

NEWS BULLETIN

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GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday said that the world body was aiming for "zero new infections, zero stigma and zero AIDS-related deaths" by 2020. African leaders said at a UN summit on the disease in New York that they needed more resources to contend with HIV/AIDS - treatment for which member states are pledging "universal access" by 2015 in a draft declaration.

CLIMATE CHANGE - The world will increasingly experience water scarcity for agriculture as a result of climate change, a phenomenon that will affect the livelihoods of rural communities and the food security of urban dwellers, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization said in a survey released today.

AFRICA

LIBYA - An aid crisis looms in Libya, as shortages of fuel and other essentials grow in both rebel- and government-held areas, the U.N. refugee agency has warned, with more international aid likely to be needed within weeks.

MADAGASCAR - Rural poverty coupled with record world gold prices is proving an irresistible pull for young girls in and around Ankavandra who are being lured away from class and into the foothills of the central plateau area by the promise of a few flecks of gold.

SOUTH AFRICA - The rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission has fallen to 3.5 percent according to a national survey by the South African Medical Research Council (MRC) and researchers say the virtual elimination of vertical HIV transmission may now be possible by 2015.

ASIA & PACIFIC

CHILD LABOUR - Forty-eight million children in the Asia Pacific region are involved in hazardous child labour - out of 115 million globally - according to a 10 June report by the International Labour Organization.

AFGHANISTAN is making progress weeding out children from its police forces but is only starting to tackle persistent allegations of sexual abuse and may still have minors serving informally, UN officials have said.

MYANMAR / THAILAND - Aid workers have welcomed a "long overdue" headcount of Burmese refugees living in three of 10 camps along the Thai-Burmese border, hoping this will address the problems of thousands who are unregistered and thus missing out on vital services.

MIDDLE EAST

SYRIAN authorities must halt a violent crackdown on pro-reform elements and allow a fact-finding mission into the country to assess the validity of claims of security forces abuses, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay says. Syrian human rights groups say more than 1,100 people have been killed and as many as 10,000 detained since protests erupted in March.

YEMEN - Political violence has displaced thousands in Yemen, while a three-fold increase in the cost of food and water, combined with fuel shortages, is straining the ability of families to cope, aid workers warn.

WFWO's Communications Team