



# News Bulletin

## ■GLOBAL

**UNITED NATIONS** - The UN peacekeeping operation in Chad and the Central African Republic is over, according to a plan endorsed by the Security Council that will see phased withdrawal of personnel before the end of the year. Chad's president, Idriss Deby, pushed for an end to the operation he said failed to guarantee security in the border areas, despite concerns from diplomats and human-rights groups.

**HEALTH** - Both women and men are more susceptible to HIV/AIDS infection during a woman's pregnancy, with the risk to men doubling if their partner is pregnant, according to British researchers who conducted a study in seven African countries. Researchers believe changes in a pregnant woman's immune system may contribute to the increased risk.

**CLIMATE CHANGE** - Industrialized countries must come up with the \$30 billion in climate-change aid they promised for developing countries from 2010 to 2012 to help push forward efforts on an international treaty to fight global warming, outgoing United Nations climate chief Yvo de Boer says. Concentrated efforts to build trust are required before any detailed agreement on an international battle plan can be reached, de Boer believes.

**ENVIRONMENT** - A new study finds that pregnancy rates among polar bears are likely to fall precipitously - marking a tipping point for the species - as a result of rising global temperatures. Instead of the mark-and-recapture method for tracking polar bear populations, this study instead examines the animals' physiology, behavior and ecology. The findings measure fat and protein stores built up during the winter to allow the animal to survive a fast over the summer - an ice-free season that will grow too long for the polar bear to endure.

## ■AFRICA

**CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC** - Thousands of people displaced from their homes in the Central African Republic (CAR) cannot be reached by aid workers because of insecurity caused by the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other armed militias, a UN official said.

**CHAD** - Bowing to demands by the government of Chad, the Security Council has instructed U.N. peacekeeping troops to withdraw from the poor, violence-ridden country by the end of the year. A council resolution extended the mandate of the force, which had been due to expire on Wednesday, until Dec. 31 - a compromise with Chad's President Idriss Deby, who had originally asked for it to start leaving in March. U.N. officials say there are about 500,000 refugees in the east of the country, half of them from the turbulent Darfur region of neighbouring Sudan and the rest from Chad itself and Central African Republic. They and private aid agencies have been concerned that pulling the peacekeepers out too soon will leave the refugees vulnerable. Meanwhile, relief efforts for two million people facing food shortages in Chad are suffering because donors are concentrating aid on neighbouring Niger, a U.N. agency has warned.

**KENYA** - The plan by the Kenya National Cereals and Produce Board to buy contaminated maize from farmers must also ensure the grain is properly destroyed and does not find its way back to the market, agricultural and environmental experts warn.

**MALAWI** - Developing countries like Malawi are calculating the cost of adhering to new World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines that recommend starting HIV-positive people on antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) sooner.

**SOUTH AFRICA** - South African special forces troops have begun a six-month deployment along the troubled border with Zimbabwe, where rape, robbery and other crimes are commonplace, and the flow of desperate migrants continues unabated.

## ■ASIA

**PHILIPPINES** - Giving midwives access to further training in life-saving skills could prevent up to 80 percent of maternal deaths in the Philippines, says Rosalie Paje, division chief of the Family Health Office under the Department of Health (DOH).

**SRI LANKA** - As Sri Lanka marks the first anniversary of the end of its 25-year war, shortages of food and water and outbreaks of disease are plaguing tens of thousands of war-displaced who are still living in camps, aid workers say. Separately, local activists have expressed doubts over the effectiveness of a truth and reconciliation commission established by the Sri Lankan government, which will investigate events in the final years of the civil war that ended a year ago. Furthermore, rights groups urged the United Nations to investigate potential war crimes at the end of the war, repeating charges that tens of thousands died in the final months.

**TAJIKISTAN** is gearing up for a new round of anti-polio immunizations for children aged between 6 and 15, according to the Ministry of Health, in a bid to stem the outbreak.

## ■MIDDLE EAST

**OPT** - Eight cargo ships with more than 10,000MT of humanitarian aid, mostly building materials, medical equipment and medicines, will set sail for the Gaza Strip today on 27 May in a symbolic attempt by activists to break the three-year Israeli blockade.

## ■LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN

**BRAZIL** - Brazilian police arrested at least 60 people, including government environment officials, for suspected illegal logging in the Amazon. It estimates that the illegal logging scheme has caused around 500 million US dollars' worth of environmental damage.

WFWO's Communications Team