



■GLOBAL

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE - Canada has endorsed the global treaty outlining the rights of the world's estimated 370 million indigenous peoples, a move welcomed by the head of a United Nations body dealing with the issue as a reaffirmation of the country's commitment to the principles of respect and non-discrimination.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - The resurgence in religious fundamentalism and the inordinate influence of certain church leaders over public health policy present major obstacles to the prevention of needless deaths and injuries of women from unsafe abortion on the African continent.

SUDAN - The African Union has announced that an agreement reached between North and South Sudan will establish a "soft border" between the two areas ahead of a referendum on southern independence due in January. The BBC reported on Monday that the deal would allow the free movement of trade and nomads between their territories should the South vote for secession. Sudanese citizens would also be allowed to choose to live in either north or south Sudan, the BBC said. The news came as thousands of south Sudanese started registering for the referendum on Monday. Meanwhile, the head of the peacekeeping mission in Darfur warned on Sunday that border tensions between North and South Sudan could spark further violence in the restive western region.

■ASIA & PACIFIC

BURMA - Some were smiling, many were crying and others were shouting, but emotions overflowed among the hundreds of Burmese who had been keeping vigil for the latest release from house arrest of the country's pro-democracy leader, Aung San Suu Syi.

INDIA has embarked on a new pathway towards developing a low-carbon transport system, days before the convening of the UN climate change convention in Cancun.

INDONESIA - Indonesian farmers, who account for 57 percent of the country's poor, are increasingly struggling to deal with the impacts of climate change, as the longer rainy season leads to poorer yields and a shorter harvest.

PHILIPPINES - Disaster time is social networking time for a growing number of humanitarian agencies, weather agencies, volunteers and individuals in the Philippines, one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world.

SRI LANKA - Strict regulations preventing the building on, or blocking of, drainage channels need to be implemented if Sri Lanka is to have fewer urban flash floods, experts say.

■MIDDLE EAST

SYRIA - A new regional Early Childhood Centre offering facilities for pre-school children as well as training for child workers in Damascus, Syria, is hoping to boost the quality of pre-primary education in the Middle East.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

CUBA - Valuing and sharing common people's knowledge and experience, awakening critical consciousness and finding paths for effective social participation are the processes used by more than 1,000 people in Cuba working in Popular Education, a liberating approach to education developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire in the 1960s.

WFWO's Communications Team