



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - Escalating tensions on the Korean peninsula over charges that Pyongyang sank a naval ship hit home for United Nations Secretary-General and longtime Korean diplomat Ban Ki-moon. It's a rare conundrum - a UN expert cited here could not come up with an example of a secretary-general confronting an act of aggression against his home country. Now Ban is faced with trying to pressure China - which backed Ban's candidacy for secretary-general - to join in the international condemnation of the sinking of the Cheonan.

UNITED NATIONS - Foreign Policy's Turtle Bay looks back over the top 10 worst UN Security Council resolutions in history, a mix of poorly considered decisions that range from ineffective to indecisive to contradictory. A 2006 resolution called for the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission in Sudan authorized to use force to protect Darfur - so long as the Sudanese government approved the mission. The ambiguous UN Security Council Resolution 242, which called for a broader transfer of land seized by Israelis during the Six-Day War back to Arabs when the resolution was rendered in French, is still the subject of debate.

HEALTH - The World Health Organization is reporting an explosive new outbreak in measles that may undermine recent gains reported against the disease. Though the number of deaths of children aged 5 and younger due to measles has fallen precipitously - from 733,000 in 2000 to 118,000 in 2008, according to UN figures - WHO expects outbreaks that could claim more than 500,000 deaths by 2012. In an assembly in Geneva, WHO's 193 member states agreed to try to achieve a 90% vaccination rate among their populations by 2015.

CLIMATE CHANGE - Efforts to turn Africa's climate-change challenges into opportunities for development through the cultivation of biofuel crops such as jatropha are growing. Supporters say such endeavors bring economic gains and provide access to mitigation strategies, while opponents argue increased poverty and poor resource management often accompany projects.

HUMAN RIGHTS - The United Nations should conduct an internal review of its actions during the latter stages of Sri Lanka's war with the Tamil Tigers, Louise Arbour, former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, tells Foreign Policy's Turtle Bay. Arbour, now head of the International Crisis Group, believes UN officials should have spoken out more forcefully against abuses, and is critical of a UN decision to evacuate international staff that left Sri Lankan employees vulnerable.

■AFRICA

Africa Region - Sub-Saharan Africa is struggling to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing child mortality but with greater access to prevention of mother-to-child HIV transmission (PMTCT) services, some countries are slowly catching up.

GHANA - More than 3,500 refugees from the Nandom area of northern Ghana have crossed into neighbouring Togo in the past week to escape local conflict and land disputes, according to a government official.

NIGERIA - The angry mobs that terrorized the central Nigerian city of Jos at the beginning of the year have returned to their neighbourhoods, but it is hard to find many people who believe the peace will hold.

SOMALIA - Thousands of people in the district of Alula, in the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, have been cut off by floods following heavy rains, say officials.

■ASIA

INDONESIA - Millions of Indonesian children remain vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and discrimination because the government has not prioritised children's rights, says a coalition of NGOs.

PAKISTAN - The government of the northwestern Khyber-Pukhtoonkh'wa province has been asked by Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to prepare for a possible emergency in the districts of Shangla, Mansehra, Kala Dhaka and Kohistan, downstream from the Hunza-Nagar district.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

ARGENTINA - Violence against women is not only domestic, it also happens in the streets. Not having the right to feel safe in a city square or at a bus stop without someone bothering us, that's also violence.

WFWO's Communications Team