

MARK KNORRIL

Refugee children in Chad

# Chad President to "investigate all NGOs"

"The entire world has witnessed what has happened in Abéché. We shed light on all these horrible crimes against these children." These were the conclusions by Chadian President Idriss Deby on the alleged kidnapping of more than hundred children in eastern Chad.

For the many humanitarian agencies and NGOs in the country, the problems and consequences are only in their beginning as President Deby has announced an "exhaustive control" of all foreign NGOs operating in the country.

# Spain reforms its development agency (AECI)

The government of Spain this week approved of the new statutes of the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation (AECI), with the intention of strengthening the institution and making it more flexible and functional to meet new aims. "Transparency, accountability and budget control" are to become the new guidelines of what is to be re-baptised AECID and that will have a budget of euro 900 million in 2008.

The new statutes and name were outlined in a royal decree and approved of in a 26 October cabinet meeting in Madrid. The agency is to change its name to AECID (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo).

# NGO tries out millennium goals in African villages

The German NGO Deutsche Welthungerhilfe has pointed out 15 villages as "Millenniumsdoerfer" - or "millennium villages" - where it is experimenting on how to reach the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The villages are to be made examples of how humanitarian aid and project works can assure the reaching of the eight MDGs before the 2015 deadline. Most important: how to halve poverty rates.



# contents

**Titel:** Chad to “investigate all NGOs” 4

## Cooperation

JICA chief says Japan needs to spend more 6  
 Scotland doubles its aid 6  
 SA, Sweden cooperate on peace and security 7  
 Spain reforms AECI 8  
 Malta development debate 9  
 Burundi's ex-combatants reintegrated 10

## Solidarity

NGO tries out MDGs in African villages 12  
 Measles campaign launched in Lesotho 13  
 NRC launched Uganda's 1st food drop 14  
 Waterborne diseases threaten Burkina Faso 15

## Alerts

Guinea: Cholera takes root 16  
 Donors not fulfilling pledges to CAR 17  
 Need for humanitarian response in North Kivu 17

## Research

New book researches Namibian transition 18  
 “Ideas for Development” Blog launched 18  
 Ghana study reveals low life expectancy 19  
 First Hunger Watch report launched 19

**Events** 20



SICURD JORDE



Images from São Tomé

**african future**

**Editorial:** afrol News SL  
 Avenida Primero de Mayo 48, 35002 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canarias, Spain.  
 Telephone: (+34) 928383558.  
 E-mail: mail@afrol.com

**Director:** Rainer Chr Hennig

**Chief Editor:** Pablo Gracia Sáez

**Editorial staff:** Himar Suárez, Musa Saidykhan, Erena Calvo

**Legal Deposit:** GC828-2007

**ISSN:** 1888-1521

**Subscriptions:** Contact afrol News SL

**Distribution:** afrol News SL

**Advertisement:** Pablo Gracia Sáez.  
 Telephone (+34) 928383558.  
 E-mail pablo.gracia@afrol.com

**Internet:** www.africanfuture.com

**Spanish version:** There exists a parallel (not identical) version of this magazine in Spanish language; Futuro Africano.

**Terms of Use:** This magazine is produced exclusively by the media house afrol News SL. Any reproduction or forwarding of texts or illustrations found in the magazine is prohibited.

**Copyright:** © 2007 afrol News SL



## Letters to the editor

### Invitation to readers

"African Future" hereby wants to invite its readers to participate in the debate about cooperation and solidarity with Africa.

We invite you to state your general reactions to the magazine "African Future" or reply to specific articles and statements. We will publish positive and negative critics alike.

We also want to open these pages to a more general debate, thus inviting you to bring up issues not treated in the magazine (but within the issue of this publication). Also, feel free to reply to the comments of others.

We urge debaters and commentators contacting us to state their full name (and, if relevant, their position), but in the case you ask to remain anonymous, African Future will respect that wish if your name is known to us. Please also state where you are located.

Letters to the editor may be sent to mail@afrol.com, marking the mail's subject with "Letter to the editor".

Letters in English and Spanish language will be considered, along with shorter comments in Portuguese, French, German, Italian and Scandinavian languages.

The publisher reserves its right to shorten contributions received from readers and translate them to other languages.

*The editor*

### Editorial note

Letters to the editor in this issue of the magazine have been sent to the editor of afrol News, reacting to the coverage of the media afrol.com (in Internet).

### Reports on Hadzabe in Tanzania

A lot of reports are being written about the Hadzabe of Tanzania both in this country and overseas. The writers have their own motives which at any rate do not help the Hadzabe at all but just sink them deeper in poverty.

In reality there is no any threat from anywhere to the Hadzabe. In Tanzania we do not have any people still living in caves or going naked. These stories are of the past and we do not really remember when such

people lived like that.

Tanzania is well determined to see that its people are all taken care of in all terms of development. Writers and human rights activists before reporting try to differentiate what is termed as cultural interference and development initiatives meant to free the communities from the yoke of human degradation, en-slavery and exploitation. They should think of if they were themselves could they accept living into such atmospheres with their wives grinding corn on stones, going naked into such harsh areas which are homes of mosquitoes and tsetse flies. Can they go without water, medical facilities. If these noble and learned people and their families have gone to schools why do they advocate against the government providing the Hadzabe with education and other amenities?

This is crazy and they should revisit their motives as the Hadzabe are people like others and not animals to be retained on this planet as a base for other humans elsewhere to satisfy their pleasures in the same way as they get from wildlife.

*Finehas Mukangara Bwire*  
(Arusha, Tanzania)

### Press censorship in The Gambia

Why is it that there are very few articles on press censorship in The Gambia. This country is falling apart and most papers are turning a blind eye and ear. A new essay just published in Index on Censorship lists the various problems/murders/detentions.

Maybe if people outside Africa took some notice of problems then maybe we could rectify our home. No one is watching what is happening in this once gentle land. Unfortunately only academics and intellectuals and those with all the freedom in the world will read this. The people with little freedom need our help. They need it now.

*The name of the author*  
*is known to African Future*

### Your coverage of Ethiopia and Eritrea

Where do you get your information from? You are so fixated with Eritrea that you bring Ethiopian problems to the North just to blame Eritrea. This is not right!

*Mulu Abraham*

## Editorial

Dear reader. Welcome to the first-ever issue of the magazine "African Future", a weekly publication by the media house afrol News SL that has been specialised in covering current African affairs since 2000.

Why a new publication about Africa? The answer is easily given. At a global level, we are many that are working professionally with the development of and solidarity with the African continent. For seven years, afrol News has been providing general African news in English and Spanish. During this time, the access to information about Africa in the web and in other media has increased dramatically, and at the same time two clear groups of readers have emerged: persons generally interested in African or international news; and persons professionally engaged in the African future.

This second group - which we expect you to belong to - clearly doesn't have the same needs as the "generally interested". She or he needs to be updated on events regarding development cooperation and solidarity actions; be aware of the current alert situations; and have knowledge of recent research and studies and the intellectual debate.

Most of these issues are of minor interest to the general public. For that reason, neither afrol News nor other mainstream media give deep ploughing attention to these issues. But with a global community of professionals dedicated to Africa already being this large, a media product covering its needs is now needed.

For the reader, we expect this magazine to become a big resource. But also for development in Africa. It is necessary to know who is doing what and where. It is necessary to learn from the successes and failures of others. It is necessary to know more about what aid agencies and NGOs in other countries are engaged in.

For Africa's sake, it is necessary that helpers are better coordinated. To meet this important aim, more information is necessary - information we want to provide you.

In that way, we hope to become a resource for those interested in the African Future, to make it a better future.

*The editor*



## Chad President announces “investigations of all NGOs”

“The entire world has witnessed what has happened in Abéché. We shed light on all these horrible crimes against these children.” These were the conclusions by Chadian President Idriss Deby on the alleged kidnapping of more than hundred children in eastern Chad. For the many humanitarian agencies and NGOs in the country, the problems and consequences are only in their beginning as President Deby has announced an “exhaustive control” of all foreign NGOs operating in the country.

The case of the 103 children that the French NGO L’arche de Zoé, or Zoe’s Arch, intended to ship to France under false premises has centred international attention on humanitarian work Chad during the last week. Chadian authorities have charged nine French citizens (of which six are members of the NGO and three are journalists) with “abduction of under-aged” and “fraud” after detaining them while trying to have the children flown out of the country towards Europe. Further, seven Spanish nationals, the

entire crew of the hired aircraft, have been charged as “accomplices to the crime”. All of them may face between 5 and 20 years of imprisonment with hard labour.

While French and Spanish diplomats are streaming to the country to aid their nationals, Chadian authorities have made it clear the accused will be treated toughly. The case is causing truly felt and deep outrage among Chadians at large and government officials in particular. The feeling is sincere and diplomatic offensives seem to have little influence.

According to a statement by President Deby, the grave incident will have serious consequences as Chad has lost confidence with NGOs working on its territory. The President says “the Chadian government must impose a strict control on all NGOs accredited to Chad with the aim of assisting refugees. And I ask the government to act on this.”

Directing himself abroad, President Deby further urged the European Union to implement “any necessary measure to assure that Eu-

ropean organisations working in Africa do not commit any more unimaginable acts, horrors and crimes against small children.”

“I call on the African Union and the United Nations to look at these images and to condemn these crimes in the strongest way and without ambiguities. The leaders of the countries where these criminals come from also need to condemn the acts of their national in the strongest way. And I do expect a reaction,” the Chadian Head of State emphasised.

According to the N’djamena presidency, “the detained came under protection of a humanitarian organisation to educate and feed children while their real motive was to remove them from the love of their parents, transport them out of the country, sell them to European organisations or sell their organs, like animal. These people do not treat us like humans. They treat us like animals. And this is the image of a Europe that is humanitarian; that lectures our country. And this is the image of a Europe that is aiding Africans. I cannot accept it.”



Chadian authorities however also emphasise that justice will be treating the local accomplices of the alleged crime. President Deby in a message to the nation promised that both foreigners and Chadians involved in the case would have to answer to N'djamena judges. It seems out of question to extradite any of the accused.

Meanwhile, and after both the UN and French authorities have condemned the alleged crime, demonstrations have roamed the streets of Abéché in eastern Chad. Investigations by the Red Cross/Crescent, UNICEF and UNHCR have established that the 103 children were orphans as the French NGO had claimed, causing French apologies.

Chadian citizens continue protesting against the French NGO, shouting "no to slave trade, no to children trafficking." The shocking story has touched an Achilles heel in a society that has become scarily dependent on humanitarian aid after decades of conflict in Chad and across the border in Sudan and the CAR. Now, whom to trust?



FREDERIC DE LA MURE

Idriss Deby, President of Chad

## Chad abduction embarrasses France

The abduction of 103 children in Chad's Abeche town has generated tension in France, with the government condemning and distancing itself from a crime committed by the French Zoé Ark charity.



MARK KNORR

The French charity was caught red-handed trying to illegally airlift the alleged orphans to France.

Six of the charity's workers and two Chadian have been charged with kidnapping of minors and fraud. Also facing charges are seven Spanish air crew and three French journalists.

Aid workers are yet to establish the identity of all the abducted children, but the issue had caused both embarrassment and tension in France.

Some opposition parliamentarians have already politicised the issue, shaming the French Foreign Affairs Secretary, Rama Yade, asking him to clarify claims that the government and the army were privy to the operation but failed to avert it.

The French military contingent in Chad [Epervier] was accused of transporting to the eastern part of the country. But Yade denied such claims as "unfounded and baseless."

Chadian Foreign Minister, Ahmed Kou-lamallah, questioned why people want to take advantage over Africans, claiming that to bail them out of poverty.

French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, has phoned the Chadian leader, Idriss Deby,

requesting the release of the three journalists because they did not conspire in the alleged abductions. Sarkozy's office said the Chadian leader agreed to secure their release.

Spanish authorities have also called for the release of the air crew.

On Wednesday, Abeche residents flocked the streets to protest against the kidnapping. Meanwhile, international agencies have proven that the abducted children are not indeed orphans. A joint report released by the Red Cross and UN agencies said 91 of the children have one parent.

Most of them [21 girls and 82 boys between one and ten years] hailed from Chadian villages close to the Sudanese border, although their nationalities could not be established. This dispels Zoé workers' claim that the children came from Darfur, Sudan.

None of the children suffered from serious health conditions, but of them had been treated for small injuries, agencies confirmed.

The alleged kidnappers have been flown to the Chadian capital today by a military helicopter. This was ruled by the country's Supreme Court.

# JICA chief says Japan needs to spend more

Sadako Ogata, President of Japan's development cooperation agency JICA, says the Asian economic super power's help to developing countries needs to increase and start reflecting Japan's position as the world's second biggest economy. "The Japanese people should be encouraged to support increased help," Ms Ogata said.

Ms Ogata was recently reappointed to a second four-year term as President of JICA and she used an October news conference on the event to highlight progress in the last four years and to discuss the challenges ahead, including the merger between JICA and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) which will be completed in October, 2008, with the formation of 'New JICA'.

One of the most formidable challenges will be to maintain and even increase Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA), she said, and to make more effective use of resources by both strengthening JICA and working more closely with various partners including the World Bank, international donors and Japanese NGOs.

Ms Ogata noted that Japan's ODA had fallen by 40 % in the last ten years and the country now ranks behind the United States and Britain, and shortly will also lag behind Germany and France.

She has consistently advocated a strong ODA programme and said the amounts should reflect Japan's standing as the world's second largest economy. To reverse this downward spiral, she said, Japanese taxpayers should be encouraged to take a greater interest in development aid and the long-term benefits to Japan as well as the poor countries by such a course of action.

In her first term as JICA president, substantial progress had been made, she said,

## Finland presents new development cooperation programme

The government of Finland in October presented its new programme for development cooperation to the President during a cabinet meeting. A government press release, not going into details on the programme, emphasised that several Helsinki ministries, civil society and NGOs had presented their views in hearings. The new programme awaits a final cabinet decision before being presented in public.



Sadako Ogata

in such areas as making the organisation much more responsive to field needs, emphasising human security and an increased role for individual communities in projects and overall, greater 'effectiveness, efficiency and speed.'

She said that already JICA had achieved a 10 percent increase in project efficiency including a reduction in equipment procurement expenses and headquarters administration costs.

The forthcoming merger with JBIC for the first time will allow 'New JICA' to offer a "one stop service" for development assistance when the organisation begins providing technical assistance, loan assistance and grant aid "all under one roof."

The World Bank and the UN, she said, was paying close attention to this merger and closer collaboration with those and other organisations "will become increasingly

important" in international aid.

## African assistance

In Africa, a One-Stop Border Post scheme had "already resulted in a huge reduction in economic costs by allowing governments and organisations to move their goods and equipment more quickly and efficiently through new frontier posts which are more integrated and efficient than old-style border procedures."

Ms Ogata said a fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) was to be held in Japan in May 2008. The conference is to emphasise "accelerating growth, human security, the environment and climate change."

The JICA leader hoped that TICAD IV and a subsequent G8 Summit in Japan would "help underline the world's expectations for Japan's help to developing nations."

## Scotland doubles its aid

The International Development Fund, an agency instituted by the autonomous government of Scotland, this autumn announced it was to be doubled to £9 million (euro 13 million). The Scottish Government also confirmed its commitment to continue working with Malawi.

The Scottish government's International Development Policy, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture Linda Fabiani said in a statement that the Scottish government was "determined to build on Scotland's existing international development work" and that the International Development Fund would be

doubled to £9 million over the life of this Parliament by 2011. "This will be done within the context of a policy review to ensure the Fund targets those in greatest need," Ms Fabiani said. "I can also confirm that our commitment to supporting Malawi will continue, with the current level of support being maintained at a minimum £3 million per year.

The Scottish Executive launched its International Development Policy in March 2005 and announced an International Development Fund of £3 million a year to support it. In September 2006, the fund was increased to £4.5 million a year.



# South Africa, Sweden "to cooperate on peace and security in Africa"

ÅSA FRIDH / SWEDISH MFA



Anders Oljelund from the Swedish MFA and Kingsley Mamabolo, Director-General of South Africa's MFA.

Peace and security are again getting hot items in cooperation between Western countries and Africa. The Swedish Foreign Ministry has now sought new ways to strengthen this type of cooperation, as armed conflicts and lack of security increasingly are being seen as one of the major obstacles for development in Africa. In South Africa, the Swedes found a partner that shares the same interests and values.

Representatives from the Swedish and South African Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, government, civil society and universities are in the process of defining principles of how Sweden and South Africa can work together to promote peace, security and development in Africa, according to the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria.

During an October seminar on Security Sector Reform (SSR) and a meeting of the Swedish-South African working group for peace and security in Stockholm, representatives agreed on DR Congo and southern Sudan as areas of particular concern and priority for future joint SSR efforts.

"SSR is defined as reforms of the public and private institutions that guarantee human security and justice. The definition also grasps over the sectors of defence, police and judiciary," according to Åsa Fridh from the Swedish Embassy in Pretoria.

"The SSR seminar was quite remarkable," said Anders Hagelberg, head of the Africa Department at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. "It has defined our shared view on SSR and given us a common

framework."

Ambassador Kingsley Mamabolo, deputy director-general of South Africa's Ministry for Foreign Affairs, said it was essential that civil society was on board. "This is the first meeting of its kind, and it is very important. The NGOs have capacity, theory and conceptualisation."

As traditional development cooperation between Sweden and South Africa is transforming into equal and increasingly co-financed partnerships, the two countries are looking to play a growing role for peace and development in Africa and the world, according to the Swedish government.

The Scandinavian countries have proposed a joint Memorandum of Understanding with guidelines for tripartite cooperation with South Africa, which is expected to be signed by the parties later this year. Ambassador Mamabolo said South Africa welcomed this initiative. "We need to concretise tripartite arrangements. This is a vehicle we can use."

Sweden is already involved in various tripartite initiatives with South Africa, such as a police capacity building programme with Rwanda.

Björn Lyrvall, director-general for political affairs at the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, said there was a strong commitment from both parties to peace and security on the African continent. "We are already working together in certain areas, but there is certainly scope for further tripartite cooperation."

## Liechtenstein lets Austria and Switzerland handle its humanitarian aid

Liechtenstein's Minister of Foreign Affairs Rita Kieber-Beck in a meeting with her Austrian counterpart Ursula Plassnik has signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the two states regarding "joint funding of humanitarian aid projects". Similar agreements were made with Switzerland. In practical terms, most of Liechtenstein's humanitarian aid will be channelled through the Vienna and Bern governments.

"In future, Liechtenstein will offer a part of its budget for humanitarian aid for concrete projects in the partner countries of the Austrian Development Agency," Ms Plassnik said in a statement. "In addition, we will coordinate when there are situations of international humanitarian crises and act together," she added. The two countries were to trust on the expertise of the Austrian Development Agency when it came to "the successful implementation and correct use of the funds," Ms Plassnik said.

In another meeting, the Liechtenstein Minister agreed with the Swiss Federal President Micheline Calmy-Rey that her small Alpine state also was to channel its aid through the Bern government and the Swiss Direction for Development and Cooperation, DEZA. "Thereby the two countries confirm their long standing desire to continue their very good cooperation in the humanitarian sector," the Vaduz government said in a statement.

The very rich principality of Liechtenstein, with a population of only 34,000, is not in a position to run its own development agency and humanitarian operations. Until now, the Vaduz government mostly has sponsored DEZA's efforts. According to the Liechtenstein MFA, the principality between 1999 and 2006 contributed with Swiss francs 5 million (euro 3 million) to development and humanitarian projects, mostly through DEZA.



Rita Kieber-Beck

# Spain reforms its development agency (AECI)

The government of Spain this week approved of the new statutes of the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation (AECI), with the intention of strengthening the institution and making it more flexible and functional to meet new aims. "Transparency, accountability and budget control" are to become the new guidelines of what is to be re-baptised AECID and that will have a budget of euro 900 million in 2008.

The new statutes and name were outlined in a royal decree and approved of in a 26 October cabinet meeting in Madrid. The agency is to change its name to AECID (Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo).

The Deputy President of the Spanish government, María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, in a press release said that during this legislature, Spain will become one in only nine countries worldwide to spend more than 0.5% of GDP in development cooperation. Within short, Spain further was to become the first large world economic power to destine 0.7% of its GDP to this effort, Ms de la Vega announced. Her government, since coming to power in 2004, had tripled Spanish development aid, she added.

The Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Miguel Ángel Moratinos, responsible for the development agency, added that there now existed a political consensus in Spain about these development aims, which included all NGOs, local communities and autonomous provinces. Most of the lat-

ter by now run their own development agencies. Minister Moratinos emphasised that Spanish society at large agreed with government that today's foreign policies needed a great focus on fighting hunger and poverty.

As the action radius of the Spanish cooperation agency has increased rapidly - a few years ago it concentrated mostly on Latin America - government had seen a need for new structures and statutes. According to Ms de la Vega, the new AECID will be a development institution and a cooperation agency at the same time. AECID is to strengthen its competences regarding sub-Saharan Africa and humanitarian aid, she announced.

## Spain to increase aid to 0.7% of GDP

The Spanish government leader José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero has announced that he will increase Spain's development aid to 0.7% of GDP during the next legislature if re-elected next year. Thus, according to Mr Zapatero, Spain will be the first of the ten richest countries of the world to reach this aim defined by the UN.

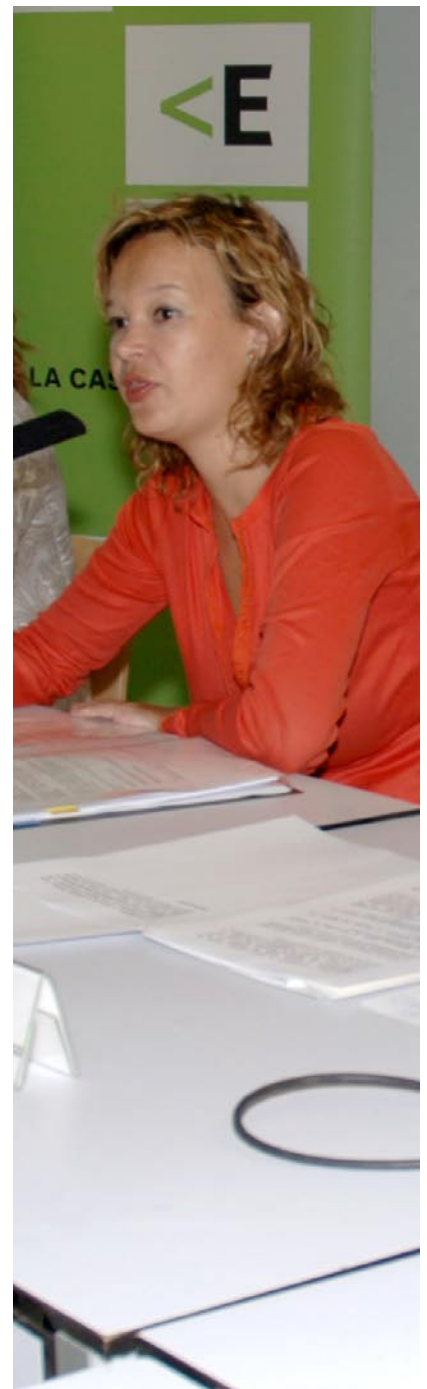
During the Zapatero government, Spain has dramatically increased its aid, in particular to Africa. In 2004, Spanish development aid stood at euro 2 billion, reaching 4 billion this year. Madrid has budgeted euro 5.5 billion for development aid for 2008, corresponding to 0.5% of GDB. Only eight other countries currently spend a larger part of their GDP on development aid.

## Czech development agency gets training in Luxembourg

Members of the Czech Development Centre (Institute of International Relations Prague) have visited Lux-Development to learn about Formulation, Monitoring, Financial Reporting and Evaluation. The Czech have increasingly received training by other European development agencies to prepare for a greater field of operations as the EU member heads towards the fulfilment of European development spending targets.

Established in 2001, the Czech Development Centre is about to be transformed into a totally new structure, which will most likely be called

the Czech Development Agency. The Prague centre currently depend on the Czech MFA and 10 more line ministries who each have a person dedicated to a sector and projects in this sector. It is foreseen to eliminate these positions in the ministries and to regroup them under the new agency. The Czech Development Cooperation disburses about euro 110 million (2006) and operates in eight partner countries (Angola and Zambia in Africa) with a staff of ten. The Czech Republic and Luxembourg are partners in the implementation of a trilateral Rural Water Management Project in Barouéli in Mali.



AECI chief Leire Pajin

## Poland considers cooperation with Kenya

During a recent visit of Poland's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Witold Waszczykowski, to Nairobi, a broadening of Polish-Kenyan ties was discussed. Mr Waszczykowski met with Kenya's Foreign Affairs Minister Raphael Tuju, talking about, among other issues, humanitarian assistance and transformation processes into modern democracy. Observers hold Mr Waszczykowski's visit is part of an evaluation to whether Kenya may become a partner country of Poland's growing cooperation agency, PolishAid. PolishAid currently concentrates most of its projects in Asia, but also includes Tanzania and Angola as "partner countries" - so far the only ones in Africa.



## EU Parliament wants more influence on Africa aid

"The EU Strategy for Africa needs a stronger parliamentary dimension," says an own-initiative report, adopted by the European Parliament, that sets out priorities for the EU-Africa Strategy to be adopted at the second EU-Africa Summit in Lisbon in December. MEPs will meet African MPs in Lisbon prior to the Summit.

"The 2005 EU Strategy for Africa was adopted without in-depth consultation with the African Union (AU) institutions and African governments and parliaments", notes the Strasbourg parliament, which wants to see cooperation between the EP, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the African regional parliaments encouraged.

A 25-strong delegation of MEPs, most of whom are Development Committee members, will meet 25 members of the Pan-African Parliament in Lisbon on 7 December, where a joint declaration by both Parliaments is likely to be adopted. EP President Hans-Gert Pötering and PAP President Gertrude Mongella will be invited to address the Heads of States and Governments meeting on 8 December.

## USAID to award 24 food aid grants

USAID has announced it "will award up to 24 grants with a total value of \$7 million, including commodities, through the International Food Relief Partnership (IFRP) during fiscal year 2007." Each IFRP grant is for the preparation and storage of shelf-stable prepackaged food and the delivery and distribution of those commodities in developing countries.

"The International Food Relief Partnership gives us many new, non-traditional food aid partners who provide food assistance worldwide," says USAID's Acting Director of Food for Peace, Jonathan Dworken.

IFRP grants for fiscal year 2007 have so far been awarded to Amigos Internacionales, Bless the Children, Catholic Relief Services, The Church of Bible Understanding, Convoy of Hope International, Coprodeli USA, Evangelistic International Ministries, Fabretto Children's Foundation, Feed the Children, Hope Educational Foundation, International Partnership for Human Development, International Relief & Development, Legacy World Missions, Medical Missionaries, Nascent Solutions, NOAH Project, Opportunities Industrialization Centers International, Project Concern International, Project Hope, Salvation Army World Service Office, The Batey Relief Alliance and Uplift International.



Michael Frendo, Maltese Foreign Minister

## Malta presents its first international development policy

The Foreign Ministry of Malta has presented its new policy for international development in a document that is to provide a framework for Maltese humanitarian assistance to Third World countries.

According to Michael Frendo, the Maltese Minister of Foreign Affairs, "it was necessary to create more knowledge about Malta's needs to contribute to the social and economic development in third countries." Malta, as an EU member, is in the process of increasing its development aid to reach European benchmarks within this decade.

This first document of Malta's development policy identifies 10 principal areas: information and communication technologies; democratisation and good governance; migration and asylum; education; training; health and HIV/AIDS; gender equality; childhood; global warming; trade

and investments; and water.

Aiming at addressing these ten objectives, the Valetta Ministry has established its Development Unity, which may turn into a full-fledged development agency within some years. The Unity now is given the responsibility of implementing a working plan in close dialogue with NGOs and civil society, according to the Ministry.

Malta has around 400,000 inhabitants, making it the EU's smallest member state. But the seven-island Mediterranean state - which will start using the euro on 1 January 2008 - has a strong economy and traditionally strong ties with the neighbouring Maghreb region. Malta has been strongly affected by illegal migration crossing the Mediterranean. On joining the EU, Malta is obliged to reach a 0.39% of GDP spending on development aid within short.

## Cuba launches 13 new projects in Equatorial Guinea

Government officials of Cuba and Equatorial Guinea have agreed to continue developing 19 projects already executed by Cubans and to launch 13 new projects. A protocol was signed between the Cuban Minister of Foreign Investments, Marta Lomas, and the Equatoguinean Deputy Minister of International Cooperation, Victoriana Nchama Nsue Okomo. The 13 new Cuban projects are within the sectors of health, culture, renewable energy, sugar industry, construction and trade. Examples include a laboratory to control cholera outbreaks and the management of a psychiatric hospital. Cuba's medical aid is to continue, currently counting on 160 Cuban medics.

## Galicia presents new cooperation strategies

The General Direction of the Galician Foreign Cooperation has presented its strategic documents that outline the autonomous Spanish province's development aid policies towards nine countries in Africa and Latin America. The "Action Plans by Country" documents address the need to not grasp over too many sectors and areas in each country, thus better concentrating aid, making it more effective and optimising resources. In Africa, the Galician partner countries still to receive development funds are Mozambique, Mauritania and Western Sahara.



## Burundi's ex-combatants reintegrated

ORT International Cooperation, has completed a thorough evaluation of a US\$ 75 million (euro 52 million) World Bank-funded programme to reintegrate the veterans of Burundi's 11-year civil war into peaceful occupations. The conclusions are mostly positive, with recommendations for the programme to continue.

More than 50,000 members of the warring Hutu and Tutsi factions are eligible for assistance under the four-year National Demobilisation, Reinsertion and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants Programme (PNDRR) in Burundi, a landlocked central African country of 8 million inhabitants.

A three-person ORT IC team spent nearly two months in Burundi earlier this year to interview beneficiaries, bureaucrats and aid workers as well as sift through mountains of documents to produce the most accurate and objective assessment they could of the effectiveness of the programme's activities over the past two years.

Judith Fiss, a staff member at ORT IC's Geneva office, was the team member primarily responsible for issues relating to women, child soldiers and disabled ex-

combatants. She said that the final report identified several ways in which the programme could be improved.

"We interviewed 190 ex-combatants throughout the country and found that some of them have derived significant benefit from PNDRR. The programme has helped some ex-combatants to reintegrate into civil society in a sustainable way. But other people are still struggling, some because they are no longer receiving help, and others due to the current famine in some parts of the country," Ms Fiss, who has a background in social work, said.

However, Ms Fiss added that there was no doubt that the programme should continue.

"We recommend the extension of the programme because there has not been enough time to integrate all ex-combatants. The programme started after an 18-month delay and it would be a catastrophe if the work that's been going on suddenly stopped. People would be left high and dry and may feel a lot of anger at being abandoned. The overall aim of the programme is the peace and stability of Burundi so it's vitally important that the programme suc-

ceeds," she said.

Among the ORT IC recommendations included in the final report:

- decentralisation of PNDRR decision making
- a publicity drive to alert current and potential participants, and the general public, to the activities of PNDRR
- development of vocational training projects
- psychological problems amongst ex-combatants be taken seriously and treated
- greater efforts to make social inclusion projects accessible to the physically disabled

"I have every confidence that the people running PNDRR, and the World Bank, will take our report into account; it won't just be filed away to collect dust. This is one of the first programmes of its type that the World Bank has supported. By helping Burundi implement this programme, we hope that our report will also add value to similar programmes in other countries," said Ms Fiss.

World ORT, founded in 1880, in its own words "is the world's largest Jewish education and vocational training non-government organisation."

## Norway promotes "new images of Africa"

Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf starred at this month's Oslo conference "New images of Africa", which was launched by Norwegian Development Minister Erik Solheim. The two promoted their common interest in fighting the generally negative press coverage of the African continent, wanting to emphasise Africa as a place of great hope, development and investments. The conference was only partly successful. The main audience was already fully aware of the many positive images of Africa that are scarcely represented in Norwegian media.

Local NGOs, as the Norwegian students' solidarity organisation SAIH, hailed the initiative. "It is important to be critical towards the image of the South created by Western players to be able to achieve changes in attitudes and actions in the North, which again influences the possibilities for freedom in the South," the NGO noted in a statement.

In Norwegian media, the high-profiled conference arranged by the cooperation agency NORAD however gained little attention. Norway's main broadcaster, state-owned NRK, presented

a shorter report from the event and made a portrait of the Liberian President, hailing her as Africa's first female elected leader. The "new images of Africa" were however not broadly presented by other media. The Oslo daily *Aftenposten* - one of the Scandinavian country's main conservative media - titled its story on Ms Johnson-Sirleaf saying she "asked Norway for help". The Liberian leader had asked Mr Solheim to increase Norway's development aid for Liberia. SAIH noted that "old images still are thriving."



## UN allocates \$1 million in Guinea flood relief

The UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) has allocated just over US\$ 1 million in aid to health, water purification and food security projects in Guinea, where hundreds of thousands of households are trying to recover from the effects of widespread flooding and avoid deadly cholera epidemics. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) announced the grant in response to the floods, part of wider inundations that have swept across most of West Africa since July.

More than US\$ 400,000 has been allocated to the World Health Organization (WHO) to fund efforts to control potential outbreaks of cholera. The programme will strengthen the capacity of local health workers, promote public awareness about health and hygiene and include follow-up monitor-

ing of people affected, OCHA said. Nearly 6,000 people have been infected.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) will receive almost US\$ 300,000 to help an estimated 975,000 households in two of Guinea's four regions undertake a series of measures to prevent cholera from spreading, such as by systematically disinfecting homes and wells, treating drinking water and encouraging good hygiene practices. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) will use over US\$ 360,000 to provide seeds for a variety of crops, such as tomatoes, peppers and aubergines, and agricultural equipment, including watering cans and hoes, to some 3,200 households. In all three cases the UN agencies will be working with Guinean government ministries and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

## Brazil, RO Congo deepen cooperation

Government officials from the Republic of Congo and Brazil in Brazzaville have signed four protocols to deepen and consolidate cooperation between the two tropical nations, in particular in the sectors of health and agriculture. The protocols were negotiated during a recent "working visit" by Brazilian President Lula da Silva in Brazzaville, where he met his Congolese counterpart, Denis Sassou-Nguesso. According to two of the protocols, Brazil is to step up its aid to Congo Brazzaville to fight malaria and HIV/AIDS. This also included the use of Bra-

zilian generic drugs to treat HIV patients. The two other protocols treated Brazilian aid regarding education, development of human resources and technology transfer in sugar cane planting and in the sector of palm oil cultivation and production. The two Presidents also agreed on the establishment of a Congolese Embassy in Brasilia and a Brazilian Embassy in Brazzaville to consolidate the deepened ties. President Sassou-Nguesso emphasised Congo had much to learn from Brazil's development, particularly when it came to technology.

## SA, DRC provinces start development cooperation

The South African province Gauteng (which includes Johannesburg, Soweto and Pretoria) this week signed a development cooperation agreement with Katanga Province in the south of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). While the agreement principally is to "promote trade and investment between the two provinces," Gauteng is also to help the much poorer Katanga Province to "build skills capacity" and pro-

vide "training for administrative officials." Gauteng Premier Mbhazima Shilowa said Katanga would get help to "respond to the challenges of poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment." Katanga Governor Moise Katumbi Chapwe said the declaration of intent between the two provinces provided Katanga with "a precious opportunity to realise its potential in tourism, agriculture, mining and electricity supply."

## Dutch may contribute to UN peace mission in Darfur

The Netherlands' Development Minister Bert Koenders during a visit to the UN in New York last week spoke about a possible Dutch contribution to the UN peace mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

Very few European governments so far have made clear pledges to contribute to UNAMID.

## UK announces £6 million to support peace in Darfur

The British International Development Secretary Douglas Alexander last week confirmed that London would "do all it can to support the push for peace" with an additional £6 million (euro 8.6 million) of UK funding. Mr Alexander said that "this will be used for grassroots development activity such as rehabilitating water points, health clinics and schools."



GOVERNMENT DU NIGER

## Donors pledge euro 3 billion for Niger

According to the Nigerien government, donors at a Brussels meeting one week ago pledged a total of francs CFA 2,000 billion (euro 3 billion). Niger is the world's poorest country but has relatively democratic and stable government structures, and the aid pledges had been given to finance the Sahelian country's five-year plan to reduce poverty.

At the Brussels donor conference, witnessed by Niger's Prime Minister Seini Oumarou, Niamey government officials presented its 2008-2012 Strategy for Accelerated Development and Poverty Reduction (SDA/RP). The ambitious strategy aims at reducing poverty rates from a current 62 percent to a still high 42 percent in 2015.

To reach this goal, Niger needs annual economic growth rates of 7 percent - which also are to counteract the negative effects of an annual population growth of 3.3 percent. Niger government officials, aided by World Bank and IMF advisors, have calculated total costs of CFA 7,600 billion (euro 11.5 billion) to finance the five-year span of the SDA/RP. Niamey sources nevertheless gave the impression of being satisfied over having achieved a euro 3 billion funding pledge at this stage.

Interestingly, Nigerien officials in Brussels made great efforts to explain to donors that their country - despite rampant poverty - has comparatively positive indicators when it comes to democracy, human rights and rule of law. Officials pointed to free elections, a free and viable press, few human rights violations and relatively little corruption in their country. Also, civil society was said to play a vital role in defining policy aims, including the SDA/RP document.

The government of Niger press release did not specify which donor pledges had been made, but noted that the Prime Minister's Office sent special thanks to Belgium, UNDP, the European Union "and other development partners".

## NGO tries out Millennium Goals in African villages

The German NGO Deutsche Welthungerhilfe (DWHH, German Agro Action) has pointed out 15 villages as "Millenniumsdoerfer" - or "millennium villages" - where it is experimenting on how to reach the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The villages are to be made examples of how humanitarian aid and project works can assure the reaching of the eight MDGs before the 2015 deadline. Most important: how to halve poverty rates.

DWHH project coordinator Dr. Florian Wieneke visited the millennium villages and informed locals about their new situation. "Of course, local residents initially had no idea of what the MDGs are, just as most people at home [in Germany]," said Mr Wieneke. "Therefore, our aims include an equal focus on sensitisation in the target countries and in Germany," he added.

The idea behind the millennium villages came after an impression that the international society was doubting whether it would be possible to reach the MDGs and how. "We wanted to know, exactly what shall be the contribution by the DWHH, and we wanted to make it transparently," explains Mr Wieneke. He emphasises that his NGO was not to start new projects to meet the MDGs, but that the DWHH's "normal project works is to be watched with millennium glasses." The question was to find out what the NGO does to work towards achieving the MDGs.

The German NGO from the beginning made it clear that "difficult countries" should not be excluded in its strive to help achieving the MDGs. As the 15 millennium villages were picked on a worldwide basis, these included 3 in Latin America, 5 in Asia and 7 in Africa. "We were not trying to pick representative prestige projects," DWHH underlines, saying "difficult countries such as Afghanistan and Angola" had been included.

Mr Wieneke has visited all 15 villages and made sure local residents and project leaders attend work shops and awareness training regarding the MDGs. Groups of around 30 persons - spanning from NGO workers, village elders, teachers, women leaders and local politicians - thoroughly discuss the MGDs and their local meaning, all with the aim of defining goals for how everyday life and village structures should change by 2015.

"Of course, at the beginning people were reserved because they had never been part of such a thing," remembers Mr Wieneke. "But already after a short time, real open and exciting discussions were held, with is-



Florian Wieneke during a project visit in Burkina Faso.

sues I mostly had not expected in advance, also beyond the scope of the MDGs," he adds. "For example, it was discussed exactly what education should mean for each and everyone." Mr Wieneke also was positively surprised about how quick women turned into key discussion partners "with clear positions" on issues like family violence, AIDS and child mortality.

Mr Wieneke concluded that his roundtrip to the millennium villages had proven a great success in raising awareness and including villagers into "intensive work" to reach the MDGs. "I think that through our workshops, we have gained very interesting, qualitative information that may help us define further project work in an even better way, simply because we know what the people need and wish," the DWHH coordinator concludes.

## Project stops pregnancy among 13-year-olds in Niger

At a school in the Nigerien village Rouga Jannare, CARE Denmark is helping children to avoid child labour, get an education and stop 13-year-old girls from getting pregnant. To make sure the nomadic Fulani (Fulbe) people sends its children to school, Fulfulde is used as a teaching language together with French - in contrast to government schools.

According to teacher Issofou Bouhari, CARE Denmark had funds to build 16 schools in the Maradi area. "Through a radio broadcast, we asked interested village societies to get in touch with us. That was to assure us of local ownership right from the start. To be considered a location, villages had to guarantee that both boys and girls were sent to school, they would help build the school, run it and help paying the teachers' salary. This is a fair trade," he explains.

Mr Bouhari said that the biggest challenge was to get villagers to prioritise sending also their daughters to school. Traditionally, Fulani parents start prepare their daughters' marriage already when they are 8 years old. "Parents are also afraid that the girls may get pregnant before marriage as this will cause shame for the family, so it is better to wed them early so that they get their children with their husbands," ex-

plains Mr Bouhari.

Among the Fulani, it is therefore common that 20-year-old girls have up to 6 children. It is common that girls as young as 13 years are pregnant. This can have severe health effects on such a young female body, often leading to the painful and socially harmful disease fistula.

"According to both teachers and parents, CARE Denmark's schools in Niger have a positive effect on making parents send their girls to school," the NGO says. At school, girls are enlightened, meet role models and given incitements. "If girls get to school, this normally has a delaying effect on the development of pregnancies," CARE Denmark holds. According to Mr Bouhari, parent indeed often view an early education as a better social investment that wedding them off in early age.



Nigerien school girl



# National measles campaign launched in Lesotho

As Lesotho's first National Integrated Measles campaign since 2003 got under way, over 530 vaccinating teams (each composed of 2 vaccinators, 1 crowd controller, 1 social mobiliser and 1 recorder) united in a titanic effort to reach and immunize as many as 221,719 Basotho children under the age of five.

UNICEF is a major donor to the government's 2007 Integrated Measles Campaign, providing more than US\$ 240,000 (euro 166 million) in cash and supplies, including all of the vaccines and related equipment - together with Vitamin A and de-worming tablets - that will be administered. WHO has also contributed to the campaign through strong technical and financial support amounting to over US\$ 45,000. The two-week long national campaign, led by the government's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) ended recently.

Of all the vaccine-preventable diseases, measles is still the leading cause of child death in many developing nations. Every year, some 2 million children die globally because they are not immunized against common childhood diseases. In Lesotho the Measles routine coverage is 78%.

"The country's routine coverage for measles has been constantly below 80% for the past five years. The WHO standards clearly stipulate that countries whose coverage of any antigen remains below 80% for three successive years warrant conducting immunization campaigns. It is for these reasons that children in Lesotho are being immunized against measles and also receive vitamin A and Albendazole", said Dr. Mphu Ramatlapeng, Lesotho's Minister of Health and Social Welfare.

Measles can cause severe health complications, including pneumonia, diarrhoea, encephalitis, and blindness. This can seriously



Lesotho's Health Minister, Mphu Ramatlapeng, providing Vitamin A supplementation to a child

aggravate the already severe impact being caused by the complex humanitarian crisis affecting Lesotho, especially the effects of HIV and AIDS. The country has experienced a drastic increase in child and infant mortality rates over the past decade.

"These deaths and the incalculable loss of human potential they represent are more than needless. They are economically ruinous and, on the most fundamental human level, they are legally, morally and ethically unacceptable, because they are preventable through immunization" said Dr Angela Benson, WHO Representative, speaking on behalf of the UN in Lesotho during the launch of the campaign.

The measles campaign has a simple objective: to administer 0.5 ml - injection to every eligible child as well as Vitamin A supplementation and de-worming. But its logistics are made overwhelmingly complex by the difficult terrain that characterizes many areas in Lesotho and makes many communities

very hard to reach. That is why the MOHSW, with key financial, logistical and training support from UNICEF and WHO, has mounted a remarkable logistical, social mobilisation and training operation to ensure every child under the age of five was reached.

Nationwide, more than 1,000 vaccinators were working at over 1,800 immunisation sites in health centres, outreach posts and communities (i.e. schools, churches, helicopter sites, chiefs' homes). Over the past several weeks, immunisation supplies have been pre-positioned across the country in preparation for the campaign - including supplies airlifted to remote regions by Lesotho Air Squadron helicopters.

The National Measles Campaign comprises a massive civil activity. Over 1,066 health workers have been trained, and more than 2,000 workers and social mobilisers from all sectors of government, NGOs, churches, teachers, volunteers and civil society are involved.

## World Vision tackles Zim outbreak of waterborne diseases

Diarrhoea outbreaks and other waterborne diseases continue to be reported in municipal health centres in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, as the water crisis affecting the city worsens. World Vision says it is now "responding with efforts to restore water sources and educate the public about disease prevention."

Bulawayo has been suffering from an acute water shortage because of unreliable rainfall into the dams supplying the city with water. Drought has plagued the

area for five years. Bulawayo Health Director Dr. Zanele Hwalima said that 371 cases of diarrhea were reported during the last week of September. She said: "The city's health department, working together with community stakeholders, is wrestling with this outbreak, as there is urgent need to stop the spread of infection. The water crisis has compromised hygiene standards in the city as some residents have resorted to using unprotected water for domestic use and sewerage systems are function-

ing far below capacity due to lack of water. There are fears of more disease outbreaks in the drier parts of the city."

World Vision in a press release says it has rehabilitated 94 boreholes in the city. Residents spend hours queuing at the boreholes to obtain the precious liquid for domestic use. "To avert further outbreaks and boost hygiene awareness, World Vision will sponsor a radio programme that will be aired on a popular local radio station in Bulawayo."



## NRC launched Uganda's first food drop operation

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) this month launched a food air drop operation in collaboration with WFP to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Northern Uganda after heavy rains blocked the delivery of food in the Kitgum, Gulu and Amuru districts. This is the first time an air food drop operation has been launched in Uganda.

"NRC successfully dropped 290 metric tons of food in IDP camps in the Kitgum and Amuru districts. In Kitgum the airdrops were completed for Potika A and B, and Paloga IDP camps, and in Amuru the airdrops were completed for Pawel, Palukere and Olam Nyung IDP camps," says Berit Faye-Petersen, NRC's Country Director for Uganda.

"Before the airdrops were launched, 46 500 IDPs in ten camps had not received food since July because the roads were cut off by torrential rains. Another 22 880 IDPs in two camps had not received food since August," says Ms Faye-Petersen. The continuous rain has destroyed most of the harvest, and the IDPs are not able to cover their nutritional needs through other alternatives than distributed food.



NRC staff prepare for food aid drop

## 1 million bullets destroyed in Guinea-Bissau

The British NGO Cleared Ground Demining and its national NGO partner in Guinea-Bissau LUTCAM (Lutamos Todos Contra As Minas), this week announced that their ERW (Explosive Remnants of War) Removal Programme had reached the milestone of destroying a total of one million bullets collected from excess military munitions stockpiles. The occasion was celebrated by a ceremony held on 30 October at their Ammunition Disposal Site in Paiol de Bra. The Permanent Secretary of National Commission for Non Proliferation of Small Arms & Light Weapons, Mr Andre Nhanca, symbolically placed the one millionth bullet in the destruction furnace, whilst observed by dignitaries including members of the National Commission for Non Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Government Ministries, Foreign Embassies and International Agencies.

## Maternal health project launched in Mozambique

The Spanish NGO Asociación Médicos Mundi has received funding from the Madrid regional authority of Fuenlabrada to launch a project of education and sensitisation of health personnel in Mozambique to reduce maternal mortality rates in the country. The project, which is to focus on the Mozambican province of Cabo Delgado, has a preliminary budget of euro 33,000 and represents one of the first international solidarity projects financed by a Madrid sub-municipality.

## 63.000 to benefit from Rwandan water projects

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) last week inaugurated a water project outside Kigali city with estimates suggesting up to 3000 beneficiaries as part of its wider rural water scheme. Work on the project began in October 2006. The organisation is planning four further projects in the coming months. The number of beneficiaries of those projects is estimated at 63,000.

## Elisabeth Rasmusson new NRC leader

The Norwegian Refugee Council's Board of Directors has announced that Elisabeth Rasmusson will be the organisation's new Secretary General from 1 January 2008. Ms Rasmusson will take over when current Secretary General Tomas C. Archer steps down at the end of the year.

"I am very pleased to welcome Elisabeth Rasmusson as our new Secretary General. She is person with high professional integrity and extensive international and humanitarian experience and networks," says Chairperson Marianne Johnsen.

Elisabeth Rasmusson has a degree in political science from the University of Oslo and a long and impressive career in international humanitarian work. She has previously been Deputy Head of the OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, and has worked as Field Coordinator for the UN in Angola and as Cooperation Coordinator for the International Red Cross in Colombia.



Elisabeth Rasmusson

## Saudi Red Crescent provides aid to Darfur

The Saudi Arabian Red Crescent Association has provided a package of humanitarian aid to Sudan's Darfur region. The aid consists of 12 ambulance cars, medicine weighing 168.861 tons, medical appliances and equipment weighing 69.798 tons, establishing of 14 health centres, eight clinics, distributing 4000 school bags, establishing female sewing training centre, providing farmers with agricultural machines, equipment, and seeds, providing more than 4000 tents,

## Italian towns to cooperate with Western Sahara dairas

Two twinning agreements were signed last week between the Italian towns, Cuatro Castello (Emilie Romagne) and Busaro (Venice), and the Saharawi dairas, Haouza and Tifariti (located in the "liberated area" of Western Sahara). The Governor of the Saharawi refugee camp Smara, Buchraya Beyoune, visited the two Italian towns and was greeted by several acts of solidarity as the twinning agreements were signed.



## Waterborne diseases threaten Burkina Faso flood survivors

Heavy rainfall across Burkina Faso since August 2007 has resulted in flooded farms and homesteads, crumbled roads, and has left thousands without shelter or food. Save the Children now warns that children and their families whose villages are surrounded by contaminated water face a growing risk of waterborne diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea. Staffers from the NGO say they "are working against time to provide alternate shelter, food and emergency medicine" in the country.

"Many wells have been inundated due to the heavy rains and drinking water is now contaminated," stressed Dr Mathurin Bonzi, Burkina Faso-based Regional Head of Programming - West Africa for Save the Children Canada. "Our fear is that waterborne diseases can emerge anytime and easily spread given the presence of stagnant waters and very poor sanitary conditions. This current threat must be taken very seriously," added Mr Bonzi.

Diarrhoea, malaria and cholera have been reported in the flood-affected region. Save the Children is calling for more financial assistance from the world community to ensure that families in the worst-affected areas can be protected. Based on the priorities defined by the Burkinabe government, Save the Children Canada is working in western Burkina Faso to deliver food, medicine, and assistance to school children, with the support of Save the Children Sweden and Finland.

In the hard-stricken district of Fo, in the western region of Haut-Bassins, children and adults from the local communities have been an important part of the aid distribution effort. A total of 13,000 anti-malaria pills, anti-cholera flacons and other emergency medicines, 4.5 tons of food, 100 mosquito



Poor sanitation in Burkina Faso causes great health risks

nets, 2 tents, some chlorine bleach and blankets have been delivered in close collaboration with the local authorities, communities and health centres. Children, who represent more than half of the 500 aid recipients, have participated in the distribution process.

As classes resume throughout the country at the beginning of October, school supplies, shoes and clothes will also be provided to children and teenagers in primary and secondary education to ensure their proper enrolment despite of the damages caused by the flooding.

"Many schools are still sheltering the displaced persons who fled their homes. But the new school year is looming and no solution has been found for them yet," said Per

Tamm, Save the Children-Sweden's Regional Representative in West Africa. "This is one of our major concerns now. Children must be able to go back to school. They have already suffered too much from the flooding," continued Mr Tamm.

More than 40,000 people in Burkina Faso have reportedly lost their homes after devastating floods caused widespread damage to crops and killed at least 33 in the impoverished country. Those preliminary estimates may still rise as UN-led missions are currently assessing needs nationwide and other rains are forecast to continue through October. Across West Africa, an estimated 500,000 victims have been affected by heavy rains and floods in 18 countries, according to the UN humanitarian agency OCHA.

## CARE Germany honours Touareg leader's fight against poverty

CARE Germany has awarded the Nigieren Touareg leader Mano Aghali with its "Millennium Prize", which he shared with Luxembourgian Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker. Both are awarded for their commitment in the fight against poverty and met in Berlin to share the first edition of the prize. Ms Aghali received the prize on behalf of the Nigerien NGO HED-Tamat, which has fought for equal rights for the nomadic Touareg people in Niger. HED-Tamat is also involved in building schools, health centres, wells and supporting small enterprises in the Nigerien desert.

Prime Minister Juncker, in an excellent mood when in Berlin, told CARE that Luxembourg could not brag of belonging to the G7, but the small EU country indeed was one of the few members of the G0.7, "a far more exclusive club." He pointed to the fact that Luxembourg is one of very few industrialised countries spending more



CARE/MARCUS MATZEL

that 0.7% of its GDP on development cooperation, which had been a major motive for awarding him the prize.



## Cholera takes root in Conakry, Guinea

"Even if the number of new cases appears to be decreasing, more vigilance is required at this stabilisation phase because the teams are exhausted and have lost their motivation in fighting an epidemic that has lasted more than five months," according to Isabelle Lessard, MSF field nurse with experience in cholera intervention. More than 7,000 cholera cases have been reported since the start of the year in Guinea - more than half of those occurred in the capital, Conakry. Some 260 persons, to date, have died.

The epidemic, even worse this time than in previous years, has mobilised a good number of health care personnel and other players in the sector. It has had a significant impact on the regular activities of a health care service with scarce resources at its disposal. If structural measures to improve water and sanitation facilities are not taken, the same scenario may well be played out year after year.

The warning has already been made by MSF epidemiologists: in view of the development in the number of cholera cases in Conakry, a quick interruption of the epidemic could hardly be expected. Six months after the first cases emerged in the Guinean capital, some 3,730 cases

had been recorded in the city's three cholera treatment centres (CTCs); all three are supported by MSF.

Although the epidemic seems to be slowing down, it is important that vigilance remains high, according to MSF. Conakry may be the most affected, but vibrio cholerae has not spared other areas of the country, including Fria, Boké and Kindia, where MSF teams have provided aid from time to time.

### Ghana Red Cross sends out flood aid appeal

The Ghana Red Cross Society (GRCS) and local partners have completed assessments of the flood emergency in four districts of Upper East Region (26 villages) and four districts of Northern Region (27 villages). Some 60,000 persons were identified as most vulnerable and were targeted by the Red Cross intervention.

The GRCS this week sent out a repeated appeal to cover the costs of emergency actions targeted at these vulnerable flood victims. Operations, which are over 50% financed by Ghanaian sources, still lack euro 710,000 of funding.

For medical workers, the epidemic has re-occurred annually in Guinea since 2004 and has been almost uninterrupted since the mid-90s because of the degradation in the country's health situation. Sergio Martin Esteso, another MSF head in Conakry, says, "If there is effective coordination and planning on the part of the players involved in preventing and responding to cholera outbreaks, then the worst can be avoided in 2008 and hundreds of lives can be saved."

### Tanzania's Hadzabe threatened as famine hits

Hadzabe "Bushmen" who live within the Yaeda-Chini valley in Mbulu district are facing an acute shortage of food. Two of them died recently from what is believed to be famine related. Five children were also seriously sick but amid the worsening situation, Mbulu officials are alleged to have banned church groups from sending food aid to the Hadzabe. "It seems like the entire Yaeda valley is now out of bounds to everybody. You cannot be allowed to go down there without permission. We wonder if it is part of Tanzania or not," said Mandege Naftal Jonga, a Hadza activist who resides in the valley. An old Hadza lady, Tale Mudendee said: "We are starving, all the animals have disappeared and we Hadzabe only feed on meat."



## Donors not fulfilling pledges to Central African Republic

The President of the Central African Republic, François Bozizé, last week in Brussels called upon his country's cooperation partners to live up to the pledges earlier given and confirm earlier commitments. Otherwise, his country would not be able to live up to its aims to fight poverty. He also promised to engage human rights organisations to address violations recently documented in the CAR.

"Only the technical and financial support of these partners may allow the Central African Republic to face the challenges of development," President Bozizé pleaded, deploring the fact that "so far, despite efforts made by financial institutions likely to give concessional loans, we do not yet get the new resources to finance development programmes and projects" that could stop the deterioration of the social situation.

"The support of our partners is essential to pursue the consolidation of democracy and

### "Humanitarian catastrophe in South Central Somalia"

"There is an unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in South Central Somalia," 40 International and National humanitarian agencies working in Somalia warned this week. "Tens of thousands of people are currently fleeing violence in Mogadishu adding to the up to 335,000 people already needing immediate lifesaving assistance in Mogadishu and the Shabelle regions."

"International and National NGOs cannot respond effectively to the crisis because access and security are deteriorating dramatically at a time when needs are increasing. The international community and all parties to the present conflict have a responsibility to protect civilians, to allow the delivery of aid and to respect humanitarian space and the safety

### Angola investigates strange illness

The Angolan government this week created a technical commission in charge of carrying out a serious investigation on the recent cases of a strange illness hitting inhabitants of Vidrul compound, in Luanda's Cacuaco District, since 18 October 18, this year.

According to Luanda provincial government, the symptoms of the illness are weakness, difficulties in walking and speaking. So far there is no report of deaths following this illness.

the restoration of peace in the country for a sustainable human development," continued Mr Bozizé, who stressed the need to strengthen structural economic reforms and referred to efforts during the past two years by the government to "put the economy on a path of sustainable growth by restoring peace and security in the territory, sound public finances and the business environment, the transparent management of natural resources, restoration of justice and the rule of law."

Acknowledging that "much remains to be done" in the area of human rights, he said he wanted to reach out to those organisations working in this field to help his country "to spread the values of human rights anywhere in the Central Africa Republic. That is why I personally invited the NGO Human Rights Watch to pursue a constructive dialogue with us in this direction, following the recently published report in which it reported violations of human rights in my country," he said.

of humanitarian workers," the alert of the 40 NGOs continued.

According to the NGOs, a dramatic increase in movement from Mogadishu has occurred in the past few days. This comes on the heels of an existing humanitarian crisis in which 1.5 million people in Somalia require humanitarian assistance. "Constrained access and deteriorating security is leaving International and National NGOs with little humanitarian space in which to operate in Somalia."

Given the severe security and access constraints, it was "impossible to obtain" more precise figures of the magnitude of the crisis. However, all indicators point to a deterioration of the, already dire, humanitarian situation.

### NGO fears silencing of Touareg activists in Niger

The German Society for Threatened Peoples (GfbV) accuses the government of Niger of trying to gag the press "to suppress any kind of independent reporting of the Touareg conflict in the north of the country." According to GfbV, the Niamey government is "massively repressing press freedom" to hinder information from the North from reaching citizens. The NGO urged President Mamadou Tandja to see to an immediate release of three journalists and to reintroduce free reporting GfbV's Ulrich Delius said the "young democracy" in Niger was experiencing a "setback to the worst times of dictatorship."

## Call for adequate humanitarian response in North Kivu

Almost 176,000 people have been forced to flee their homes since September when fighting resumed between government troops and those loyal to dissident General Laurent Nkunda. The humanitarian contingency plan for the province, last updated in August this year, is based on the calculation that there could be 320,000 newly displaced people before the end of 2007. However, current figures of displaced already amount to half this number, according to the UN.

Andrew Wylie, the acting Head of Office for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), stressed that "through collaborative efforts and careful planning of emergency assistance, the humanitarian community in North Kivu managed to anticipate the recent massive population movements." For example, since the end of August the main emergency response tool, the Rapid Response Mechanism (RRM), stocked up on no less than 40,000 non-food item (NFI) kits to cover the potential needs of 200,000 beneficiaries. The majority of these kits have now been distributed and additional NFI kits to cover the needs of 380,000 people are currently being brought to the province. From January to June the World Food Programme (WFP) had to increase food distributions from a monthly average of 163 metric tonnes for 16,000 beneficiaries to 2,200 metric tonnes for 122,000 beneficiaries. Today, WFP is again trying to increase amounts delivered to Goma to ensure food distribution for 500,000 people.

Several organisations, including UNICEF, UNHCR, OXFAM-GB, MERLIN, IRC and MSF have reinforced their emergency response capacity by mobilizing new personnel. On the funding side, donors have contributed approximately 40 million dollars to the humanitarian response in North Kivu through various funding channels.

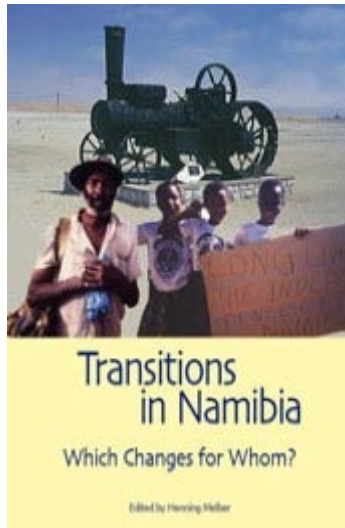
As long as the crisis remains at the current level of intensity and there is not a marked increase in the rate of displacement, the humanitarian community has the capacity to respond to the needs of affected populations. However, the humanitarians are increasingly concerned about the potential consequences of an all out military assault on the armed groups in the province. "We are currently reassessing our planning figures, our available materials and human resources. A rapid deterioration of the situation could easily overwhelm our existing capacities and make the current humanitarian crisis very difficult to manage," explained Mr Wylie.

## New book researches Namibian transition

The Sweden-based Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) this week released its newest book on Namibia, titled "Transitions in Namibia: Which Changes for Whom?" which completes NAI's series and research project on "Liberation and Democracy in Southern Africa".

The new NAI publication mainly addresses socio-economic and gender-related issues in contemporary Namibia. Most of the contributors are either Namibian, based in Namibia or have undertaken extensive research in the country. Their investigative and analytical endeavours depict a society in transition, a society that is far from being liberated, it turns out. The compilation in fact rather explores the limits to liberation in Namibia than its advances.

Independent since 1990, Namibia has since then a mixed balance sheet in terms of its achievements and shortcomings, both politically and socio-economically.



"Under the hegemony of Swapo as the liberation movement in political power, a policy of national reconciliation had little impact on the structural legacies of the society, while inner-party power struggles have in-

creasingly dominated the political scene. Much will depend on the forthcoming party congress at the end of 2007 with regard to the country's future socio-political developments," notes Henning Melber, director of the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and editor of this book

Namibia, as the book's title more than indicates, still is deeply rooted in a transition process towards liberation from colonial patterns. The NAI publication dives into the "many faces, dimensions and meanings" of transition in Namibia, in Mr Melber's words.

*Title:* Transitions in Namibia: Which Changes for Whom?

*Author:* Henning Melber (ed.)

*ISBN:* 978-91-7106-582-7

*Pages:* 262

*Language:* English

*Price:* SEK 290 (approx. euro 31)

*How to order:* Via the NAI website at

<http://www.nai.uu.se>

## "Ideas for Development" Blog launched

"Ideas for Development", an international blog designed to stimulate debate on economic development issues, was launched in Washington DC on 21 October at the World Bank and IMF annual meetings.

Created by seven prominent personalities, the blog provides web users with a new forum to share information, viewpoints and visions for the future, with the common goal of advancing the cause of development.

Heads of international organisations are taking actively part in the blog:

- Kemal Dervis, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme,
- Abdou Diouf, Secretary General of the Organisation de la Francophonie,
- Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank,
- Pascal Lamy Director General of the World Trade Organization,
- Supachai Panitchpakdi, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

- Jean-Michel Severino, Managing Director of the Agence française de développement,

- Josette Sheeran, Executive Director of the World Food Programme.

Ideas for Development is an original platform of exchange - in its format as well as in its content. It will offer many applications such as video, RSS syndicate and e-mail updates.

Available in three languages - English, French and Spanish - Ideas for Development is planning to host wide-ranging debates, crossing perspectives and points of views from all over the world.

"Development issues meet a growing interest on the internet, yet blogs that address these issues are either of individual web users or of institutions," according to the organisers. Ideas for Development's ambition is "to promote a genuine and informed debate in which the contributors share their own convictions, both with their peers and with the larger public."

The blog's URL is <http://www.ideas4development.org>

## Policies of 13 governments compared on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

A hitherto unique study by the Bertelsmann Stiftung and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) entitled "The CSR Navigator - Public Policies in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe" looks at how governments help companies meet their social responsibilities and involve them usefully in solving complex problems.

"Special attention must be paid to effective cooperation between government, industry and civil society," GTZ says in a press statement. The study also demonstrates that by adopting a cooperative political style, governments can help make globalisation fair.

The study focuses on selected industrialised, emerging and developing countries, namely Brazil, China, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Mozambique, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom, USA and Viet Nam.



Liz Mohn of the Bertelsmann Stiftung presents the CSR Navigator



## Ghana study reveals low life expectancy

A new research conducted by a Ghana-based NGO, Longevity Project Group, reveals an "incredible low life expectancy" among Ghanaians, *afrol News* reports. Several factors such as natal related deaths, malnutrition, inadequate poor public sanitation, a combination of deadly infectious, and increasing diseases brought about by the lifestyle of Ghanaians have been responsible for the low life expectancy.

It has become a major challenge for most Ghanaians to attain 58 years and a number of those who passed this age are faced with serious chronic diseases. The research also shows a similar low life expectancy and lifestyles in most sub-Saharan countries.

The health of Ghanaians and their fitness standards are not anything to write home about. "Most Ghanaians are uninformed about the hazards posed by substandard living conditions, poor sanitations, diet and inadequate exercises.

"This is happening because of inadequate access to health information in the system," concurs the editor of a recently launched health and fitness magazine, Anna Bannerman-Richter. She described the escalating levels of environmental pollution and mental health problems as the worsening threats to an already dismal situation in the country battling with hypertension, diabetes, heart diseases and other life-threatening diseases.

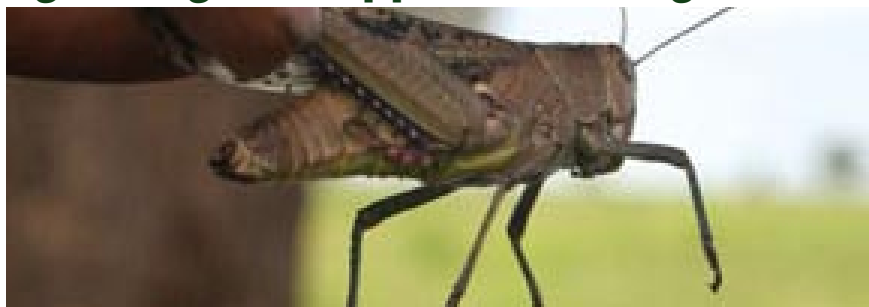
The poor state of the workers' health has enormously affected Ghana's productivity, resulting to "inefficiency and ineffectiveness" on the part of employees. "These losses cut across all industries and the cost of treatment represents a substantial drain on the national pocket," Ms Bannerman-Richter said.

## First annual Hunger Watch report launched

Action Against Hunger has launched its first annual Hunger Watch report titled "The Justice of Eating: The Struggle for Food and Dignity in Recent Humanitarian Crises." Highlighting that over 852 million people still suffer from hunger worldwide, the publication shows that hunger is a largely invisible violation of human dignity and social justice and assesses why, in a world of abundance, acute malnutrition continues to exist.

According to the NGO, "this report presents an accessible, jargon-free account of the causes and consequences of malnutrition around the world.

## Study finds low-dose biopesticide effective against grasshoppers in Senegal



Researchers in USAID-sponsored advanced field trials this month completed in Senegal have found that a more cost-effective, low dose of biopesticide reduced hungry grasshopper populations by more than 90%. This is important news for Senegal and its neighbours in the Sahel region as they fight their annual battle with crop-munching grasshoppers and prepare for potential large-scale infestation by future locust swarms.

"Green Muscle", a biological control product for combating locusts and grasshoppers, was developed with international donor support over a 10-year period and is now commercially available. It is registered in nine West African countries, including Senegal. Green Muscle is made from the spores of a fungal disease specific to grasshoppers and locusts. It will not harm other insects, birds, or animals. At the current recommended dose of 50g of spores per hectare for hand-held sprayers, trucks, or aircraft, Green Muscle remains more expensive to use than conventional chemical pesticides. However, recent research findings, indicate that the cost of using Green Muscle can be halved by reducing the dose is reduced by 50% without compromising its effectiveness.

USAID/Senegal supported tests by the Senegal Plant Protection Service (DPV) of

low doses of Green Muscle to promote its economical use during large-scale spray programs. A research team just spent five weeks camping in the grasslands of Khelcom, spraying Green Muscle, and measuring its effect on grasshopper populations. Results from this field trial in Khelcom in central Senegal indicate that half the normal dose of the non-toxic Green Muscle biopesticide will kill grasshoppers equally well. In sprayed parcels the grasshopper densities dropped to 50% within ten days and 95% after three weeks.

"With this research, we have proven that we can significantly reduce the cost of biopesticides," said Aminata Niane Badiane, Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Specialist at USAID/Senegal. "Biopesticides are especially effective in attacking young grasshoppers and locusts; the small ones eat everything."

According to DPV's chief entomologist Kemo Badji who heads up the research, Senegal currently has enough green muscle to treat up to 30,000 hectares. He is sold on the benefits of the product. "Senegal will gain much by using biopesticide in terms of health and economy," he said, noting that the product is safe and that biopesticide only needs to be applied once, whereas chemical pesticides may need to be sprayed several times during a growing season.

The report combines analysis of the causes of hunger with personal testimonies from families who face hunger, or the threat of hunger, on a daily basis." Through case studies, the report examines the impact of various forces on malnutrition, focusing on conflict and the destruction of livelihoods in the case of the Darfur region of Sudan, unstable markets in Niger, the HIV/AIDS pandemic in Malawi and Zambia and the daily struggle of families fighting for food and dignity in the coffee lands of Ethiopia.

The report argues that an end to malnutrition is

possible but requires the citizens of the world to take empathy and question what prevents the right to food from becoming a global political priority. "Hunger can and should be tackled: not just halved, as the MDGs aim to do by 2015, but eradicated as a crime against our common humanity. As this report so powerful reminds us, the persistence of hunger is an indignity to us all," comments Stephen Devereux, IDS, University of Sussex.

This 107 pages publication is available in English and priced at £7.99. A copy can be ordered on e-mail [info@aaahuk.org](mailto:info@aaahuk.org).

## EU-Africa summit on track



The second European Union-Africa summit set to take place in Lisbon this December will go on despite speculation surrounding Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe's attendance. South Africa's Foreign Affairs Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad said at a press briefing that despite British Prime Minister Gordon Brown's indication that he would not attend the two day summit if Mr Mugabe was there, the summit would still take place. "We are confident that this summit will go ahead," he said.

Mr Pahad emphasised that it was important to have a meeting at Heads of States level and that nobody would be able to choose who forms part of the AU delegation. "We don't think that a boycott at this critical juncture is helpful," said Mr Pahad. He added that Zimbabwe was at present showing signs of progress in terms of press laws and freedom of movement and that it didn't make sense to boycott the summit in light of this. The South Africa Deputy Minister said that Zimbabwe could be brought forward as a topic for discussion at the summit.

No other head of state, apart from Mr Brown, has indicated that they are unwilling to attend the summit and Mr Pahad said that many leaders of African countries were eager to be involved in the meeting which they had waited a long time for.

Key issues to be discussed at the summit include climate change and migration, both legal and illegal. Mr Pahad said that the issue of social alienation of many migrants in Europe would be broached, as well as China's growing involvement in Africa. The Summit is scheduled to take place in Lisbon on 8 and 9 December 2007, following on from the Summit held in Cairo in 2000 and the political dialogue initiated there. It will take place at the Lisbon International Exhibition site, Feira Internacional de Lisboa (FIL), located in the Parque das Nações, to the east of Lisbon city centre.

## World Conference on Lung Health held in Cape Town

The 38th Union World Conference on Lung Health will be held in Cape Town, South Africa - at the epicentre of developments that have been uppermost in the minds of tu-

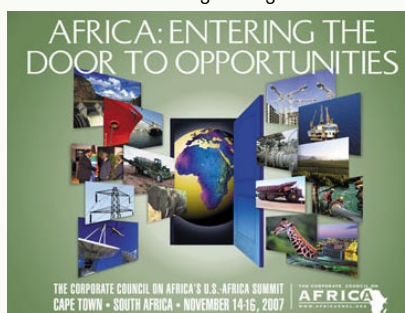
berculosis and lung health experts this year: the emergence of extremely drug-resistant strains of TB; the continuing epidemic of patients co-infected with TB and HIV; and the critical need for new drugs, diagnostic tools and resources to address these problems. The event is from 8 to 12 November 2007 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC). For more information, see [www.worldlunghealth.org](http://www.worldlunghealth.org)

## US-Africa Business Summit

Panelists will join global leaders from leading American and African companies and government agencies for the 2007 US-Africa Business Summit, starting on 15 November. South African Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo Ngcuka is among the featured speakers during the "Investing in Africa: Chinese and U.S. Perspectives" plenary session. Ugandan President Yoweri has also announced his participation at the Cape Town event.

Titled "Africa: Entering the Door to Opportunities," the Summit will provide a forum for some of the world's top global business leaders to discuss trade and investment opportunities in Africa, best practices, and how best to increase trade and investment in ways that will help engender sustainable growth on the continent. Africa-China relations are high on this year's agenda. Some argue that China's rampant growth on the continent has a number of adverse implications while others argue that China's investment growth is having a positive impact on Africa's development. Panelists will weigh both sides of the debate, while contributing constructive feedback on avenues for China-Africa-US trilateral dialogue and collaboration in support of Africa's growth objectives.

Hosted every two years, this is CCA's sixth Summit, but the first-ever to be held in Africa. More than 1,000 participants are expected to attend. The Summit will take place November 14-16 at the Cape Town International Convention Centre. Interested participants can pre-register for the Summit at [www.africacncl.org](http://www.africacncl.org) through 7 November.



## Addis Ababa hosts African Economic Conference

More than 300 experts from Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas will participate in the second African Economic Conference (AEC) on "Opportunities and Challenges of Development for Africa in the Global Arena", to be jointly organised by the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group and the UN's Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) from 15-17 November 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The conference aims at encouraging the exchange of ideas between economists and decision-makers, strengthening access to information and research on economic issues, and in doing so, improve the quality of the economic policies in the region.

## Barcelona runs African cinema days

November sees the 12th edition of African Cinema days in the Catalonian city of Barcelona. The event will host 13 invited guests from the African movie industry, including Senegalese producer Moussa Touré and includes most of the movies awarded in Burkina Faso's FESPACO festival. The event runs from 8 to 14 November in the Cines Casablanca/Gràcia, carrer Girona, Barcelona.



## WHO organises Global Forum for Health Research

The Director-General of WHO, Margaret Chan, joined Chen Zhu, Chinese Minister of Health in opening the 11th annual meeting of the Global Forum for Health Research in Beijing on 29 October. Some 800 researchers, policymakers, representatives from development agencies, NGOs, civil society and the private sector are debating equitable access to health systems for developing countries.

The programme agenda also includes research on new demographics, gender issues in health, patient safety, and maternal death. The Forum closes on 2 November.