



# News Bulletin

## ■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS - When the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) back in December 1948, 58 member states voted for a historic document covering political, economic, social and cultural rights. On Wednesday, nearly 62 years later, a widely-expanded 192- member General Assembly adopted another memorable resolution: this time recognising water and sanitation as a basic human right. The resolution proved politically divisive, with 122 countries voting for it and 41 abstaining, but with no negative votes.

UNITED NATIONS - When the Security Council condemned the killings by Israeli military forces of nine Turkish civilians on a flotilla of ships carrying humanitarian aid to Gaza last May, it also released a presidential statement "taking note" of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's proposal for an international investigation of the incident.

HEALTH - Activists and scientists at the International AIDS Conference in Vienna called on governments to stop criminalizing drug users and instead to provide them with addiction and HIV treatment.

## ■AFRICA

AFRICA - Members of the African Union (AU) reaffirmed at the end of their meeting on 27 July in Kampala, Uganda, that they would strive to spend 15 percent of their national budgets on health, but at the end of the day it is about how "effectively and efficiently" you spend the money, not about how much.

D.R. CONGO - Four women die every hour from complications during pregnancy or labor, making the Democratic Republic of Congo one of the most dangerous places in the world to be pregnant, according to an assessment from the United Nations Population Fund. Half of Congolese females give birth before age 19, often without access to qualified medical personnel or equipment.

GUINEA - More than two million Guineans do not have enough to eat, basic health services are a shambles and the country is in a fragile transition from decades of military rule, yet most aid donors do not see Guinea as an "emergency".

MADAGASCAR - Vast portions of Madagascar's unique biodiversity could be lost - possibly forever, and at incalculable cost to ordinary Malagasy and the world - by the continued suspension of environmental funding in response to an ongoing political crisis, says a new report.

## ■ASIA

BANGLADESH - As swollen monsoon rivers and rising sea levels threaten to engulf more land across Bangladesh, NGOs are training thousands of farmers in traditional soil-less farming on water.

## ■MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL / OPT - Israel is allowing Palestinians in the Gaza Strip to import consumer goods and raw materials banned until recently under an embargo imposed on the territory for more than four years.

## ■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

MEXICO - The Deepwater Horizon oil spill that covered hundreds of square miles in the Gulf of Mexico has largely disappeared thanks to cleanup efforts, the Gulf's natural oil eating bacteria and two recent storms that helped disperse the massive slick. Researchers warn the absence of surface oil does not eliminate threats to marine life and the Gulf Coast as oil, dispersant chemicals and other pollutants remain underwater.

WFWO's Communications Team