



# News Bulletin

## ■GLOBAL

**UNITED NATIONS** - An end to impunity and efforts to change attitudes toward women are keys to ending the growing use of sexual violence as a weapon during times of war, the United Nations special representative for sexual violence in conflict zones Margot Wallstrom says. Wallstrom takes up the newly created post in April and plans to travel first to the Democratic Republic of Congo where tens of thousands of conflict-related rapes have occurred.

**CLIMATE CHANGE** - Bolivia, which did not sign a UN climate accord at Copenhagen, is hosting an independent climate conference to address what it perceives as conversations skipped over by rich countries in favor of discussing financing and carbon markets. Bolivian Ambassador to the UN Pablo Solón said that developed countries pledged carbon emissions reductions that fell short of the 40% reductions necessary to prevent global warming. Describing Copenhagen as a backward step from the Kyoto protocol, Solón pledged greater transparency in the Bolivian conference.

**HEALTH** - New figures released by the World Health Organization (WHO) reveal that multiple drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) killed close to 150,000 people in 2008 and continues to spread. Between 390,000 and 510,000 people became infected with MDR-TB around the world in 2008, the report shows. The epidemic has reached record levels in Asia, where China and India account for almost 50 per cent of cases. Of all TB cases where symptoms are manifest, 3.6 per cent are thought to be MDR-TB. The report calls for urgent improvements in laboratory facilities as only 7 per cent of MDR-TB cases are believed to be diagnosed worldwide. MDR-TB and other more resistant strains of TB cannot be cured by standard cocktails of antibiotics and require stronger treatment for longer periods.

**HEALTH** - Funding to combat malaria must be more than tripled if the mosquito-borne disease which kills nearly a million people a year is to be fought effectively, health campaigners said.

## ■AFRICA

**AFRICA REGION** - A regional take on food security - A study commissioned by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has been taking stock of food security initiatives in Eastern Africa, and the authors urge those involved in such efforts to "think regionally".

**D.R. CONGO** - Most fled the fighting with little more than the clothes on their backs. Now, insecurity and poor access are hampering efforts to address the most basic needs of more than 114,000 refugees in northern Republic of Congo.

**KENYA** - Internally displaced people (IDPs) in Kenya are set to enjoy greater protection under a national policy that also aims to prevent future displacement and to fulfil the country's obligations under international IDP law, say analysts.

**MALAWI** - Ambitious plans to prolong lives - Malawi's government has set itself a major challenge this year, announcing plans to more than double the number of people receiving antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to half a million by the end of 2010.

## ■ASIA

**AFGHANISTAN** - High child mortality rates, poor levels of nutrition and widespread sexual abuse make Afghanistan the hardest place in the world to be a child, a United Nations children's official has said.

**INDIA** - Worries over energy security will drive India's goal to slow the growth of its carbon emissions, the head of a government panel tasked with developing the country's low-carbon strategy said.

**INDONESIA** has launched a review of laws governing a U.N.-backed carbon trading scheme aimed preserving rainforests, a forestry ministry official said.

**SRI LANKA** - Resettlement efforts are under way for thousands of displaced Muslims from Sri Lanka's north who have been languishing in refugee camps for nearly two decades, officials say.

## ■MIDDLE EAST

**EGYPT** - Lessons from the January floods in Sinai - Floods in and around the northern Egyptian city of Al-Arish in January have highlighted the need for more and better quality disaster preparedness planning in the governorate and nationwide, officials say.

## ■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

**HAITI** - International donors have set an initial short-term target of providing 3.8 billion US dollars over 18 months for rebuilding Haiti after a devastating earthquake in January.

WFWO's Communications Team