



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon singled out Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper for failing to signal greater dedication to reducing carbon emissions and combating global climate change. Harper, who did not attend the UN climate-change summit in the fall, has said the global economy will take priority among Canadian policy goals. Ban said that preventing climate change is crucial to ensuring development in poor and developing countries and to broader global economic recovery.

UNITED NATIONS - The UN High Commissioner for Refugees and Ethiopia are appealing for \$13 million to protect, shelter and feed the 25,000 Somali refugees expected to stream into camps in coming months. Some 67,000 Somalis and 42,000 Eritreans have already sought refuge in Ethiopia, with thousands more arriving each day, causing an impending shortage of food.

HEALTH - Infectious diseases such as pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria were the leading cause of death among children under five years of age in 2008, researchers have found. They caused 68 per cent of the estimated 8.8 million child deaths worldwide in 2008, according to a new study funded by the World Health Organisation and UN Children's Fund.

BIODIVERSITY - Mounting international criticism against Japan's Atlantic bluefin tuna imports linked closely to the extinction of the species has turned the spotlight, once again, on the lack of a viable means of protecting most of the world's fast-depleting natural resources.

■AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE - An additional police unit and more troops should be added to the UN Office in Côte d'Ivoire's peacekeeping presence of 8,500 troops, to keep the peace in the west, say the International Crisis Group (ICG) and aid officials.

SOUTH AFRICA is experiencing a shortage of over 80 different drugs in its public health sector, including flu vaccinations and medication for tuberculosis and high blood pressure. The severity of shortages varies from province to province and hospital to hospital, depending on the leadership and skills levels of management.

ZIMBABWE - A new Zimbabwean temporary travel document (TTD) is not being recognized by neighbouring South Africa's immigration authorities, preventing cross-border traders from sourcing goods for resale.

■ASIA

AFGHANISTAN - Over 120 people have died and 10,000 houses have been destroyed or damaged by floods which have affected about 20 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces in the past month, officials say. The floods have also damaged agriculture and infrastructural facilities such as roads, schools, and health centres.

MONGOLIA - Fifteen of Mongolia's 21 provinces have been declared as disaster zones by the government as the country reels from its worst winter in five decades. The United Nations warned that a drought, which has devastated the country during the severe cold weather, could last for another year.

THAILAND - The Thai government has helped legalize nearly one million previously undocumented labour migrants.

WFWO's Communications Team