The 2005 World Summit

The 2005 World Summit, held from 14 to 16 September at United Nations Headquarters in New York, is expected to bring together more than 170 Heads of State and Government: the largest gathering of world leaders in history. It is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to take bold decisions in the areas of development, security, human rights and reform of the United Nations. The agenda is based on an achievable set of proposals outlined in March by Secretary-General Kofi Annan in his report In Larger Freedom www.un.org/largerfreedom. These have since been reviewed by Governments in a series of informal consultations conducted by General Assembly President Jean Ping, who released on 5 August a third draft outcome document for the Summit. It is anticipated that another draft will be issued in late August. The latest version and additional details can be found at www.un.org/ga/59/hl60_plenarymeeting.

The good news is that we do have an outcome document for the 2005 Summit, which has just been approved by the General Assembly almost unanimously, with two delegations reserving their position. The document includes a good chapter on development; we’ve got the establishment of the Human Rights Council approved; we’ve got a Peace-building Commission approved. We also have a Responsibility to Protect, and we’ve got a statement on terrorism, as well as the Democracy Fund, which has been established.

The big item missing is non-proliferation and disarmament. This is a real disgrace. We have failed twice this year: we failed at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Conference, and we failed now. And I hope the leaders will see this as a real signal for them to pick up the ashes and really show leadership on this important issue when we are all concerned about weapons of mass destruction and the possibility that they may even get into the wrong hands. I will appeal to the leaders who are coming here in the next few days to really step up to the plate and accept the challenge and show leadership on this issue.

There were Governments that were not willing to make the concessions necessary. And in my discussions with the Member States I tried to get them to understand that, in our interconnected world, we need to look at issues in much broader terms, rather than narrow national interest, and that, when we are asked to seek collective interest — look out for the collective interest is also the national interest, and one should not assume automatically that the collective interest may be against one’s national interest. But it’s a tendency to look inward at their national requirements, instead of looking at the broader picture. I must say that during this process in the last couple of weeks I think some delegations focused on the trees and missed the forest.

Now that we’ve got the document — and I hope the Heads of State will approve and endorse it — the challenge is implementation, moving ahead and working together to implement it and pressing ahead for agreement on those issues where agreement has been elusive up till today. But we have not given up on those either.

(Excerpts of the Secretary-General’s press conference after adoption of the outcome document)

Hello…

So, here we are at last. Not only the World 2005 Summit is about to begin in New York, RUNIC is publishing its first monthly Bulletin in English. It will give you an overview of the UN relevant issues and events (Month in Review), a forecast of highlights to be expected next month (Coming Up) an editorial on a topical issue (Opinion), background material on major events (Focus), new appointments and report launches (RUNIC Reports), and a guest commentary (What the others say). We hope to give those who receive our regularly disseminated materials a second strike capability for covering missed items, and those whose interest is long-term, a reference instrument and easy retrieval system.

This issue is dedicated to the historic gathering of world leaders in New York to make the World Organization fitter for the new century, but it also covers major events like the issuance of the Volcker report on the Oil-for Food Programme and the launch of the Human Development Report. We will be in touch with you shortly to see in whether this Bulletin is useful and how it could be improved.

Andreas Nicklisch
Regional Director a.i.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- The RUNIC Monthly in English is here
- Acting director Andreas Nicklisch introduces new information tool
- Agreement on outcome document for World Summit
- The inclusion of the Secretary-General
- The 2005 Summit:
  - The Why, the What and the Who
- Oil-for Food
  - Lesson to be learned
- The long, steep road of Development
  - Launch of the Human Development Report
- Highlights of the month
- Coming up
- New appointments

Habemus Outcome Document
By Kofi Annan

(Continues on page 2)
FREEWOMEN FROM WANT

Proposals in the area of development call for breakthroughs in debt relief and trade liberalization, and increases in aid to revitalize infrastructure and improve health and education services, in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including cutting extreme poverty in half by 2015 www.un.org/millenniumgoals.

Developing countries are being asked to devise national strategies to meet the MDG targets and to facilitate transparent and accountable governance, while developed countries are being urged to increase aid and reduce trade barriers, debt and other burdens that hamper development. It has been proposed to set up an International Financing Facility that would make official development assistance (ODA) more predictable and accessible. Many donors are on track to meet the target of dedicating 0.7 per cent of gross national income to ODA by the year 2015.

Others have promised to make substantial increases in ODA over the next ten years. Leaders meeting at the Group of 8 Summit in early July agreed to increase annual aid flows by at least $50 billion as of 2010, with at least half of that increase to be directed at Africa, and to write off the debts of eighteen of the world’s poorest countries.

FREEWOMEN FROM FEAR

Another major focus of the Summit agenda is to make the world safer by improving collective security arrangements. Proposals include initiatives to prevent catastrophic terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Member States are being urged to reach agreement on a universal definition of terrorism and to sign on to a comprehensive convention against terrorism. A comprehensive convention against nuclear terrorism has already been approved by the General Assembly and will be opened for signature at the World Summit. Another area under decision regards the establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission that would support countries during their transitions from armed conflict to lasting peace and reduce the risks of war. Governments are also being asked to take action against organized crime, as well as to contain illicit trade in small arms and landmines.

FREEWOMEN TO LIVE IN DIGNITY

The three-pronged approach to collective action hinges on the idea that there can be no development without security, no security without development, and neither without the universal application and protection of human rights. The Secretary-General recently announced the creation of an independent and self-financing Democracy Fund to help Governments strengthen their democratic practices and institutions. Another key step calls for the acceptance of a universal principle of the responsibility to protect civilian populations from crimes against humanity when Governments are unwilling or unable to do so. In addition, the draft outcome document urges strengthening the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Another proposal under consideration would transform the largely discredited Human Rights Commission into a smaller standing body, a new Human Rights Council. Membership on the Council would be subject to approval by two-thirds of the General Assembly.

STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS

It is widely agreed that the United Nations must adapt itself to meet the needs of today’s geopolitics and global challenges. Although the UN continues to streamline and renew its internal structure, efforts need to be intensified to make it more effective, transparent and accountable. Key among the proposals is the expansion of the Security Council to make it more inclusive and representative of the UN’s current membership. Two models for expanding the Council from 15 to 24 members are among those now on the table: one creates six new permanent seats and three new non-permanent ones; the other creates nine new non-permanent seats. Although consensus is desirable, it is not mandatory as long as two-thirds of UN Member States agree on the formula. An invigorated role for the Economic and Social Council is also envisioned among the reform proposals. ECOSOC would play a more active role in coordinating system-wide development policies and hold high-level ministerial meetings biennially to assess progress and make recommendations about how to achieve the MDGs. The General Assembly itself is also under scrutiny. Proposals for its renewal include measures to streamline its committee structure and speed up the deliberative process, as well as to rationalize the Assembly’s lengthy agenda to give priority to the most critical issues of the day. Other proposals include steps to realign the Secretariat’s structure and staffing with the proposed reforms, including approval for a one-time staff buyout and a comprehensive review of budget and human resources. The changes aim to make the culture and organization of the Secretariat more efficient, open and accountable. For more information on Secretariat reform, visit: www.un.org/reform.

SUMMIT FORMAT AND OUTCOME

The 2005 World Summit will feature plenary meetings continuing over the three days, where Heads of State or Government and other senior officials will make statements. There will be a special meeting on Financing for Development on the morning of 14 September. The plenary meetings will be presided over by the Heads of State or Government of the home countries of the Presidents of the 59th and 60th sessions of the General Assembly — Gabon and Sweden, respectively. Four closed, interactive roundtables will also be held over the three days, each one covering the broad Summit agenda and chaired by two Heads of State or Government selected by regional groupings. Summaries of the discussions will be presented during a closing plenary meeting on 16 September. Selected Observers and members of non-governmental and regional organizations may also address the plenary. Member States are expected to adopt a final outcome document containing a number of decisions and recommendations for action. For more information, visit the Summit website at www.un.org/summit2005.
With world focus on Niger, Belgium donates to neglected African crises

18 August - The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) today welcomed a cash donation of five million euros from Belgium which will allow WFP to provide urgently needed food to the Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Niger, Mali, South Sudan, Zimbabwe and Malawi. This contribution doubles the Belgian government’s assistance to WFP so far this year, bringing it to a total of 9.63 million euros.

UN-backed treaty to prevent waterborne diseases in Europe enters into force

4 August - A treaty to prevent such water-related diseases as cholera, dysentery and typhoid through the provision of safe drinking water and adequate sanitation in cross-boundary European river basins entered into force today, following its ratification by the required 16 countries, according to the United Nations health agency.

For more information, see: http://www.euro.who.int/epri/.../WHO/NewsCentre/PR/2005/20050729_1

World Summit in New York

31 August - World leaders will arrive in historic numbers at the United Nations in mid-September, with a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reach major decisions on ending poverty, promoting human rights, fighting terrorism and helping countries recover from deadly conflict.

For more info, see: http://www.un.org/s.../2005/summit2005/

With worldwide ceremonies, UN marks 2nd anniversary of Baghdad terror attack

19 August - From its Headquarters in New York to front-line missions in the field, from solemn minutes of silence to impassioned tribute to the fallen, the entire United Nations system today marked the second anniversary of the deadly terrorist attack on UN headquarters in Baghdad one of the darkest days in the world body’s history.

For more see: http://www.un.org/events/.../index.html

High-Level Group named by Annan to guide the Alliance of Civilizations

2 September - Following up on a Spanish and Turkish initiative to establish an “Alliance of Civilizations” to foster mutual respect for religious beliefs and traditions, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today announced the composition of a High-Level Group to guide the initiative and help bring about cooperation.

For more information: http://www.un.org/apps/news/.../society

United Kingdom must not deport people to countries with risk of torture – UN rights expert

23 August - A United Nations human rights expert today called on the United Kingdom not to deport anybody under its new anti-terrorism law to a country where there is a risk of torture or ill-treatment, warning that the proposed assurances it would seek were not an adequate guarantee and circumvented its treaty obligations.

For more, see: http://www.unhchr.ch/hurricane/hurricane.nsf/19A5433D2D8CB81C1257065007323C7?optionopenp

UN-backed youth summit pledges action on Millennium Development Goals

23 August - Youth leaders from more than 40 countries participating in the United Nations-sponsored second Pan-African Youth Leadership Summit in Ifrane, Morocco, unanimously agreed today to endorse sport as a way of mobilizing African youth for practical initiatives aimed at advancing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).


Donors pledge nearly $4 billion to Annan-initiated fund to fight AIDS, TB and malaria

6 September – The United Nations-backed Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria today received pledges of nearly $4 billion for 2006 and 2007, and another conference will be held next June in the hope of reaching the $7 billion target for the two-year period.

For more information: http://www.theglobalfund.org/en

Annan stresses ‘vital importance’ of UN reforms in wake of Oil-for-Food report

7 September – Secretary-General Kofi Annan today underscored the “vital importance” of enacting management reforms in the United Nations after the Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) into the Iraq Oil-for-Food Programme delivered its final report to the Security Council, finding both misadministration and evidence of corruption.

For more information, see: http://www.un.org/apps/news/.../Body=Oil-for-Food&Body1=oilfor-Food&Body2=Oil-For-Food
SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS FILIPPO GRANDI OF ITALY AS DEPUTY COMMISSIONER-GENERAL OF UN RELIEF AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES

The Secretary-General has today appointed Filippo Grandi (Italy) as Deputy Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).


SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS ALAN DOSS AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR LIBERIA

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed Alan Doss of the United Kingdom as his Special Representative for Liberia.


SECRETARY-GENERAL APPOINTS LOUIS FREDERICK REUTER, IV, (FRITZ) OF UNITED STATES ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CAPITAL MASTER PLAN

United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan today announced the appointment of Louis Frederick Reuter, IV, (Fritz) as Assistant Secretary-General - Executive Director of the Capital Master Plan.


SECRETARY-GENERAL NOMINATES KEMAL DERVIŠ OF TURKEY AS NEW ADMINISTRATOR OF UNDP

Mr. Kemal Derviş started as the new head of the United Nations Development Programme, the UN's global development network, on 15 August 2005. He is also the Chair of the United Nations Development Group, a committee consisting of the heads of all UN funds, programmes and departments working on development issues.


SUPACHAI PANITCHPAKDI TAKES OFFICE AS HEAD OF UNCTAD

Dr. Supachai Panitchpakdi today began his tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), following his appointment by the United Nations General Assembly on 12 May. Dr. Supachai, a career diplomat and economist, was the Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO) for the past three years; his term there ended 31 August.

Oil-for-Food: Neither the Security Council nor the Secretary-General was Clearly in Command

As you know, it was on my initiative, and with the support of this Council, that in April of last year Mr. Volcker, Justice Goldstone and Professor Pieth were asked to conduct their inquiry.

I took that initiative, not with a view to deflecting blame, or to forging a political weapon against anyone, but with the sole purpose of uncovering the truth. I was convinced that only by revealing the full truth, however painful, could the United Nations regain its credibility, and establish what changes were needed.

Mr. Volcker himself remarked, when presenting his first interim report, that few other organizations would have opened themselves to independent scrutiny as fully as this one has. And indeed, the truth as revealed in the successive interim reports of the Inquiry, and in this full report today, is painful for all of us. There can be few people, either in this Council or in the Secretariat, who will take pleasure in hearing or reading the conclusions that the Inquiry has reached.

But, while I have not yet had time to study the full text of the report, I am gratified to see that two essential points are made in the preface. First, the Committee notes that the Programme did succeed in restoring and maintaining minimal standards of nutrition and health in Iraq, while also helping to maintain the international effort to prevent Saddam Hussein from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. And secondly, it observes that “the wholesale corruption within the Programme took place among private companies, manipulated by Saddam Hussein’s government”.

More important, however, are the Committee’s findings about the general management of the Programme, which was characterized by weak administrative practices, and inadequate control and auditing. Most important of all is the way that those findings reflect on the system of decision-making, accountability and management throughout the Organization. Here too, as chief administrative officer, I have to take responsibility for the failings revealed, both in the implementation of the Programme and, more generally, in the functioning of the Secretariat.

They are lessons about the importance of accountability, and particularly of having clear lines of responsibility and reporting, so that all officials, and all parts of the Secretariat, know exactly where their responsibilities lie. They are lessons about oversight, and particularly about the need for mechanisms to ensure that, when oversight reveals deficiencies, someone takes prompt action to repair those deficiencies. And above all, they are lessons about the need for the United Nations to maintain the highest possible standards of integrity, and of effective performance.

But one thing should be clear right now. The Inquiry’s findings underscore the vital importance of proposed management reforms, many of which are at this very minute being negotiated by Members in the General Assembly, with a view to their adoption, as part of a broader agenda of political and institutional change, by next week’s summit. I have already embarked on new reforms in areas where I have discretion – reforms designed to improve the performance of senior management, to strengthen oversight and accountability, to increase transparency, and to ensure the highest standards of ethics, notably by creating a new Ethics Office. But there are many key decisions that only the General Assembly can make.

Therefore, it is vital that we review fully the rules governing our budgetary and human resources. The Oil-for-Food Programme is only the most extreme example of the wide range of new types of operation that Member States have called on the Secretariat to undertake in the last 15 years. It surely illustrates the point that our rules must allow us to attract, retain and develop a cadre of professionals with appropriate skills to manage such operations, to move them from post to post in a fair and practicable way, and to rationalise a budgetary process which at present is far too heavy, time-consuming and bureaucratic.

But it’s no less vital that the Secretary-General himself should be allowed to carry out his functions effectively, taking day-to-day decisions on deployment of staff and resources without having to wait for prior approval from the General Assembly, or this Council, or their various committees. As the report says, one of the fundamental problems with the Oil-for-Food Programme was that “neither the Security Council nor the Secretariat leadership was clearly in command”, and this “turned out to be a recipe for the dilution of Secretariat authority and evasion of personal responsibility at all levels”. In future, the respective roles and powers of the different parts of the Organization must be clearly defined, so that the Secretary-General knows precisely what is expected of him, and Member States can hold him fully accountable for the results.

Excerpts from Secretary-General’s statement to the Security Council on receipt of the Independent Inquiry Committee (IIC) report
Missing the Millennium Development Goals will come at bitter Human Costs

World leaders last week received a stark assessment of the human costs of missing agreed global targets for lifting people out of extreme poverty—costs which would include many millions of preventable deaths over the next 10 years, according to UNDP's 2005 Human Development Report.

Presented to heads of state and government one week before they meet in New York for a crucial UN summit to review progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2005 Human Development Report shows that while there has been substantial overall progress globally, many individual countries are actually falling further behind.

The Report calls for swift and dramatic changes in global aid, trade and security policies to fulfil the promises made by the international community when world leaders gathered here to address these problems five years ago. “The world has the knowledge, resources and technology to end extreme poverty, but time is running out,” said UNDP Administrator Kemal Dervis.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said that the 2005 Human Development Report spells out what is at stake in the September 14-16 World Summit. “I urge member states to heed this timely message, and to use next week's Summit to launch us on a global effort to make this vision a reality. And I commend the ideas and analysis in this report to all citizens, civic organizations, Governments, parliaments and international bodies who are working to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,” Annan said.

The Report was delivered to world leaders today through the missions of the 191 member states of the United Nations in preparation for the 2005 World Summit, which will be the largest-ever gathering of heads of state and government. The Summit will be assessing progress and recommending further action toward achieving the MDGs, which originated in the Millennium Declaration, unanimously adopted by world leaders at the Millennium Summit at the UN in 2000. The MDGs include pledges to halve extreme poverty, reduce child deaths by two-thirds, and achieve universal primary education by 2015.

In London, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair welcomed the report as a powerful and timely reminder of the scale of the challenge the world is facing and of the human costs of failure: “With 10 years to go to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals target date, we need to make the next decade a decade for development, a decade in which we deliver on the promise made in the Millennium Declaration. I commend the Human Development Report for providing us with a compelling vision for the future.”

The report says that under current trends the promises of the Millennium Declaration will not be kept. “The Millennium Declaration was a solemn pledge to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty,” notes Kevin Watkins, the Report’s lead author and Director of UNDP’s Human Development Report Office. “The MDGs are a Promissory Note, written by 189 governments to the world’s poor people. That note falls due in less than 10 years time, and without the required investment and political will, it will come back stamped ‘insufficient funds.’”

(continues on next page)
Using the latest country-level data, the Report shows that human development is improving but too slowly to achieve the MDGs. Among the key findings:

- Fifty countries with a combined population of almost 900 million are falling backwards on at least one of the Goals. Twenty-four of these countries are in sub-Saharan Africa.

- Another 65 countries with a combined population of 1.2 billion risk failing to meet at least one MDG until after 2040. In other words, they may miss the target by an entire generation.

- Goal to cut poverty: In 2015, on current trends, there would be 827 million people living in extreme poverty—380 million more than if the internationally agreed target were reached. Another 1.7 billion people would be living on US$2 a day.

- Goal to reduce child deaths by two thirds: On current trends, the goal to reduce the deaths of children under five years of age would be met in 2045, not 2015—30 years late. Over the next decade, the cumulative human cost of missing the target would translate into 41 million more child deaths.

- Goal of universal primary education: In 2015, 47 million children would still be out of school, 19 million of them in sub-Saharan Africa.

- Goal to improve access to clean water and sanitation: Instead of halving the ranks of the one billion people who lack access to fresh drinking water, on current trends the world in 2015 would still be 210 million people short of this goal. More than two billion would still lack proper sanitation in 2015, mostly in sub-Saharan Africa.

**Progress on aid, trade and security must be linked**

“This Human Development Report presents us with a clear warning. We know that the MDGs are attainable, but if we continue with business as usual, the promise of the Millennium Declaration will be broken,” said UNDP Administrator Kemal Dervis. “That would be a tragedy above all for the world’s poor—but rich countries would not be immune to the consequences of failure. In an interdependent world our shared prosperity and collective security depend critically on success in the war against poverty.”

(continues on next page)
The authors emphasize that development is ultimately up to the governments of developing countries—to tackle inequalities, respect human rights, encourage investment and root out corruption. But the Report focuses on the role richer countries must play to defeat poverty, in three vital areas—aid, trade and security.

“Failure in any one area will undermine the foundations for future progress,” warned Watkins. “More effective rules in international trade will count for little in countries where violent conflict undermines opportunities to participate in trade. Increased aid without fairer trade rules will deliver sub-optimal results. And peace will remain a fragile entity without the prospects for improved human welfare and poverty reduction that can be provided through aid and trade.”

Extreme inequality slows progress

The 2005 Human Development Report argues that extreme inequality is a brake on progress towards the MDGs and wider human development goals. The Report spotlights the scale of the international wealth divide: The poorest 40 percent of the world’s population—2.5 billion people, living on less than $2 a day—account for just five percent of all global income.

The Human Development Report team argues that inequalities within countries also weaken the link between economic growth and poverty reduction, and that in very unequal societies, growth may have little impact on poverty.

Economic growth alone will be insufficient to enable most countries to achieve the Goal of halving poverty, and far more attention should be paid to creating conditions under which the poor can increase their share of future national income gains, the authors argue.

“Anybody questioning whether income distribution matters might reflect on the fact that the poorest 10 percent of Brazilians are poorer than their counterparts in Viet Nam, a country with a far lower average income,” said Watkins.

The Report highlights the interaction between inequalities based on income, rural-urban divisions, ethnicity, and gender. In India, the death rate among children aged one to five is 50 percent higher for girls than boys. Along with inequalities among states, this gender gap is one of the major obstacles that needs to be overcome for India to convert economic success into human development success.

Aid pledges must be kept—and resources delivered quickly

The Report points to positive developments since the 2002 Monterrey conference on financing for development, culminating in the July 2005 G-8 Gleneagles pledge to increase aid by $50 billion over last year’s levels.

However, it warns against complacency. “Even a three-quarters full aid glass will not bring the Millennium Development Goals within reach, especially if resources do not come on-stream for several years,” the authors warn.

Looking beyond aid quantity, the Human Development Report also calls for improvements in aid quality. The Report estimates the cost of tied aid—assistance that is linked to the purchase of goods and services from donors countries—at $5-7 billion a year. The Report identifies excessive policy conditionality and weak donor coordination as additional problems.

“We hope that the G-8 promises to increase aid are kept and that the additional assistance is made available as quickly as possible and is targeted to do the most good,” said Dervis.

“Perverse taxation” of poor by world trade policies

The 2005 Human Development Report says donor countries have failed to act on their commitment to a ‘development agenda’ at the World Trade Organization (WTO). The authors say the Doha Round has so far delivered little of substance—and that a failure to reform trade rules at the ministerial meeting planned for December in Hong Kong would have grave consequences for the MDGs, and for the entire multilateral trading system.
In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...IN Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...IN Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...In Focus...IN Focus...

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The Report decries what it calls ‘perverse taxation,’ under which the world’s poorest countries face the highest tariffs in rich countries, and examines the impact on the poor of agricultural subsidies and protectionism in wealthy industrialized nations. Donor countries, the Report shows, spend $1 billion a year aiding agriculture in developing countries and $1 billion a day on domestic subsidies that undermine the world’s poorest farmers. At the same time, the report warns that the European Union and the US are restructuring their subsidy programmes to limit the effectiveness of WTO disciplines.

The overall effects of agricultural protectionist measures and subsidies in wealthy countries, the Report estimates, cost developing countries close to $72 billion a year—an amount equivalent to all official aid flows in 2003.

The 2005 Human Development Report also examines armed conflict as a critical development problem which must be addressed together with aid and trade reforms. The great majority of countries in the ‘low’ human development category—22 of 32, according to the Report—have experienced violent conflict since 1990. The Report stresses the critical importance of conflict prevention in the eradication of poverty, and the scope for international action to tackle the challenges posed by the global small arms trade and post-conflict reconstruction. “The interaction between poverty and conflict in many developing countries is destroying lives on an enormous scale,” the Report states.

The authors strongly endorse Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s proposal for a Peacebuilding Commission to assist post-conflict countries in the transition to reconstruction and long-term development.

18 countries show reversals in human development

The Report shows that 18 countries, with a total of 460 million people, have moved backwards on the Human Development Index (HDI)—a compendium of key indicators such as income, life expectancy and education—since 1990, when the first groundbreaking Human Development Report was published. Of the 18 countries, 12 are in sub-Saharan Africa. The other six countries were all in the Commonwealth of Independent States, the nations of the former Soviet Union.

Southern Africa was hit hardest, in a downturn driven primarily by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. South Africa fell 35 places in the HDI; Zimbabwe, 23; and Botswana, 21. Tajikistan fell 21 places; Ukraine, 17; and the Russian Federation, 15. Declining life expectancy combined with economic disruption after the fall of the Soviet Union were the main factors. Russia’s life expectancy ranking plunged 48 places since 1990.

There has been progress in many other nations, however. Over the past 15 years people in developing countries have on average become healthier, better educated, and less impoverished—and they are also far more likely to live in a multi-party democracy. Life expectancy in developing countries has increased by two years while two million fewer child deaths occur annually. Meanwhile, 30 million fewer children are out of school and more than 100 million people have escaped extreme poverty. Over the last decade, 1.2 billion people gained access to clean water, while literacy increased in developing countries from 70 percent to 76 percent in the past decade, according to the Report.

* * * *

ABOUT THIS REPORT: Every year since 1990, the UNDP has commissioned the Human Development Report by an independent team of experts to explore major issues of global concern. A worldwide advisory network of leaders in academia, government and civil society contribute data, ideas, and best practices to support the analysis and proposals published in the Report.

The concept of Human Development looks beyond per capita income, human resource development, and basic needs as a measure of human progress and also assesses such factors as human freedom, dignity and human agency, that is, the role of people in development. The Human Development Report 2005 argues that development is ultimately “a process of enlarging people’s choices,” not just raising national incomes.
What the other’s say ...  

Dr. Annan’s cure for the ailing UN

Michael Binyon

His grand reform plan could avert the bankruptcy threat and calm European skepticism

THE MUSKETEER strategy has collapsed. To battle their way to permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council, the four contestants made a pact: it would be all for one and one for all. Japan, Germany, India and Brazil thought they had an unassailable case: the world’s largest, richest or most populous states still barred from a say in global governance, they demanded that the UN, as it celebrates 60 years since its founding, recognise the changes since the Second World War.

They reckoned without the world’s ability to bicker. The UN has been discussing reform for well over a decade. But there was never a consensus on what should replace the postwar arrangements. The five permanent Security Council members — America, Russia, China, Britain and France — all paid lip service to a more representative body. But none relished sharing power or giving a newcomer the right to veto their collective decisions.

Now things have become serious. Next month, kings, presidents, dictators and prime ministers will meet in New York in the biggest summit of world leaders ever held. The aim is not simply to celebrate an organisation that has, against the odds, survived and helped to stave off pestilence, famine and war; it is to rekindle the early idealism and relaunch the UN when criticism, cynicism and impatience are eating away at its foundations.

Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General, has seized the moment. Three years ago, he says, he looked at the UN, saw it was broke and resolved to fix it. The Iraq war had split the Security Council, bypassed the UN machinery and infuriated the general membership. It was time to rebuild not only trust but also the machinery.

It was also essential to do something to stave off the strident attacks from Washington. Congress has long cast a sour eye at a body it sees as institutionally anti-American. But the steely US mood after the 9/11 atrocities and the visceral distrust of multilateral bureaucrats turned the UN into a prime target for the American Right. And then came the Oil-for-Food scandal. Not only was the UN an obstacle to US interests, Congress insisted; it now proved to be corrupt. Either it reformed itself from top to bottom, or it would be starved of American money and support and left to wither.

So Mr. Annan decided to use next month’s anniversary to launch a grand reform plan, counting on the bonhomie of the restructuring of peace-keeping operations, also on the Annan wish list, go back to the table and compromise if asked to the restructuring of peace-keeping operations, also on the Annan wish list, go back to the table and compromise if asked to

Terrorism is also an issue splitting the West and the Muslim world. America insists — and Mr Annan agrees — that a world body that refuses to condemn terrorism without ambiguity all forms of terrorism sacrifices any claim to the moral high ground.

Does this scuttle any attempt to deny terrorists arms, havens and support? Equally, can the abortive talks on nuclear non-proliferation, which ended in bad-tempered disagreement this year, be re-started as part of the general reform package? Would countries supporting the strengthening of collective security and the restructuring of peace-keeping operations, also on the Annan wish list, go back to the table and compromise if asked to look again at proliferation?

The idea is clever. Different member states have different demands. The richer nations want the UN to be more powerful, with strengthened peacekeeping; the poorer nations want the UN to be more engaged in development, in equalising conditions for world trade, relieving debt and getting the rich nations to honour their development assistance pledges. The richer nations, by contrast, want the UN to insist on a blitz on corruption, greater accountability, more private sector initiatives, better government and a stable partnership between rich and poor.

Or take human rights. The West regards the present UN Commission as ineffective, bureaucratic, weakly lagging at times of crisis, such as in Darfur, and overpoliticised. But the reform now proposed, for a far more powerful permanent human rights council, with greater clout and emergency powers for more forceful intervention, is alarming dictators and kleptocrats around the world.

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**Conference on Disarmament**
(Geneva, 8 August—23 September 2005)

**58th Annual DPI/NGO Conference**
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**2005 World Summit**
(New York, UN Headquarters, 14-16 September 2005)
http://un.org/summit2005/

**Special Days**


*(Continuation from previous page)*

The grand reform plan is certainly daring. If passed, even in part, it may go some way to assuaging US anger, European scepticism and the frustrations of the developing world. But one overriding problem remains: the Security Council. This is where decisions are made; this is where the power lies. And if, *faute de mieux*, the status quo prevails, the energies and resources of those countries hugely important to all UN programmes — India, Germany and Japan, for example — will never be properly harnessed.

The Four Musketeers’ bid has failed because each has too many enemies. China is set against Japan, America does not want Germany, no one in Latin America supports Brazil, and Africa is insisting, absurdly, on two seats and the veto. Mr Annan has put off the issue until December. But unless this is resolved, little else has any meaning. The UN is the world’s parliament. But will it have any credibility if its power and authority continue to rely on rotten boroughs?
• Health and the Millennium Development Goals – WHO

• Report on the World Social Situation - DESA

• Report of the Fact-Finding Mission to assess the Scope and Impact of Operation Murambatsvina by the UN Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe, Mrs. Anna Kajumulo Tibaijuka

• Economic Survey of Europe 2005 (UN/ECE)
  http://www.unece.org/ead/survey_new.htm

• Chernobyl’s Legacy: Health, Environmental and Socio-Economic Impacts

• Human Development Report 2005

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