

NEWS BULLETIN

25 May 2011



GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - The Group of 20 (G20) largest economies are largely keeping their pledges to avoid protectionism as a reaction to the recent global recession, but the rest of the world is increasing trade barriers, according to a new report co-authored by the United Nations.

UNITED NATIONS - An international coalition of academics and environmental activists has launched a global campaign for the creation of a new UN convention to protect "mother earth". With the United Nations fighting a relentless battle against water pollution, loss of biodiversity, desertification, deforestation, climate change and a depleted ozone layer, the campaign for a "Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth" has taken added significance.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Nearly two dozen developed countries have pledged some \$28 billion in fast-start financing to help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to climate change by the end of 2012, according to a global environmental think tank. Countries set a relatively modest benchmark of \$30 billion in pledges - due by the end of this month - under the Copenhagen Accord of 2009.

AFRICA

SOUTH AFRICA - Political parties should be forced, through changes in legislation, to bring more women into government. This is the call from the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) after the country's local government election saw only 17.25 percent of women elected as councilors out of the total number of candidates standing in the election. Of the candidates running for election, only 37 percent were women.

TUNISIA - Tensions have escalated among third country nationals who fled violence in Libya and have been living in Choucha transit camp in Tunisia, and the situation could get worse, an aid worker warns.

ASIA

BANGLADESH - The number of deaths caused by respiratory illnesses linked to air pollution, the leading cause of premature mortality and morbidity in Bangladesh, could be halved if existing forms of brick kiln technology are replaced by cleaner alternatives, according to the World Bank and UN Development Programme.

MYANMAR - More than six months since Myanmar held its first general elections in 20 years, human rights abuses continue unabated, say activists.

WFWO's Communications Team