, Tyumen, Orenburg, Khabarovsk, Ulan Ude, and Yakutsk shared their work experience and practices. Anastasia from Tyumen said that her main goal was to assist her interlocutors to accept the diagnosis, to understand the need and necessity to take ARV medicines regularly with no interruptions. The main problem of PLHIV is the lack of adherence to treatment and irregular in-take of medication that has a negative impact on their well-being and life span. By their own life experience, the peer consultants prove that people with such disease can and shall live and at the same time they can be useful for other people and the society at large.

Physicians from AIDS centres emphasized the necessity of interaction between peer consultants and medical personnel. On the one hand, it is important for upgrading the consultants' skills, and on the other hand, it is necessary for physicians to understand the benefits of consultants' work, and also to raise the effectiveness of their joint efforts. Ksenia from Sverdlovsk AIDS Centre suggested



Igor Pchelin, Executive Director of the Russian Association of People Living with HIV, raised the issue of improving the work effectiveness of peer consultants

that joint trainings should be organized for physicians, nurses and peer consultants. In her opinion, peer counselling is essential and it should be institutionalized as soon as possible. Currently the majority of peer consultants provide their services on their own initiative and on a voluntary basis. At the same time, physicians from AIDS centres recognize the importance and the invaluable contribution of peer consultants in the psycho-social support to PLHIV. "Peer consultants take up a

great part of our work," underlined the physicians present at the round table discussion.

Larisa Dementyeva, a Rospotrebnadzor representative, thanked the organizers for a valuable and timely discussion. It is necessary to create an evidence-based database with detailed regulatory information so that the government could take a decision on the official status of peer consultants and include them in the staff schedule of AIDS centres.



The first in Russia sociological survey on peer counselling on HIV/AIDS

This is what the Russian Association of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) is focused on at the moment. Igor Pchelin, Executive Director of the Association, raised the issue of improving the work effectiveness of peer consultants. This evaluation should be clear for all stakeholders including the government. Certification issues, reporting requirements, monitoring of peer consultants' services are the most important and inherent elements of peer counselling on HIV introduction.

At the end of the discussion the round table participants signed a resolution on the necessity of including peer counselling regulations into the draft document by the Ministry of Health and Social Development 'Procedures for Medical Assistance to the PLHIV'. Institutionalization of peer counselling as one of the elements of psycho-social support system for PLHIV could help the government overcome the consequences of the HIV epidemic in Russia.

World Humanitarian Day – Solidarity with Suffering

Man-made and natural disasters cause immense suffering for millions of people every year, very often among the world's poorest, most marginalized and vulnerable individuals. There are currently more than 27 million internally displaced people and 10 million refugees in the world. One out of every six people on Earth is chronically hungry. Humanitarian aid workers strive to ensure that all those in need of life-saving assistance receive it and can restart their lives. As United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put it, "aid workers are the envoys we send to show our solidarity with suffering."

World Humanitarian Day, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2008, aims to increase public awareness of humanitarian work and importance of international cooperation. On that day, the world commemorates all humanitarian and United Nations and associated personnel, who have worked in the promotion of humanitarian course, and those who have lost their lives in the course of duty."

On 19 August 2003, the Canal Hotel bombing in Baghdad killed 22 United Nations personnel, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello. World Humanitarian Day was designed in their memory, but also in the memory of all other victims among humanitarian workers. Unfortunately in the past ten years, their number increased: 102 humanitarian workers were killed and 92 kidnapped in 2009 compared to 30 and 20 in 1999 respectively.

Also in Russia, we commemorate hundreds of humanitarian staff from UN agencies, international and Russian organisations, who contributed to the resolution of the humanitarian situation in the North Caucasus from the beginning of the 90s, in particular those who were victims in security accidents, kidnappings, and lost their lives.

World Humanitarian Day is also held to emphasize current humanitarian needs and challenges worldwide and the



increasing complexity of the humanitarian environment due to food price shocks, global market turbulence, water shortages, and climate change. A joint international effort is needed to meet these needs and challenges, which the Russian Federation has efficiently contributed to, increasing its financial assistance in the past few years.

For example, according to UN statistics, in 2009-2010, it responded to severe humanitarian crises around the globe, providing in kind assistance to the occupied Palestinian territory, food aid to Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of

Congo and Afghanistan, assisting victims of the earthquake in Indonesia and those of civil conflicts in Kyrgyzstan and in Uzbekistan, as well as in other cases. Sizable humanitarian aid was provided to the devastated Haiti.

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School of Peers: Volunteers in Altay

United Nations Population Fund

In early August, celebrating its 10th anniversary, a Summer School for Volunteers on the basis of peer-to-peer education methods was organized in Altay to promote living a healthy lifestyle. The Summer School was organized by the regional NGO Siberian Initiative headed by Mr. Veniamin Volnov, who has been one of the leaders of the volunteer movement in Russia for over 10 years. Over the years over 1,000 young people from 300 state and municipal organizations joined the Summer School to learn about effective HIV prevention interventions.



This year, 35 students from 10 regions of Russia participated in the Summer School. During six days they exchanged practical skills and gained new knowledge about working with peers.

The training was held in Gorny Altai where students not only participated in the trainings but could also demonstrate their leadership skills and fitness through camping and mountain river rafting.

Despite a heavy schedule students found time to take part in youth group games and contests. Youth Achievement Awards were announced in most sessions and given to students who achieved high scores in competition. Among the most memorable was an opportunity for all participants to feel like real singers of a Georgian national choir and the performance of the volunteers from the NGO Kuzbass against Drugs and HIV/AIDS at the closing party.

The participants and organizers of the event exchanged opinions considering the results of the training. Most of them viewed the program as highly dynamic and comprehensive. Quoting one of the youngest participants of the event, “each student was encouraged to help the others.”





At a later stage of the training staff members from UNFPA Russia joined the training for peer educators organized with the assistance of NGO Oreon. This helped UNFPA build a broad and productive relationship with Gorno-Altai State University.

By developing a training program framework young trainers of the Y-PEER Network were aiming to explain and illustrate the main princi-

ples of peer education and demonstrate peer-to-peer approaches and interactive tools to participants. During the course special attention was paid to the forms and methods for improving knowledge of peers, analyses of concrete situations, role-playing games, skills-training and behaviour change exercises and group discussions.

The training facility was specifically designed to give an opportunity to



young people to increase their practical skills and gain hands-on experience as trainers and teach their audiences prevention methods based on the peer-to-peer model. At the end of the training all participants received certificates.

By expanding their horizons these young people are now empowered to increase the involvement of youth in prevention and meet the many new challenges they will face as one team.

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“The Exhibition Destroys the Selfishness of Well-to-do People”



A visitor of the exhibition of graphic posters conducted by UNHCR in June 2010, on the eve of World Refugee Day, wrote this in the guest-book. The emotional statement is well justified, as the exhibition concept aims to shock the public and draw attention to the fate of refugees and displaced persons through various visual means – posters developed by young designers, UNHCR videos and installations at the exhibition site conveying a sense of the difficult living conditions of uprooted people.

The exhibition inspired by the theme of the 2010 World Refugee Day “They took my home but they cannot take my future” was preceded by a contest held in May 2010 among

students of art colleges and other graphic designers who were expected to pass a strong message related to the theme through various creative means.

Contest participants came from Moscow and the Moscow Region (Zhelesnodorozhny and Zhukovsky towns), St Petersburg, Krasnodar, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Bryansk, Kazan, Krasnoyarsk, Novosibirsk, Izhevsk, Norilsk, Omsk, Voronezh, Saratov, Barnaul, Perm, Rostov-on-Don, and the CIS countries.

Over 200 posters were submitted to the contest. A jury of professional graphic designers, UNHCR and implementing partners’ representatives selected 50. These posters were on display during one week (15-22 June), including World Refugee Day on 20 June, at Krasny Oktyabr exhibition hall in downtown Moscow.

The choice of the exhibition hall was not random. Half-empty dilapidated premises with walls long in need of paint, miscellaneous household arti-



cles, clothes, folding beds, broken chairs, children’s toys – from the outset, visitors find themselves in a parallel world, where refugees and other displaced persons reside, a world hitherto unknown to them.

The exhibition concept accompanied by a non-stop demonstration of UNHCR videos including the World Refugee Day appeal by Angelina Jolie (UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador), “UNHCR Global View-2010” and “Returning Home” (about the return of Burundian refugees to Uganda) helped visitors get an idea about UNHCR humanitarian activities and assistance of the international community around the world, better understand the theme of World Refugee Day and see with their own eyes the harsh life of refugees.

Here are some more entries from the guestbook. “An empty workshop of a former chocolate factory. The first impression is a nightmare, a shock. This is the refugees’ habitat. They live here, or work here, or else this is a registration point – or else all





The empty walls create illusions of hope. Everything will change! Such is the concept.” “The exhibition creates relevant moods and brings us close to these persons” “The posters make common Muscovites picture themselves as refugees” “It strikes a chord!” These entries testify that the concept of the exhibition was well understood and adopted.

The jury unanimously awarded the first prize (scholarship for the Ninth summer school of graphic design at High Academic School of Graphic Design) to Alexey Popov, a student of Surikov College, for the poster with a laconic phrase against the white background that you may read only as you get closer: “We are ashamed to show how refugees live. They are human beings, their life should be different”.

at once. Then, the eye meets posters in window pillars, refugee belongings scattered around....

Looking back, one sees the central structure with the exhibition logo painted by a child – and feels better...

The young blood is bobbling with sympathy and compassion, and it makes you warm.

On a series of posters developed by Julia Sharova (2nd prize winner) refined intellectuals, evidently well-educated and aware of a better life, have to earn their daily bread by playing the accordion or sweeping the pavement in the street of a European town. These people live next to us; they need our support and compassion.



Anastasia Gutsalo, the 3rd prize winner, also attracted many sympathizers: two hands make a roof to protect refugees from an avalanche of offences and appeals to go away; the caption “Yes! Feel at home!” is a friendly invitation and a symbol of tolerance to uprooted people.

All participants received UNHCR certificates in recognition of their contribution to developing the theme “They took my home but they cannot take my future”.

From our perspective, the cooperation with professional designers helped achieve a great deal of publicity in mass media and reach out to the public hitherto unaware of UNHCR activities in general or about the problems of refugees and migrants. The exhibition opened up these issues to the broad public, promoted awareness of refugee protection and opposing xenophobia, and thus helped “destroy the selfishness of well-to-do people”.



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Business and Human Rights

The relationship between business and human rights is a rather new subject.

Experts maintain that having business behave in a responsible manner is half the work. It is equally important that the government take a more active position encouraging corporate culture, in which respect for human rights is viewed as an essential part of operational 'good manners'.

More often than not voluntary initiatives by entrepreneurs include commitments vis-a-vis public opinion. This trend will, undoubtedly, grow stronger, specifically as it draws on such mechanisms as the UN Global Compact or the Global Reporting Initiative.

UN experts admit that, in many cases, the dialogue on human rights with government institutions is a delicate issue. Not in the least because many companies lack a clear enough position in this field. Some of them

even view it as a matter of principle to distance themselves altogether from any form of political activity.

The Secretariat of the UN Global Compact highlights several key points. For instance, whether a company that gets engaged in a human rights issue has assessed possible pros (in terms of risk management, reputation, etc.) and cons, if any. Or, whether a company that decides to take a public stance in the field of human rights has a strategy for doing so?

According to the Global Compact experts, in such situations companies are not guided by abstract "lofty" considerations, but rather by a purely entrepreneurial logic. Yet they often realize that looking the other way would be the silliest of all possible options.

Many companies have come to understand that openness with regard to human rights issues is an added value in building closer ties with

the civil society and their own shareholders. Although NGOs tend to overestimate the 'enlightenment' of businesses and their influence over the government, the companies should speak out loud their position (while certainly making sure that their words match their deeds).

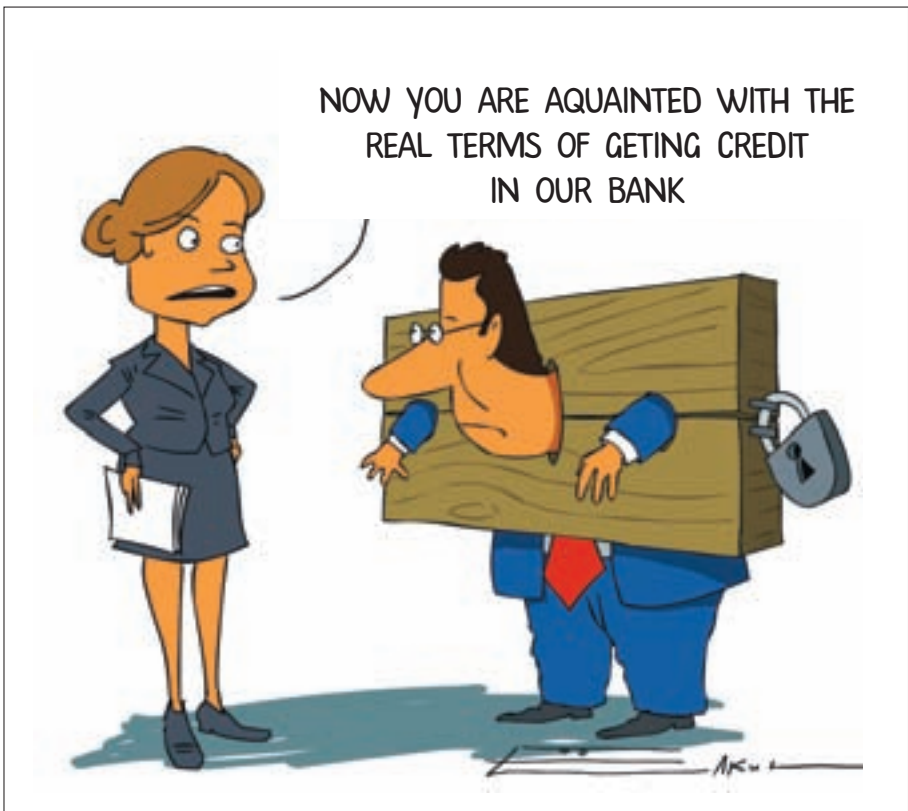
In practical terms, it is important to be able to use the tools of legal protection. Indeed, even in the countries and situations where institutions are functioning well disputes involving alleged violations of human rights by entrepreneurs are inevitable, and the perceived victims are likely to be seeking redress and compensation. However, the access to legal mechanisms is often difficult precisely where it is needed most.

It would be naïve to rely on ideal legal procedures. Specific situations can be complicated by legal, economic and even political circumstances (such as moves by governments that evoke "national interest" or similar reasons).

In my opinion, this angle deserves a very serious consideration by Russian businesses, specifically, mining, oil and gas companies that expand their presence globally.

Extra-judicial mechanisms can be equally very useful, but on the whole, in many countries such tools are underdeveloped. They include national human rights institutions (for instance, the Office of Ombudsman for Human Rights in the Russian Federation, which often addresses such issues as violation of consumer rights), or mechanisms of a national network of the Global Compact (such network – at last – has been established in Russia, but is not quite active here yet).

And what about companies themselves? Regrettably, even the most advanced of them are not always up to high accountability standards. Few companies conduct systematic evalua-





© Cartoon by Sergey Tumin

between business and human rights no longer seems a weird topic. The game is afoot?

Alexandre Gorelik
Director UNIC Moscow

(This article is an abridged version of the author's contribution to the round table on business and human rights, hosted by the UNIC and organized in partnership with the Agency of Social Information.)

tion to measure the impact of their activities on human rights situation. Non-financial reports rarely spotlight business strategies and operations from this point of view.

Nevertheless, recently several Russian organizations including the Agency of Social Information have stepped up efforts to improve corporate policies in this regard. The linkage

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Publications

Human Rights at Your Fingertips

In the near future the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will resolve one of the main challenges which has been hampering promotion of its agenda in the Russian Federation for a long period and especially since OHCHR started implementing its activities in Russia in 2008. The main OHCHR web-site www.ohchr.org containing comprehensive information on various human rights issues and on the work of OHCHR in worldwide, will be finally translated into the Russian language. This will give Russian-speaking users of the internet an opportunity to study human rights documents, learn about Russia's participation in international human rights agreements, and find out rules and regulations of human rights protection secured by international law. The materials of the web-site are currently translated and will be available soon.

UN Country Team in the Russian Federation has compiled all major UN human rights instruments and OHCHR

at the All-Russia Exhibition Centre on 1-6 September 2010. OHCHR expects that the CD-ROM will support the work of government bodies, academia and civil society organizations working in the area of human rights. It will also be distributed to libraries including in the regions where internet access is limited.



If you would like to receive a copy of the CD-ROM please contact the Office of the Senior Human Rights Adviser to the UN Country Team in the Russian Federation. Tel +7(495) 787-21-03; Fax +7(495) 510-68-79.

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publications available in Russian into a special edition of a CD-ROM, which was presented to the public during the XXIII Moscow International Book Fair



Regions

Teachers of the Arctic

On 3-6 August 2010, in the framework of the Year of the Teacher, the city of Yakutsk in the north of Russia hosted an inter-regional research and practice conference Educational Space of the Arctic: Development Through Dialogue and Cooperation. During the conference the Teachers of the Arctic project was officially launched.



For three days representatives of the educational community of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and other regions of the Russian Federation, international experts from Canada, Norway, the USA together with UNESCO experts discussed current issues and future-oriented goals of innovative development of basic education in the Arctic regions of the Russian Federation; shared experience in the field of information and education space development in the Arctic and cooperation in the sphere of school education for circumpolar populations.

The discussion at the conference focused on the launch of an international project Teachers of the Arctic. In the framework of this project a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education. The primary goal of the project was elaborated by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia) and UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education is to ensure that school-aged children enjoy a qual-

ity of schooling comparable to what is available in other regions, while at the same time being more in tune with the Arctic community realities. The time-frame of the project is five years. Its goals are consistent with the EFA's central tenet, the right to education, as well as the 2003 WSIS principles, the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

The purpose of the project is to modernize the education system by training a new type of teacher prepared to meet the challenges of minority cultures and languages. One of the key components of the project is to facilitate the use great ICT potential to resolve the problems arising from the Arctic isolation.

Among the key topics discussed at the conference in Yakutsk were capacity building of the teachers living in the Arctic regions, as well as strengthening of inter-regional and international cooperation and partnerships among governmental and non governmental organizations in the field of education in the Arctic.

A number of events within the conference programme were held aboard the Demyan Bedny ship and the participants had an opportunity to admire the unique nature park Lena Pillars. The conference resulted in the adoption of a resolution that would serve as a base for the implementation of the project. "The Teachers of the Arctic project has had a successful start," noted Feodosiya Gabysheva, Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia), summing up the event.



Bioethics and Human Rights

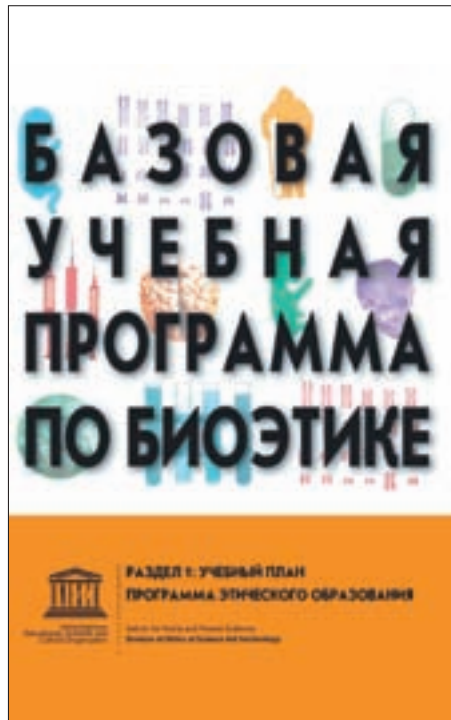
In autumn 2010 the international community will mark the 5th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights adopted in October 2005 by the UNESCO General Conference. For the first time in the history of bioethics, Member States committed themselves and the international community to respect and apply the fundamental principles of bioethics set forth within a single document.

The rapid development of our knowledge in science, technology and biomedicine opens the door to wide prospects for socioeconomic and cultural progress but also gives rise to serious ethical problems and puts in jeopardy the realization of human rights and freedoms. Based on the freedom of science and research, scientific and technological developments have been, and can be, of great benefit to humankind in increasing, inter alia, life expectancy and improving the quality of life, and emphasizing that such developments should always seek to promote the welfare of individuals, families, groups or communities and humankind as a whole in the recognition of the dignity of the human person and universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In dealing with ethical issues raised by medicine, life sciences and associated technologies as applied to human beings, the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights, adopted by an acclamation of 191 Member States of UNESCO, as reflected in its title, anchors the principles it endorses in the rules that govern respect for human dignity, human rights and fundamental freedoms. By enshrining bioethics in international human rights and by ensuring respect for the life of human beings, the Declaration recognizes the interrelation between ethics and human rights in the specific field of bioethics.

UNESCO, as a leading international organization in the area of bioethics, has a mandate to do its utmost for the implementation of the principles set forth in the Declaration. One of the activities undertaken to disseminate the information concerning the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights is the Ethics Education Program created by

UNESCO to increase the quality of bioethics education in the Member States. Within the framework of this program UNESCO developed the Bioethics Core Curriculum for the institutions of higher education. Its contents are based on the principles established by the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights. It therefore does not impose a



The Bioethics Core Curriculum for the institutions of higher education

particular model or a specific view of bioethics, but articulates ethical principles that are shared by scientific experts, policy makers and health professionals from various countries with different cultural, historical and religious backgrounds.

A number of universities around the world are currently cooperating with UNESCO in pilot testing and evaluation of the Bioethics Core Curriculum. The Russian Federation is one of the countries where this process was

launched. In the first semester of the 2009/2010 academic year the UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum was introduced to the curriculum for full-time students of several departments of Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU). The pilot testing was conducted with the support of the UNESCO Moscow Office and in coordination with the leading Russian experts in the field of bioethics. By the end of the course both lecturers and students were invited to provide their feedback and comments about the core curriculum and on the best ways of adapting the program to Russian higher education. Starting in September of this year the Bioethics Core Curriculum will be tested at Kazan State Medical University (KGMU).

Implementation of a joint project of the UNESCO Moscow Office with the Forum for Ethics Committees in the CIS (FECCIS) and the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States (IPA CIS) has been a significant factor in advancing the pilot testing of the Bioethics Core Curriculum in the Russian universities. The project is aimed at harmonizing the legislation of the Member States of the CIS in the area of bioethics and bringing it in line with the international agreements, as well as bringing the medical education in line with the UNESCO Ethics Educational Program. As a result a set of regulatory recommendations "On Cooperation of the CIS Countries in Harmonizing Medical Education with the UNESCO Ethics Education Programme" was developed and adopted.

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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/UN Secretary-General's Message on World Humanitarian Day

In his message on World Humanitarian Day, Ban Ki-moon remembers those in need, those who have fallen while trying to help them, as well as aid workers who continue to give aid, undeterred by the dangers they face.

UNAIDS/XVIII International Conference on HIV/AIDS

The International Conference on HIV/AIDS held in Vienna in June was conducted under the motto: "Rights Here, Rights Now" and mainly focused on the HIV epidemic in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The participants adopted the final declaration calling on the international community to improve drug policy in order to increase the effectiveness of HIV prevention.

UNICEF/Compassion and Care Key to HIV Prevention

According to data presented at the XVIII International HIV Conference held in Vienna this month, Eastern Europe and Central Asia are the only places in the world where the HIV epidemic is still growing. Russia is host to an estimated 1 million population living with HIV, and the number of new cases is growing at the annual rate of 8%.

UNDP/We Speak the Same Language

On 12 August 2010, UNDP and the Association of People Living with HIV held a round table discussion dedicated to the institutionalization of HIV peer education. While medical support is widely available to people living with HIV in Russia, the state system of providing social and psychological support is underdeveloped.

UNDP/ World Humanitarian Day: Solidarity with Suffering

World Humanitarian Day, established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2008, aims to increase public awareness of humanitarian work and importance of international cooperation. There are over 27 million internally displaced people and 10 million refugees in the world. Humanitarian aid workers strive to ensure that all those in need of life-saving assistance receive it and can restart their lives.

UNFPA/School of Peers: Volunteers in Altay

In early August a Summer School for Volunteers using peer-to-peer education methods was organized in Altay to promote healthy lifestyle among 35 students from 10 regions of Russia. The school organizer, the Siberian Initiative NGO, has been a leader of volunteer movement in Russia for over 10 years and helped nearly 1,000 young people from 300 state and municipal organizations joined to learn about effective HIV prevention.

UNHCR / "The Exhibition Destroys the Selfishness of Well-to-do People"

In June UNHCR organized a poster exhibition inspired by the theme of the 2010 World Refugee Day "They took my home but they cannot take my future". The posters were selected during a contest held in May 2010 among students of art colleges and other graphic designers who were expected to pass a strong message related to the theme through various creative means.

UNIC/ Business and Human Rights

According to UN experts, the dialogue between business and state in the sphere of human rights is a sensitive issue. It is important for the state to encourage corporate culture based on respect of human rights. Today Russian business pays more attention to human rights issues and this trend will be further developed with the establishment of the Russian Network of the UN Global Compact.

OHCHR/ Human Rights at Your Fingertips

The main OHCHR website www.ohchr.org containing comprehensive information on various human rights issues and on the work of OHCHR worldwide will soon be available in Russian. This will give Russian speakers an opportunity to study human rights documents, learn about Russia's participation in international human rights agreements, and find out rules and regulations of human rights protection secured by the international law.

UNESCO/ Teachers of the Arctic

On 3-6 August 2010, in the framework of the Year of the Teacher, Yakutsk hosted an inter-regional conference Education in the Arctic: Development Through Dialogue and Cooperation where the Teachers of the Arctic project was officially launched. The project supported by UNESCO aims to ensure that children enjoy the quality of schooling comparable to what is available in other regions, while at the same time being more in tune with the Arctic community realities.

UNESCO/ Bioethics and Human Rights

In autumn 2010 the Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights marks its 5th anniversary. In the Declaration adopted in October 2005 by the UNESCO General Conference countries agree to respect and apply the fundamental principles of bioethics set forth within a single document.

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:

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| 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 |