



News Bulletin

■GLOBAL

UNITED NATIONS Human Rights Council representatives voted unanimously to elect Thai diplomat Sihakak Phuangketkeow as the body's president for the next year. Thailand has drawn fire from human-rights advocates in recent months over concerns around deaths and injuries resulting from the government's handling of street protest in Bangkok.

■AFRICA

NIGERIA - Lack of access to clean toilets or an adequate water supply, living in close proximity to animals, and poor public health awareness have helped put 2.3 million people in northern Nigeria's Borno State at risk of contracting trachoma, a viral infection causing blindness.

SOMALIA - The announcement by the government of Somalia's self-declared republic of Somaliland that there were no refugees in the region - only economic migrants from neighbouring countries - has angered hundreds of refugees in the country.

SOUTH AFRICA - HIV infection rate slowing - South Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic may finally be slowing, according to a new study which found a 35 percent decline in the rate of new HIV infections between 2002 and 2008.

■ASIA

AFGHANISTAN - The forced expulsion of Afghan child migrants from the UK and other European countries puts children in harm's way and the practice must end immediately, rights groups say.

CHINA - Changes to Chinese labor laws in 2008 have broadly been interpreted by Chinese workers as an opportunity to express their grievances over working conditions and salaries. Protests, strikes and court cases have occurred across China, but possibilities for widespread change remain hobbled by a lack of legal enforcement, overwhelmed judicial entities and remaining legal prohibitions against independent worker unions.

KYRGYZSTAN - Clashes erupted Monday in troubled southern Kyrgyzstan between security forces and ethnic Uzbeks leaving at least 20 wounded and two civilians dead. The renewed violence follows deadly ethnic riots this month and comes just one day after Kyrgyz security forces removed barricades Uzbek communities had erected to protect their communities.

SRI LANKA - The population of Sri Lanka's largest remaining camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) is dwindling at a rate of up to 2,000 people a week, with efforts being stepped up for the remaining 50,000 IDPs to return home.

■MIDDLE EAST

ISRAEL / OPT - International attention has been focused on the Palestinian question in recent weeks in the wake of Israeli military actions against marine activists trying to deliver aid to the Gaza Strip and recent Israeli moves to ease the blockade.

■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

ARGENTINA - In Santiago del Estero, one of the Argentine provinces hit hardest by deforestation and desertification, an oasis of native tree species is being created to restore the soil and entice back farmers who were forced to leave their land.

WFWO's Communications Team