



# News Bulletin

## ■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - The European Union would like the United Nations to give European Council President Herman Van Rompuy the right to address the General Assembly like other heads of state, and allow the bloc to submit resolutions, suggest amendments and bring up points of order. British officials delivered the official request, which must win approval from the General Assembly.

HEALTH - A trend by affluent countries to suspend or cut HIV/AIDS-related funding to developing countries in response to the global recession is "short-sighted" and will adversely affect health care costs and death rates for years to come, a NGO warned in a new report. Donor governments should immediately recommit to prevention and treatment efforts, the group said, as access to treatment results in lower costs and rates of infection in the long term.

## ■AFRICA

Africa Region - Children as young as eight have been burned, beaten and killed after being accused of witchcraft, the United Nations' children's agency has warned. A report released claims that witchcraft accusations against children in sub-Saharan Africa are on the rise. The children most at risk include those with disabilities or abnormalities, orphans, street-children, albinos and twins. The report found that urbanization, poverty, conflict and fragmenting communities were some of the causes of growing beliefs that children could be witches. Previously elderly people and women were considered witches, not children, the report found.

## ■ASIA

NEPAL - Rising temperatures, drought, floods and landslides have combined to kill crops and leave millions hungry in Nepal.

PAKISTAN - Receding water levels on the lake formed in the Hunza River by a landslide in January this year have raised hopes among the 20,000 or so people displaced by the disaster that they may soon be able to return to their villages.

## ■MIDDLE EAST

EGYPT - While a review is underway of how the World Health Organization (WHO) and national authorities handled last year's outbreak of the H1N1 virus, also referred to as swine flu, medical experts in Egypt have criticized their government for overreacting to the pandemic, provoking unjustified fear and wasting millions of dollars-worth of much-needed public funds.

YEMEN - Water scarcity, rapid population growth and internal conflicts are some of the main factors causing an "alarming state of food insecurity" at national and local levels, a new report has warned.

## ■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

BRAZIL - Brazilian scientists have developed a way to use glycerin to clean up offshore oil spills, a method they say is more efficient and safer than using chemical dispersants or burning off oil. The glycerin is thrown over spilled oil in the form of a powder, which then transforms into a plasticlike material that absorbs the oil and allows it to be recovered for later use. One ton of glycerin can absorb 23 tons of crude oil. Brazil produces glycerin as a byproduct of its biodiesel industry.

WFWO's Communications Team