



UN BULLETIN

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United Nations Office in Belarus



Changing the World Starts
from Changing Oneself

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Front cover photo: a bird's-eye view of Disna, the smallest town in Belarus

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United Nations Office in Belarus

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Global Unemployment Reaches 212 Million

As a result of the global economic and financial crisis and its consequences, the world is now facing a sharp increase in unemployment, according to a new report entitled "Global Employment Trends" released by the International Labour Organization (ILO). It is reported that in 2009, employment in the working-age population decreased by 34 million as compared with 2007.

In 2009 employment in the CIS and Central and Eastern Europe fell by 2% versus 2007. Over 10% of the able-bodied population is unemployed across the region.

Global unemployment now totals 212 million people. Despite gradual economic recovery, unemployment levels are expected to remain high in 2010.



The report says that young people have been particularly hard hit by labour market recession. In 2009 the number of young unemployed persons rose by 10.2 million compared with pre-crisis (2007) levels.

Frequency of New Inventions Decreasing as a Result of Financial and Economic Setbacks

In 2009 the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) received approx. 156,000 patent applications, 4.5 % less than in 2008. WIPO experts believe that the frequency of inventions is decreasing as a result of financial and economic setbacks. However, the crisis has not at all affected innovations in East Asia.

In 2009 the number of patent applications from Japan rose by 3.6%, from South Korea by 2.1% and from China by almost 30%. By the number of patent applications submitted to WIPO, the top five countries are the USA, Japan, Germany, the Republic of Korea and China, the latter just ahead of Great Britain and France. In 2009 the number of patent applications submitted by Chinese inventors was almost 8,000.

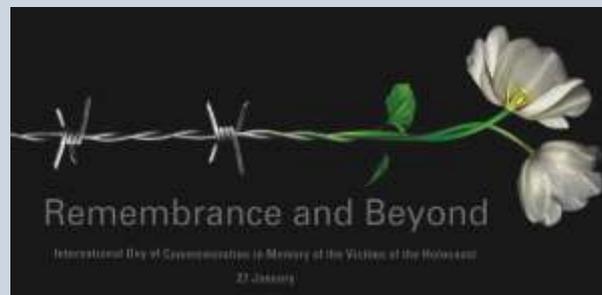
WIPO believes that the use of the patent system is a prerequisite for the functioning of the knowledge- and innovation-based economy.



"The Holocaust in the Territory of the USSR" Encyclopaedia Presented in UN Headquarters

"The Holocaust in the Territory of the USSR" Encyclopaedia was presented in the UN Headquarters in New York. The Encyclopaedia contains about two thousand articles and references to all towns and villages of the Soviet Union (within the borders as of 22 June 1941) where more than 100 Jews were annihilated or where ghettos and labour camps existed.

The presentation was organized with support from the Resident Office of the Russian Federation and the American Forum of Russian-Speaking Jews. The Encyclopaedia was



presented by the project initiator and chief editor Ilia Altman, co-chairman of the Russian Holocaust Centre and research manager of the Museum of Jewish Heritage and the Holocaust.

In January 2005, UN member states held a Special Session of the UN General Assembly dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the concentration camps. The Session adopted a Resolution declaring 27 January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The General Assembly authorized the UN Secretary-General to establish an awareness programme entitled "The Holocaust and the United Nations" and to undertake measures to preserve the memory of the Holocaust.

2010 Declared the International Year of Biodiversity

In declaring 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, the United Nations Organization is striving to draw attention to a need to protect and efficiently manage the world's nature and to consolidate efforts to conserve its ecosystems and protect especially valuable natural assets.



Excessive consumption of fresh water and energy, large-scale logging, and current agricultural and other anthropogenic practices are having a devastating impact on the environment and reducing biological diversity. More than 7,000 species of wildlife and almost 60,000 species of vegetation are currently endangered.

The International Year of Biodiversity was officially launched on 11 January in Berlin. A press conference dedicated to the launch of the International Year of Biodiversity in Belarus was held in Minsk on 3 March. Opening the press conference, Antonius Broek, UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Belarus, made an overview of biodiversity conservation projects implemented by the United Nations Development Programme in Belarus. Officials of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of the Republic of Belarus informed the audience about the work the Ministry intends to carry out during the year, in accordance with the Action Plan for participation in celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity, endorsed by the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus.

8 March: The Serious Context of a Global Festive Day

We have recently celebrated International Women's Day, on 8 March. However, whilst congratulating your dearest women on this spring holiday, did you think about the origin and real grounds of the festive occasion? On 8 March 1857, women working at clothing and footwear factories in New York joined a rally demanding a reduction of working hours, improvement of working conditions and wages equal with those of men. Therefore, 8 March is not just a day for honouring women, it is rather a day of their struggle for civil and social rights.

In 1975, in connection with the International Year of Women, the United Nations Organization started to celebrate 8 March as International Women's Day. Many people doubt whether the festivity is really "international". However, already in 1977 the United Nations Organization passed a resolution urging all countries to declare 8 March a day for women's rights - International Women's Day. For more than 100 years women have achieved impressive results: on the basis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on 1 September 1985 the governments of 88 countries signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. However, the declaration of the right and its realization are not the same. Even now, women and children still suffer from violence and humiliation.

The findings of a nationwide survey conducted in 2008 by the Centre for Sociological and Political Studies of the Belarusian State University suggest that 4 out of 5 Belarusian women aged 18–60 experience psychological violence in the home. Every fourth woman suffers from physical violence (with varying frequency). 22.4% of women experience economic violence and 13.1% of women suffer from sexual violence at the hands of their husband or partner.

The year 2009 is the fourth year of the awareness campaign against domestic violence. The campaign is supported by the UN Office in Belarus and is a joint effort of the UN Theme Group on Gender, which includes the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) acting as the Theme Group and Programme Coordinator, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Belarus, the UN Department of Public Information, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Belarus. The partners of the awareness information campaign are the departments for the prevention of domestic violence of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Belarus.

In 2009 the campaign was conducted nationwide. On 25 November the UN Office in Belarus organized a roundtable discussion. Representatives of the United Nations Organization, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Church and a family Internet portal spoke about the origins of domestic violence.

The campaign included concerts against domestic violence which were organized in clubs in regional centres all around Belarus and in Minsk. All performers participated for free. Katia Pytleva, a musician and TV presenter said that "Three years ago we decided to support the campaign and to this date we are very pleased to participate in the concerts. I believe that all problems should be voiced and here we do it in a very delicate way. Young people can come, listen to the music and learn about the problem".

Sportsmen have also joined the campaign. Andrei Kulebin, who has won the world muay thai championships 15 times, has become the face of the White Ribbon Campaign in Belarus. This initiative calls on men to join the campaign to suppress violence against women. At the events organized during

the campaign, men were presented with white bracelets labelled "Violence is a weapon of the weak", "Where there is violence, there is no family" and "Violence is a sign of weakness". By putting these bracelets on their wrists, they have thus committed not to keep silent about the problem of domestic violence and to talk about it with friends.

Andrei Kulebin started a group on the "Odnoklassniki" social networking website, inviting all those who believe that truly strong men can stop the problem. In his opinion, the problem originates in adolescence. "I've known situations when a boy would beat a girl but then the girl would hide it, saying that she had fallen down and gotten bruises. There were many problem families in our town. Swearwords and insults were quite common. However, back then I could hardly realize the huge scope of the problem", he said.

On 4 December 2009 the "Minsk-Arena" Cultural and Sports Centre hosted an action named "Sports Without Borders" dedicated to the International Day of Disabled Persons. Some sportsmen had white ribbons on their wrists. Information about domestic violence in Belarus was presented to visitors.

The White Ribbon Campaign has also been joined by the International Automobile Holding "Atlant". Their action was held on 11 December when male employees who had decided to support the initiative against domestic violence put on white ribbons with the campaign labels.

8 March is over but men can wear a white ribbon on any day, because peace and calm should be a daily reality of family life rather than just a present for a holiday.



A concert in Stolitsa shopping centre, from the series of social concerts "Not Another Single Sound"

The Rights of the Child for the Whole Family

The Office of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) celebrated the anniversary of the signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with the "Folk Fairytales for Children" Project initiated within the framework of the Early Childhood Development Programme.

The ancient Belarusian fairytales found all around the country by Oleg Khomenko, a musician and soloist of the pop group "Palats", are a unique collection of Belarus' folklore heritage and have been donated to UNICEF. Nineteen educational, interesting and magical tales with unique illustrations created by Julia Ruditskaya are already available at the UNICEF website (www.unicef.by). The website also presents an illustrated version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and educational games for children.

"All the basic children's rights, such as the right to live in a full and loving family, the right to a quality education, the right to comprehensive development, the right to preserve one's identity and the right to enjoy one's own culture are reflected in the 'Folk Fairytales for Children' Project," says Yuri Oksamitniy, UNICEF Representative in Belarus. "Today, parents find it more and more difficult to have enough time to communicate with their kids and quite often they can hardly find new forms of such communication: what to read, which games to play and which fairytales to tell. Our project with the Belarusian fairytales is intended for mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers, elder brothers and

"Every child has the right to enjoy and preserve his or her own culture".

The Convention on the Rights of the Child

sisters and, of course, for children. So it is designed for the whole family and strives to make communication between parents and children more interesting and varied on the one hand, and useful for the child to the greatest possible extent, on the other."

It all started with a Deed, a remarkable and noble initiative by Oleg Khomenko. For almost 20 years he has been collecting folklore in all the regions of Belarus. He has compiled a valuable collection of Belarusian fairytales, proverbs and legends. Oleg has recorded fairytales using the unique "single voice" manner. Oleg's lone voice can create a whole world of characters, fascinating events and miracles, because it was in this way – using the voice – that fairytales were passed from grannies to grandchildren, from mothers to children.

"I believe that today children know little and demonstrate a very low interest in Belarusian culture. The Belarusian language is practically not in use, while language is the key channel for understanding and living in your native culture. Therefore, it is very important for parents not only to read the Belarusian fairytales but also to learn how to narrate them. Though not necessarily in the same way that I do it. Try your own way and you will feel that there is an amazing spiritual value which you are passing on to your kids," – says Oleg Khomenko.

The website also offers comments from a professional psychologist: how fairytales can educate a child and how to read them together with your child in the right way.

"Small children, aged two years and older, readily associate themselves with animals and other characters of fairytales," says Sergei Popov, a psychologist. "For example, the fairytale called 'A Cat and a Fool' encourages kids to adopt an active and confident manner of behaving. The fool does not have any intellect and has not inherited a household but, instead, he inherits a cat who can easily compensate for all his stupidity by solving his problems. To better understand the wisdom of the fairytale, you need to play out the story again and again with the child. By doing so, you can train the child, step by step, to acquire a work ethic and use games for building up new skills."

The "Folk Fairytales for Children" Project was designed and is being implemented as an interactive and educational exercise, gradually involving new tools which are useful for communication between parents and children. The website of the project already offers comments from a psychologist, a small glossary of magic words, colouring sets based on the illustrations, and puzzles using the scripts of the fairytales. Each fairytale is available in both text and audio form, so parents and kids can choose whether to read or to listen together to a thoughtful story told in an exciting manner. You can also choose, together with your child, a fairytale that will fit your mood: a long or a short one, a magical tale or a story about animals.

The online format of a "live" project has been selected purposefully: all the fairytales and other components of the project can be downloaded onto a PC. Besides, this format makes it possible to add new elements at any point in time, such as educational games, desktop wallpapers and information for parents. The website has a simple and intuitive navigation: even grannies and granddads will be able to use it with the help of their grandchildren.



The wonderful illustrations by Julia Ruditskaya amplify a magical world with many interesting and colourful details. ("The Stepdaughter and Demon")

Belarusian Business Contributes to Poverty Reduction in Africa

Corporate social responsibility implies not only caring about employees, the environment and local development, but also adopting a new understanding of responsibility for addressing global problems and challenges. The ethical principles behind running a business open new directions of development and unanticipated prospects, expand international cooperation and improve competitiveness.

The Belarusian producer of mattresses "EOS", a participant in the Global Compact, has joined the international initiative "Cotton Made in Africa" (<http://www.cotton-made-in-africa.com>) which was launched in 2005 and is aimed at addressing poverty and environmental degradation in Sub-Saharan Africa. The project was initiated by prominent businessman and maecenas Michael Otto. On a visit to Africa he witnessed how cotton farmers lived in deep poverty while German companies bought cotton at world market prices. He investigated the situation, and discovered that intermediaries bought cotton from producers at very low prices, thus making enormous profits. It was these circumstances which led to a project involving direct supply of products and procurement of cotton from farmers at the market price.



The project is currently implemented in four of the poorest African countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Zambia and Mozambique. The project offers assistance to local farmers and families growing cotton and promotes cooperation between trade and industry and non-governmental organizations in order to improve the living standards of farmers and cotton production methods.

The key principle of the project is formulated as "Help people to help themselves". Under this project, small-scale farmers receive on-the-job training on how to improve cotton production methods in order to obtain much higher yields and, consequently, to benefit from higher incomes and improve their living standards. The project is funded through cooperation with commercial companies buying products labeled "Cotton Made in Africa". Thus, any customer buying a product with the project label automatically becomes a participant and contributes part of his or her money to poverty reduction. At present about 130,000 small farmers producing almost 85,000 tons of raw cotton in total are involved in the project.

At the end of 2009 "EOS", which signed the Global Compact in September 2006, became the first Belarusian supplier participating in the international social programme "Cotton Made in Africa". The first supplies of cotton fabric from Africa were arranged in November-December 2009 and today any customer of "EOS" can see the label of the international social project on their mattresses.

According to Marina Shabanova, "EOS" General Manager, any person buying "EOS" mattresses (<http://www.eos.by/>) can be regarded as a participant in the "Cotton Made in Africa" project: "Now any mattress produced using African cotton has a special label with brief information about the project and a reference to its website, so that any customer can learn more and tell others. Projects like this change our perception. I do believe that if you are able, you should help others because there are thousands of people in the world whose life is poorer than yours. Some people call it social responsibility but I think it is part of your soul".

"We have good examples of social investment and responsible social attitudes," says Taisia Eletsikh, Senior Advisor to the UN Global Compact Initiative. "Such investment implies that businesses do not expect immediate profit and they are prepared to postpone financial benefits for the sake of addressing urgent social challenges. For example, there is a joint telemedicine project involving "Mobile TeleSystems", the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Belarus, Minsk district hospital and UNDP. With support from "Coca-Cola Beverages Belorussia", a summer cafe opened on the bank of the Novolukoml lake. So we can see that large business is contributing to small business development in a small town, thus improving tourism infrastructure. It is also worth noting the initiative of OJSC "Savushkin Produkt" entitled "Healthy food for children / School milk". Over the course of ten months, dairy products produced by the company were provided free of charge to children studying at the Minsk secondary school No. 163. There are numerous similar examples.

According to Taisia Eletsikh, the main goal of participants of the global initiative for socially responsible business is contributing to sustainable social development. Experience has shown that new prospects do emerge for businesses demonstrating a responsible attitude to the environment and society. The activity of "EOS" is an evident example.

Candles Lighted in Minsk to Commemorate Victims of the Holocaust

Did you know that?

Sixty-five years ago, on 27 January 1945, the Soviet Army liberated one of the largest Nazi concentrated camps – Auschwitz-Birkenau. On 1 November 2005 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a Resolution designating 27 January as International Holocaust Remembrance Day. On this day candles are lit worldwide and hundreds of people from all over the world pass through the Auschwitz main gate with its famous sign – “Arbeit Macht Frei”.

During the Second World War 60% of the Jews of Europe and almost 35% of the total Jewish population were purposefully annihilated in Nazi concentration camps. Special events to commemorate the Holocaust are held on 27 January all over the world. This problem is particularly relevant for Belarus because 800,000 local Jews and about 20,000 Jewish people brought from Western countries were killed on Belarusian territory during the war. On 27 January 2010 a commemoration ceremony was held in Minsk in the Republican Palace of Veterans to mark International Holocaust Remembrance Day. It was organized by the UN Office in Belarus and the Republican Holocaust Foundation of the Union of Belarusian Jewish Associations and Communities.

Inna Gerasimova, Director of the Museum of the History and Culture of Belarusian Jewry and President of the Holocaust Foundation, told the UN Bulletin about the goals of International Holocaust

Remembrance Day and what else needs to be done to preserve memory about the Shoah.

On Holocaust Remembrance Day

Holocaust Remembrance Day is not simply a Jewish festivity. The Jews have their own festive day – the Day of the Catastrophe and Heroism of the Jews – Yom Ha' Shoah. It was established to commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and is observed every year on a different day because the Jews follow the lunar calendar. On this day, life in Israel stands still for two minutes – everything stops. International Holocaust Remembrance Day is mainly an awareness event intended to draw attention to the problem, because the Holocaust is a vivid example of one nation's attempt to destroy another nation not for any practical reason but simply because of their national identity. People were not only killed in action, the whole nation was purposefully slaughtered simply because they were born Jews. But you can't choose your nationality! You can choose your religion but not your nationality. Another aspect of the Remembrance Day is to enable the emergence of various awareness projects.

On Future Generations and Awareness Education

Of course, there are ghetto prisoners and war veterans who are still alive, but they are eighty years old now. They will soon leave us. There will be books, there will be memories. But we must do whatever we can so that young people will also remember this tragedy and so that it will never happen again. The Jews often say that they would be very happy not to mark Remembrance Day and not to speak about the Holocaust, as if it had never happened. But it did happen and we shouldn't let it be forgotten. The Holocaust must be a lesson to remain forever in people's memory. We already implement various projects: we publish books and collect information. In 2009 we published, jointly with the National Archive of the Republic of Belarus, a book titled “Executioners Testify: Annihilation of the Jews on the Occupied Territory of Belarus in 1941–1944”. We have an exhibition “Children Paint the Holocaust”, which is now on in Borisov. We have organized two big contests of research works among school students. But those are our efforts, our initiative – while this needs to be done by the Belarusian people. This year we are very pleased that Remembrance Day events were attended not only by Jewish people (though they were still the majority) but also by Belarusians and representatives of other nationalities. Though it was very cold, people from other cities came, including schoolchildren. This is probably the result of the emergence of the word “Holocaust” in the school curriculum. Previously, even if a teacher was willing to tell children something about it, he also had to explain his intentions. Today this is no longer a problem, but we shouldn't rest on our laurels. We need to organize new events, to develop new projects, to publish books.

On Plans for the Future

International Holocaust Remembrance Day is only one event. Such an event will be carried out, more or less successfully, but in any case it will take place. Education, on the other hand, needs to be constant and continuous. We are hoping to collaborate with the Ministry of Education in order to publish a huge amount of textbooks, as in Russia and Ukraine. We are celebrating Remembrance Day for the third time already, but even in Moscow it is held without UN support. And we do hope that next year we will receive support also from the Ministry of Education and this will enable us to involve more children, teachers and ordinary Belarusians. Through our contests we have collected more than a thousand works dedicated to the Holocaust. We hope to publish a book which could incorporate all these works.

*Inna Gerasimova:
How good it would be,
if only we could afford not
to speak about this!*



Former prisoner of the Minsk Ghetto. Minsk, Holocaust Remembrance Day, February 2010

Changing the World Starts from Changing Oneself

Efforts in the field of sustainable development started in Belarus in 1992. The first initiatives for elaborating and implementing sustainable development strategies – Local Agendas-21 – emerged seven years later. In 2004 the capital city began elaborating the Strategic Plan for the Sustainable Development of Minsk Until 2020. Other Local Agendas-21 were launched in 2005. However, this was just the beginning.

A new joint project of the European Union and the United Nations Development Programme entitled “Support to the Environment and Sustainable Development in Belarus” was presented in November 2008. The project objectives include improving capacities for elaborating and implementing Local Agendas-21 and Green Routes in the regions of Belarus; effective implementation of Strategic Environmental Assessment; implementation of international environmental conventions; and creation of prerequisites for the development of ecological education in schools. The project consists of three interrelated components: “Sustainable development at local level”, “Capacity-building for Strategic Environmental Assessment and implementation of environmental conventions in Belarus” and “Raising environmental awareness among the youth through establishing and developing Green Schools in Belarus”.



The “Sustainable development at local level” project will be in operation until the end of 2010 and is intended to help local communities in the regions of Belarus in building their capacity for establishing and implementing Local Agendas for the 21st Century, whilst taking local concerns into consideration. Local communities will follow the sustainable development principle proclaimed by the United Nations when elaborating these strategies. This principle is centred on effective governance addressing local needs without affecting the environment and the interests of future generations. Project activities include information and training workshops, identifying regional capacities and formulating a sustainable development strategy paper. Due attention is given to exchange of experience with neighbouring countries with a strong performance record in elaborating and implementing Local Agendas-21. The project expects to establish so-called “Green Routes” i.e. tourist routes with



The nature of the Disna area

natural and cultural heritage which go along “green corridors” (rivers, traditional and historic trade routes, natural sites). Territory covered by Green Routes will be more attractive for tourists, both from Belarus and abroad. This is one more way of developing eco-tourism in the Republic of Belarus.

2009 was a year of raising local communities' awareness about the “Sustainable Development at Local Level” Programme: information workshops were held in all six oblasts of the country; project experts visited the provinces and informed town dwellers and villagers about the sustainable development programme and its importance for every person and for society at large. The work of the team contributed to the elaboration and submission of draft Local Agendas-21 by 58 regions of Belarus. From these, 35 pilot regions were selected, where it is expected that training workshops will be organized with a view to finalizing and publishing a series of Local Agendas-21.

Individuals and organizations from the pilot regions can compete for financial support for their initiatives, amounting to either US\$ 3000 or US\$ 8000 depending on the focus area of funding. A total of 85 initiatives will be selected and will receive financial and informational support. The performance record of the first year of the project can be evaluated by the number

of applications submitted. According to Public Information Coordinator Viachaslau Smirnou, the expectations of the UNDP experts were exceeded twice over: firstly, when the number of letters of interest from the regions was two times as many as expected, and secondly, when 205 applications were received from initiative groups.

The project intends to establish a mobile team of experts who will explain on-site the difficult aspects of elaborating and implementing local initiatives. Local initiatives should be in operation within 6 months, in order for project outcomes to be visible by the end of this year. However, its impact will be more prolonged because one of the criteria for selection of initiatives is the long-term effects and enhancement of development opportunities for the whole region.

The decade 2005–2014 was declared by the United Nations as the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Due to the “Sustainable Development at Local Level” Project, the decade is likely to bring both educational and doubtless applied benefits to Belarus.

Impartial opinion: Doctor of Economics Tatiana Vertinskaia, Head of the Institute of Economics at the National Academy of Sciences, has assessed the relevance of the “Sustainable Development at Local Level” Project for Belarus:

The key principles of the project are integral development of territories and institutional sustainability. These principles and the project itself uphold the Belarusian economic model. The Government is striving to develop small and medium-sized towns, but for the first time a particular focus is being made on the development of economic activities locally. Developing infrastructure and business whilst also addressing environmental concerns are the goals of both the Government and UNDP.

There is one more area prioritized by the Government – this is tourism. This is also reflected in the programme. The Government focuses on the same issues as those addressed in the initiatives. Revitalization of rural areas is a point of action in the government agenda and it is also addressed in the



The winners of a drawing competition on ecology, Minsk, grammar-school No. 19

project. While the government addresses the problem “from the top down”, the project uses a “bottom-up” approach. This enables maximum efficiency.

Belarus' President has declared 2010 to be the Year of Quality. Governance can also be viewed in terms of quality. For example, UNDP requires that local initiatives should themselves elaborate their sustainable development strategy. Such agendas did not exist before; planning was done at the oblast and regional level only. These approaches are new to our realities, and there is a certain consensus of interests improving the quality of governance.

The specificity of local governance in Belarus means that local communities are not used to participating in self-governance. This project is a good school for self-governance. Local people learn to participate in vital decision-making, and the institute of governance changes in line with the international standards.

Today the development of the economy not only in a centralized manner but also through business is particularly relevant for Belarus. And we should make use of the external resources which perfectly supplement domestic ideas.

Denis Broun: "Setting Priorities is Key to Success"

From 1st till 4th March, the Director of the UNAIDS Regional Support Team (RST) for Europe and Central Asia Dr. Denis Broun visited Belarus for the first time. The main purpose of the visit was to ensure the sustainability of HIV prevention measures. He held meetings with the heads of the Ministries of Health, Education, and Labour and Social Protection, with deputies of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus, and with religious figures, representatives of public organizations and people living with HIV/AIDS. Dr. Broun also had a set of meetings with the Chair of the UN Thematic group on HIV/AIDS and the heads of UN agencies.

On 4th March, after a briefing at the conference hall of the UN Office in Belarus, Mr. Broun kindly agreed to give an exclusive interview to the "UN Bulletin".

How would you characterize recent trends in the HIV epidemic worldwide?

The spread of the HIV epidemic has slowed in most regions. Today, there are 33 million people living with HIV worldwide, but the epidemic is coming under control and a growing number of people are receiving treatment. Southeast Asia is a good example in this regard. However, HIV continues to grow in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. We hope that all countries in this region will take the necessary steps to stop the spread of HIV and reverse the epidemic.

What is your assessment of the contribution of the UN system in Belarus to the national response to the HIV epidemic?

Most of all, it is highly positive that all of the UN agencies are engaged. They work together and coordinate well among themselves. Belarus is a country with a cohesive UN team, which is excellent. The agencies have clearly defined their priorities in helping the country. This is the right approach, which maximizes outcomes and performance. The number of personnel engaged in the response to the epidemic is limited, and the staff who are involved also have other duties. In this situation, the right approach for maximizing outcomes is to set priorities. Otherwise the efforts and resources become 'diluted'.

This is your first visit to Belarus. What impressed you the most?

Let me mention three points. Firstly, lifeskills education in the schooling system, which is largely the result of the partnership between the Ministry of Education and the UN agencies in Belarus. This work has already contributed to a reduction in the proportion of young people among people living with HIV. Second, methadone replacement programmes are available to drug users. Such programmes are widely supported by UNDP and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, because they open new opportunities to drug users. Methadone replacement therapy helps drug users to stop injecting drugs and promotes their reintegration into society. Third, I was impressed by the engagement of civil society organizations in the prevention of HIV. In addition to support from the UN and the Global Fund, the dedication, enthusiasm and commitment of NGOs is a key factor which can lead to success in halting the spread of HIV, despite the difficult environment in which they sometimes operate.



Dr. Denis Broun was assigned the position of Director of the Regional Support Team for Europe and Central Asia of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS) in October 2009.

He is a Doctor of Medicine with a specialization in tropical medicine and epidemiology. Dr. Broun has held different posts, including the position of Head of the Department of Health Services at UNICEF headquarters in New York and Director of the Department of Resource Mobilization at World Health Organization headquarters in Geneva.

In recent years he has held a set of responsible positions in UNAIDS: 2005–2008 – Head of the UNAIDS Program in India, 2008–2009 – Chief of the Partner Relations branch at UNAIDS headquarters in Geneva.

He has developed a wide network of contacts and partner relations among (non-)government organizations, communities of people living with HIV, the private sector and scientists within and outside the region of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Dr. Denis Broun is a citizen of France. He speaks French, English, Spanish and Russian.

Water is a Foodstuff whose Quality should not Depend on the Season and Place of Production

On 22 March the international community celebrates World Water Day. The current condition of the world's water resources raises serious concerns, as due to pollution and shortages, water is increasingly becoming a more expensive good. In response to increasing water-related problems, in 1993 the UN General Assembly declared 22 March to be World Water Day and 2005-2015 as the International Decade for Action "Water for Life". The main goal of the Decade is to ensure safe water for all and, consequently, to create the conditions for safe and healthy livelihoods on our planet.

The Chemistry Faculty of the Belarusian State University (BSU) is also making its contribution to the protection of water resources and efficient management of water use. Within the framework of the International Decade, professors and students of the Faculty, together with the UN Office in Belarus, have been holding annual educational youth forums on water-related issues.

Professor Dmitry Grinshan, Doctor of Chemistry, Head of Laboratory at the BSU Research Institute in Physics and Chemistry, told us about the innovations taking place at BSU, water treatment and the water supply challenges affecting Belarus.

Could you please tell us about the innovations of your Institute in the field of water research?

Many different water treatment methods are in use, including chemical, physical, biological and combined. There are fewer and fewer methods which are totally new. As for the innovations proposed by the laboratory at our Institute, I would like to mention three new interesting innovations which do not replicate the available methods. In terms of significance, the most remarkable one is the creation of colloid or, simply speaking, "water-soluble" carbon. In water, carbon particles form a sound suspension, thus making it possible to treat sizeable volumes of water with a small quantity of this carbon and to obtain drinkable water. The advantages of this new carbon are particularly significant for use in emergency situations.

Secondly, I would like to note the creation of small-sized reusable filters for post-treatment purification. These filters remove active chlorine, chlororganic compounds, heavy metals, suspended particles and other toxic chemical compounds from water. The filters withstand boiling at 100° in severe conditions i.e. in the presence of acids, which enables their repeated use.

Our third innovation is a sorbent agent for eliminating the impact of oil spillages. Transportation of oil, both on land and on water, involves inevitable accidents from time to time. Oil, which is toxic for the environment, leaks into water and soil. Our sorbent agent made of timber waste does not ignite oil and, at the same time, can be easily utilized. It transforms liquid fuel and oils into solids and is an effective fuel.

What are practical applications of your innovations?

We have produced several hundred individual sets and six machines for the departments of the Ministry on Emergency Situations. We have been producing filters for households and industrial enterprises in the Republic of Belarus for almost twenty years. We have never received any complaints concerning their performance. As for "Lignosorb", we hope that its commercial use will start in the next two years. However, not everything depends on science; producers and managers need to get involved, and people's mindsets need to be prepared to recognize that the environment needs to be protected and that not any water is safe for drinking. Environmental pollution should be addressed through continuous rather than ad-hoc efforts.



To what extent does the quality of water in Minsk and other regional capitals of Belarus meet drinking water standards?

There have never been any epidemics caused by poor water quality in the cities and urban settlements with a centralized water supply. Only a few water samples fail to meet the requirements of our standard for microbiological parameters. However, this has never caused any mass outbreaks of disease. In Minsk and Gomel, water supplied from surface sources is treated with chlorine and is decontaminated. All regulatory requirements are strictly followed by the staff responsible for water treatment in accordance with this parameter.

But it is another issue whether such water can be regarded as drinking water and whether it has negative health impacts. We keep saying that double standards are unacceptable. We have two types of drinking water: chlorinated tap water, the quality of which is regulated in accordance with one document, and bottled water which is regulated by a separate important document prohibiting the use of chlorine and chlorine agents. Both waters are called drinking water, while the applicable requirements are completely different. The chlororganic content of bottled water has to be three times lower than in tap water. There is an obvious inconsistency here. In my opinion, tap water which contains chlorine and its derivatives should not be regarded as drinking water because it produces a negative impact on human health.

I believe that water containing chlorine and chlororganic substances should not be regarded as drinking water. It should be used for household purposes only.

How should the individual citizen approach the problem of water quality?

A person should make his or her own choice concerning money spending priorities, for example whether to spend money on sweets or clean water. Priorities should be identified and an individual choice made. In my opinion, it is better to buy a water filter. It is particularly important to select it correctly. There are filters which transform water into a distillate i.e. the water is completely desalted. Such water is harmful for humans. We should drink water which contains salts. In this respect, Belarusian water is very good. It contains sufficient amounts of necessary salts which should not be removed.

Water is a foodstuff. Its quality should not depend on the season and place of production. Drinking poor quality water from wells or chlorinated tap water should be avoided. People need to be aware of this.

World Food Programme Launches Russian Version of its Website

The World Food Programme (WFP) has announced the launch of its official website in Russian. The Russian version of the site is aimed at increasing awareness about the efforts of WFP. The website (<http://ru.wfp.org/>) is intended to become an information portal for the Russian-speaking population worldwide.

Всплывающая панель: Всплывающая панель Программы ООН

Всплывающая панель: ЗАПОЛНИ ЧАШКУ! Помогите ВПП ООН бороться с голодом в мире

О нас

Всемирная Продовольственная Программа – является агентством ООН, находящимся на передовой линии борьбы с темными голодом. Это самая большая в мире гуманитарная организация.

В чрезвычайных ситуациях ВПП ООН доставляет продукты питания туда, где они больше всего необходимы, спасая жизни пострадавших от войн, конфликтов и стихийных бедствий. После того, как устранены причины возникновения чрезвычайной ситуации, ВПП ООН использует продовольствие, чтобы помочь сообществам вернуться к нормальной жизни.

ВПП ООН имеет надежду вера таким, в котором каждый мужчина, каждая женщина и каждый ребенок в любое время может иметь доступ к продовольствию, необходимому для активной и здоровой жизни. Для достижения этой цели мы работаем с Продовольственной и сельскохозяйственной организацией (ФАО) и Международным Фондом развития (МФР) ООН. В 2009 году ВПП ООН намеревается оказать продовольственную помощь 105 миллионам людей в 74 странах мира. В нашей организации работает 10 200 сотрудников, большинство из которых находятся в удаленных регионах планеты, оказывая непосредственную помощь голодающим. Скачать Годовой

БОРЬБА С ГОЛОДОМ ВО ВСЕМ МИРЕ

Существует русская пословица – «люблю я калачи...». Данный сайт является попыткой привлечь внимание на многие проблемы России, предложить для постановки информационный канал о том как можно одержать победу над глобальным голодом. Сайт рассказывает о бедности России, описывает условия голодающим, особенно в сельских районах.

ГОЛОД: ЧАСТО ЗАДАВАЕМЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ

1 – Есть ли в мире недостаток еды? Сегодня в мире для каждого из нас достаточно еды для здоровья и продуктивной жизни.

2 – Чем такой голод?

Жозе Шарон
Исполнительный директор ВПП ООН

The World Food Programme was established in 1963 as the authority on emergency food aid in the UN system. WFP's mandate is to combat hunger and malnutrition in the world. WFP delivers around 4 million tonnes of food annually to the most disadvantaged corners of the world. In recent years, WFP has reached over 100 million people per year with food aid. WFP activities are funded entirely by voluntary contributions. In 2009 the cost of WFP operations totalled over US\$5 billion.

Web-Encyclopedia Offered by World Bank

The UN global website (www.un.org) has posted a new information package called “Do you know...?”, developed by the World Bank especially for students. The new web-resource, available at <http://www.un.org/ru/youthink/>, is a kind of mini-encyclopedia containing interesting facts and data, ranging from topical sections such as “Gender Issues” to the Millennium Development Goals.

In a child- and youth-friendly manner the encyclopedia explains what globalization is, why it is necessary to care about one's health, why we need to protect the environment, the reasons behind the world's conflicts, and whether poverty and hunger in poor countries can be reduced. The internet resource is well-structured and has a user-friendly interface.

Добро пожаловать в ООН. Это ваш мир! Поиск на веб-сайте ООН Найти

Материалы Всемирного Банка для учащихся

А знаешь ли ты... ?

Главная страница ООН

Первая страница

Гендерные вопросы

Глобализация

Задолженность

Занятость

Здоровье

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Инвалидность

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Окружающая среда

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СПИД

Торговля

Урбанизация

Цели развития тысячелетия

Школьный автобус

на стр. 22

Представьте, что кто-то вам сказал, что вы не в счет. Что бы вы подумали? Правильно ли не принимать в расчет половину рода человеческого? [Подробнее >>](#)

По мере интеграции экономик и обществ, наш мир уменьшается? [Подробнее >>](#)

Списывается задолженность целого ряда беднейших стран мира. Кэши и почему? [Подробнее >>](#)

Может ли частный сектор вывести страны из нищеты? [Подробнее >>](#)

Ваша жизнь под угрозой? Все ваши действия обусловлены состоянием здоровья? [Подробнее >>](#)

Изменение климата с учетом его потенциального воздействия на жизнь человека является, вероятно, одной из наиболее острых глобальных проблем развития, стоящих перед человечеством. [Подробнее >>](#)

Отсутствие у инвалидов доступа к школьному образованию и занятости ведет к тому, что они автоматически попадают в категорию беднейших слоев населения. [Подробнее >>](#)

Направление инвестиций в строительство дорог с твердым покрытием и железных дорог, сетей электро- и водоснабжения содействует укреплению инфраструктуры и росту благосостояния стран. [Подробнее >>](#)

Нищета ведет к конфликту, порождающему нищету. Можно ли разорвать этот заколдованный круг? [Подробнее >>](#)



***“I am getting older.
That means I am alive.”***

Garry Andrews

Today, about 10% of the world's population has crossed the threshold of 60 years of age. That is a little less than 700 million out of almost 7 billion people who live on planet Earth. Many of them are living on the sidelines, removed from active lifestyles. The photography exhibition “Anti-Stereotypes Concerning Old Age” which opened in Mogilev on October 25, 2009, has acquainted many people with seniors who perceive the figure of 60 as a mere formality, and nothing more. Photographers: Evgeniya Alefirenko and Rodion Kovenkin. The characters in the photos: residents of Mogilev.