



UN MOURNS FOLLOWING ALGERIA BOMBING

In the wake of the Algiers terrorist bombings of 11 December 2007, the entire United Nations family mourns the loss of all of the victims of the attacks, including 11 of its own dedicated staff, mostly Algerian citizens and five other UNDP staff who were initially missing but were recently confirmed to be killed. [More >>](#)



PUPPETS COME TO LIFE

The implementation of some of the projects that received funds in late 2007 in the context of the third phase of the Life Plus Youth Programme established by Coca-Cola Turkey and UNDP has commenced. One of the first projects that came to life is the "Trainer Candidates Are Learning Puppetry" project developed by Puppet and Mask Researches Association, which aims to promote puppetry as a drama tool in formal education institutions. [More >>](#)



AIDS DAY COMMEMORATED

The World AIDS Day was commemorated on 1 December 2007 around the world. This year's theme was "leadership" and highlighted the need for innovation, vision and perseverance in the face of the AIDS challenge. The campaign called on sectors of society such as families, communities and civil society organizations – rather than governments – to take the initiative and provide leadership on AIDS. [More >>](#)



ICT SUMMIT IN ANKARA

An Information and Communications Technology and Youth Summit was held on 14-16 December 2007 in Ankara. The summit organized by Youth for Habitat in support with UNDP, aimed to bring together the volunteer trainers of Information Technologies projects that have been so far realized in Turkey and to establish strong links between them thus introducing programme partners and various experts on the IT sector. [More >>](#)

GENDER AND EU ENLARGEMENT

The 2004 and 2007 enlargements created important spaces for the pursuit of gender politics in the Central and East European Member States. On the one hand, accession preparations fuelled a rush to implement new laws and create new institutions to implement the equal opportunities *acquis*, that is the existing body of Treaty



FACTS ON AIDS

The 2007 AIDS epidemic update prepared by UNAIDS provides striking figures regarding the AIDS epidemic and its estimates for adults and children. Although 2007 estimates are significantly lower than 2006 estimates, this is merely due to major improvements to UNAIDS and World Health Organization methodologies recently endorsed by independent international experts. [More >>](#)

UNDP TOPS GLOBAL ACCOUNTABILITY RANKING

UNDP received top ranking on the 2007 Global Accountability Report launched in London on 4 December by One World Trust, a leading expert in the field of global governance and accountability. UNDP is among 30 of the world's leading organizations from intergovernmental, non-governmental, and corporate sectors assessed by One World Trust according to four widely-accepted dimensions of accountability: transparency, participation, evaluation, and complaint and response mechanisms. [More >>](#)

provisions, directives and European Court of Justice decisions on equal pay, equal treatment, and maternity and parental leave which is binding on Member States. On the other hand, preparations for accession also fuelled capacity development in candidate countries. Officials became involved in 'twinning' arrangements, whereby officials from Member States assisted those from candidate countries in producing the necessary laws and regulations. [More >>](#)



Editor: Aygen Aytac

News Writer : Gökçe Yörükoğlu



UN MOURNS FOLLOWING ALGERIA BOMBING

In the wake of the Algiers terrorist bombings of 11 December 2007, the entire United Nations family mourns the loss of all of the victims of the attacks, including 11 of its own dedicated staff, mostly Algerian citizens and five other UNDP staff who were initially missing but were recently confirmed to be killed.

Kemal Derviş, the UNDP Administrator and Chair of the United Nations Development Group, representing the Secretary-General and the entire UN family, arrived in Algiers on 12 December and proceeded immediately to the site of the attack of the UN offices to see first-hand the recovery efforts. He met with the families of victims and offered the condolences of all UN staff across the world.

"I am here to offer my support to the families of those killed in the attacks and to send to the people of Algeria a strong message of solidarity from the United Nations," he said.



Derviş also met with members of the UN Country Team, with representatives from several UN development and humanitarian agencies whose staff also sustained casualties. The top priority on all their minds is the well-being of all UN staff, of Algerian citizens and the support to the families of the dead and wounded. After the meeting, Derviş visited those injured in the attacks who are currently receiving medical care in Algerian hospitals.

"It was so saddening for me to see with my own eyes the impact of this attack on colleagues so committed to helping create sustainable livelihoods for Algeria's poor, supporting access to justice, strengthening the national Parliament and promoting environmental protection. The victims are not soldiers who signed up for battle, but people, mostly Algerians, who are working for peace, development and to alleviate human suffering", Derviş said.

In his meetings with Abdelaziz Belkhadem, Prime Minister of Algeria, Derviş underlined that the United Nations family is committed to being a strong partner to Algeria along the road to greater prosperity for all Algerians. He also stressed that this commitment is coupled with a responsibility on the part of the host government – on the part of all UN Members States – to ensure adequate security provisions are in place so that UN staff can carry out their important work without fear for their safety.

"We appreciate all the government's efforts with the rescue operation. We are committed to continue working in Algeria. But staff security is of the utmost importance to us and host governments around the world have to do their maximum to provide protection for our offices," he affirmed.

"The UN represents and embodies the international community as a whole. We are politically neutral and work for development, peace and humanitarian causes, in the interest of humanity. This is and must remain the only driver of our actions. It is very important that these principles are respected and observed by all".

The UN family in Turkey also observed a moment of silence as a group on 12 December 2007 in UN House, Ankara.



PUPPETS COME TO LIFE

The implementation of some of the projects that received funds in late 2007 in the context of the third phase of the Life Plus Youth Programme established by Coca-Cola Turkey and UNDP has commenced. One of the first projects that came to life is the “Trainer Candidates Are Learning Puppetry” project developed by Puppet and Mask Researches Association, which aims to promote puppetry as a drama tool in formal education institutions.

In the context of the project, trainings on how to do simple puppets for over 200 trainee candidates among who are undergraduate students, vocational school students and NGO volunteers have started. These trainee candidates will later on perform a simple show. At the first stage of the project, a professional puppet show for the target group was organized on 28 November 2007 in Istanbul in order to create enthusiasm towards puppetry and to promote the project.



Workshops on how to make simple puppets as well as performing simple shows continued through December in various universities and high schools. State schools fairly close to the location of the Puppet and Mask Researches Association were particularly chosen in order to reach disadvantaged groups. Some of the schools in which workshops were realized are Rüştü Akın High School, Levent Girls' Vocational School, Ortaköy Zübeyde Hanım Girls' Vocational School and Istanbul University.

In the context of the third phase of the Life Plus Youth Programme, 9 projects from Antalya, Balıkesir, Amasya, Erzurum, Istanbul, İzmir, Manisa and the Nomad villages were funded. The projects focus on education, environment, culture, art and sports.

The Life Plus Youth Programme supports innovative, creative, participatory and sustainable projects developed by youth aged 16-26 and encourages youth to design projects that will find solutions to environmental and societal problems. 22 projects have been realized since the establishment of the programme in 2005. The Life Plus Youth Programme gives 3 thousand to 30 thousand dollars for each project.

For further information on the Life Plus Youth Programme please visit [Life + website](#) and/or click [here](#).



AIDS DAY COMMEMORATED

The World AIDS Day was commemorated on 1 December 2007 around the world. This year's theme was "leadership" and highlighted the need for innovation, vision and perseverance in the face of the AIDS challenge. The campaign called on sectors of society such as families, communities and civil society organizations – rather than governments – to take the initiative and provide leadership on AIDS.

In the context of the activities to commemorate World AIDS Day in Turkey, a symposium titled "HIV/AIDS Epidemiology and Innovations in Treatment" was organized by the Hacettepe University HIV/AIDS Treatment and Research Center on 30 November 2007 in Ankara. The epidemiology of AIDS in the world and in Turkey, possible precautions and innovations in treatment were issues taken up at the symposium and the speakers consisted of representatives from UNAIDS, Ministry of Health and various NGOs including Fighting Diseases Spread by Sexual Intercourse Association and Positive Living Association.



The World AIDS Day was originally organized by UNAIDS in sponsorship with UNDP, who chose the theme after consultation with other organizations. In 2005, UNAIDS handed over responsibility to [World AIDS Campaign](#) (WAC).

Below is UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş' message on the occasion of 2007 World AIDS Day:

"The World AIDS Campaign has selected "leadership" as the 2007 World AIDS Day theme highlighting the need for innovative and visionary leadership in response to the epidemic. It calls on all of us to renew our commitment at the individual, family, community, national and international level to support empowering leadership on AIDS.

New data released by UNAIDS in its 2007 AIDS Epidemic Update shows global HIV prevalence leveling off and the number of new infections falling, with approximately 33.2 million people living with HIV in 2007. Yet with 6,800 new infections and over 5,700 deaths each day due to AIDS, we recognize the epidemic as a long-term development crisis—as it claims lives, deepens and spreads poverty and depletes resources. We must continue to scale up efforts towards universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010.

As a co-sponsor of UNAIDS, UNDP is playing a leading role in the global response to AIDS and will continue to strengthen its efforts to address HIV/AIDS as it affects development, governance, the protection of human rights and gender equality. In doing so, we will support the wider UN system's coordinated response to the epidemic.

On World AIDS Day, I am also pleased to launch a call for nominations for the biennial Red Ribbon Award to honour and celebrate the leadership of community organizations. For over 20 years, communities have been the hardest hit by AIDS, yet they have shown extraordinary courage and resilience and their leadership has been central to address the challenges posed by the epidemic.

HIV/AIDS has been a challenge for the world at large but also for UNDP staff and their families. As UNDP's Administrator, I am proud of the commitment our organization has made to support staff living with HIV. We have been at the forefront of developing the Inter-Agency Programme "UN Cares" that will succeed our own "We Care" programme. This is a major step forward in ensuring that UNDP staff living with HIV/AIDS have access to care, treatment and support, and a workplace free from stigma and discrimination.

Let us all pledge on this World AIDS Day to sustain our leadership on AIDS and keep our commitment to the 6th Millennium Development Goal, of halting and beginning to reverse the spread of AIDS by 2015."

FACTS ON AIDS

The 2007 AIDS epidemic update prepared by UNAIDS provides striking figures regarding the AIDS epidemic and its estimates for adults and children. Although 2007 estimates are significantly lower than 2006 estimates, this is merely due

to major improvements to UNAIDS and World Health Organization methodologies recently endorsed by independent international experts.

- There are 33.2 million people living with AIDS in 2007 of which 30.8 million are adults (15.4 million women) and 2.5 million children under 15 years of age.
- In 2007, the number of people newly infected with HIV is estimated to be 2.5 million of which 420 thousand are children.
- In 2007, AIDS claimed the lives of 2.1 million people of which 330 thousand are children.
- According to regional HIV and AIDS statistics for 2007, Sub-Saharan Africa suffers the most from the disease with 22.5 million people including children living with AIDS followed by South and South East Asia (4 million), Latin America, Eastern and Central Europe (1.6 million), North America (1.3 million), East Asia (800 thousand), Western and Central Europe (760 thousand), Middle East and North Africa (380 thousand), Caribbean (230 thousand) and Oceania (75 thousand).
- AIDS is 96% more prevalent in low and middle income countries.
- About 1200 cases are seen in children under 15 years of age.
- About 5800 cases are seen in adults aged 15 years and older of whom: almost 50% are among women and 40% are among young people aged 15-24.
- Two thirds of people living with HIV and three fourths of all deaths due to HIV are in the Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Since 2001, people living with HIV in Eastern Europe and Central Asia recorded an increase of 150% from 630 thousand to 1.6 million.
- AIDS continues to be the most fatal disease of the past century as well as this century.

To read the UNAIDS 2007 AIDS epidemic update, please click [here](#).



ICT SUMMIT IN ANKARA

An Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and Youth Summit was held on 14-16 December 2007 in Ankara. The summit organized by Youth for Habitat in support with UNDP, aimed to bring together the volunteer trainers of Information Technologies (IT) projects that have been so far realized in Turkey and to establish strong links between them thus introducing programme partners and various experts on the IT sector.

The summit was very rich in terms of attendance. Among the participants of the summit were representatives from State Planning Organization, universities, Cisco Systems, INTEL, Microsoft Turkey, Vodafone, Netron, Youth for Habitat as well as UNDP Turkey Resident Representative Mahmood Ayub, Jean-Claude Lazaro from the youth sector of the Council of Europe, Jesko Hentschel from the World Bank and Halil İbrahim Akça Deputy Undersecretary of the State Planning Organization.

During the two day summit, presentations of ICT and youth projects were made including presentations on "Empowerment of Youth for E-Transformation of Turkey" project, "Youth Movement in Informatics" project and "Bridging Digital Divide: Empowerment of Youth for E-Transformation of Turkey" project. The social impact of these projects were evaluated and workshops and class simulations were realized.

Youth Association for Habitat implements a number of ICT and youth projects in partnership with United Nations Development Programme, Microsoft Turkey, Cisco Systems and Vodafone Foundation. These projects mainly focus on the empowerment of disadvantaged young people on Internet and Communication Technologies for their active participation in the e-transformation process of Turkey.

Empowerment of Youth for E-Transformation of Turkey Project that has successfully provided voluntary trainings on basic computer skills to thousands of young people in each region with a pool of hundreds of peer educators is announced as a good practice by the United Nations Development Programme. The programme that is initiated in 2004 targets to train 100 thousand disadvantaged young people in 81 cities with a group of a thousand voluntary trainers until the end of 2009.

Youth Movement in Informatics Project has successfully provided voluntary trainings on Cisco Networking Academy Programme to hundreds of young people to increase the number of youth experts on networking. The project that is initiated in 2006 and provided employment opportunities to each trainee is multiplied in the Mediterranean Region within the framework of Mediterranean Youth Technology.

Bridging Digital Divide: Empowerment of Youth for E-Transformation of Turkey Project that is initiated in 2007 targets to reach 1 million disadvantaged young people within a period of 30 months. The Project aims to become the biggest ICT literacy programme in the country providing online European Computer Driving License trainings.

For more information, please visit <http://www.youthforhab.org.tr/eng/index.htm>

To learn more on UNDP's ICT works in Turkey, click [here](#).

To read a related article please click [here](#).



UNDP TOPS GLOBAL ACCOUNTABILITY RANKING

UNDP received top ranking on the 2007 Global Accountability Report launched in London on 4 December by One World Trust, a leading expert in the field of global governance and accountability.

UNDP is among 30 of the world's leading organizations from intergovernmental, non-governmental, and corporate sectors assessed by One World Trust according to four widely-accepted dimensions of accountability: transparency, participation, evaluation, and complaint and response mechanisms.

Commenting on the report, UNDP Administrator Kemal Deris said, "UNDP finds the key dimensions of the Global Accountability Framework -- transparency, participation, evaluation and complaint/response management -- to be particularly useful and instructive. The Framework independently validates UNDP's current work and sheds light on areas of possible improvement. This feedback is critical to UNDP's continued progress in this area and adherence to the best practices of accountability."

For UNDP's profile and results in the 2007 Global Accountability Report, [click here](#). The full report is available on the [One World Trust website](#).



GENDER AND EU ENLARGEMENT

The 2004 and 2007 enlargements created important spaces for the pursuit of gender politics in the Central and East European Member States. On the one hand, accession preparations fuelled a rush to implement new laws and create new institutions to implement the equal opportunities *acquis*, that is the existing body of Treaty provisions, directives and European Court of Justice decisions on equal pay, equal treatment, and maternity and parental leave which is binding on Member States. On the other hand, preparations for accession also fuelled capacity development in candidate countries. Officials became involved in ‘twinning’ arrangements, whereby officials from Member States assisted those from candidate countries in producing the necessary laws and regulations. EU funds became available to support these activities. NGOs and activists became more drawn in, in some cases, to EU-wide or EU-funded activities, and sought to exploit pre-accession leverage to secure equality gains in national arenas.

There nonetheless remained, at the time of accession, significant shortfalls both in the transposition of law and in the capacity for its effective enforcement. A very patch picture is revealed, with governments, national courts, and state equality bodies struggling to realize the promise of accession.

Background

Adopting EU laws and regulations and decisions of the European Court of Justice on gender equality – the gender *acquis* – is just one of the conditions for EU membership. In principle, candidate countries are required to demonstrate not only that their domestic legislation conforms to EU law, but also that it is actually applied – that state institutions, including courts, have the tools, capacity and willingness to apply the relevant laws. The European Commission is tasked first with assisting a country’s preparations for accession and later with monitoring its progress. However, because gender equality is only one of its many concerns, the Commission’s *de facto* scrutiny has often been quite cursory.



For many candidate countries or ‘new’ Member States, gender equality may not seem of the highest political priority. Nevertheless, the political imperative to secure a ‘green’ light from the Commission to proceed towards membership can provide unique opportunities for gender activists to make important gains. Persuading governments to collect gender-sensitive statistics, enact gender-equality laws, and create state bodies charged with advancing gender equality has rarely been easier. As a result, the 10 post-communist countries who became members in 2004 and 2007 all saw significant changes in equality laws and institutions in the pre-accession period. However, the post-accession period has demonstrated significant shortfalls both in the transposition of law and in the capacity within the new member states for their effective enforcement. A number of different factors explain this.

The transplantation industry: In the rush to adopt new laws, existing member state legislation was often held up as blueprint. ‘Twinning’ arrangements (often with very short deadlines) reinforced this process. Over 700 such projects were approved in preparations for the 2004 enlargement. While often billed as ‘mutual learning’ experiences, in reality these relationships felt far from equal. In any case, time pressures often left candidate countries with little option other than

implementing an “off-the-shelf” reform package not tailored to domestic legal systems. Post-accession, these ‘transplants’ often prove to be an awkward fit with domestic law, leaving judges with huge problems trying to fit new employment protection obligations, for instance, into existing civil-code provisions for remedies.

Lost in translation: Key concepts of EU law are sometimes translated differently into domestic legislation. For example, the transposition of the EU’s ‘indirect discrimination’ principle (which seeks to prevent discrimination resulting from practices that do not necessarily have discriminatory intents) into Croatian law has been hampered by its divergent treatment in two key pieces of national legislation – the Gender Equality Act and the Labour Code.

Differing national judicial traditions: EU gender equality law depends on national judiciaries for effective implementation, partly because compensation to the individual 'victim' is central to its concept of 'effectiveness', and partly because it relies on 'balancing tests', e.g., to determine when indirect discrimination *can* be justified. This necessarily requires adjudication on a case-by-case basis. However, many judges in the new Member States who were schooled under socialist legal regimes are not fully prepared to abandon their inherited formalistic legal traditions and apply the 'European' rule-of-reason approaches. Though some judicial training has been funded through EU programmes, deep cultural changes are often required for judges to fully realize their potential as independent guardians of individual rights.

Week political support: While the pre-accession period may have provided attractive reform opportunities, gender equality measures and institutions in the new Member States have rarely enjoyed strong support from existing political groupings. Most new Member States boast few 'gender champions' within the administration who remain actively engaged post-accession. Indeed, the fact that gender equality legislation was often 'fast-tracked' through parliament with little time for debate exacerbated problems of inadequate support from domestic constituencies. Many gender-equality bodies in the new Member States have therefore seen their roles and budgets slashed, or their work criticized by the government. And while the *acquis* may have been transposed on time pre-accession, some outstanding legal issues nonetheless remain. The Czech Republic currently faces enforcement action by the Commission in relation to Directive 2002/73 which should have been transposed by October 2005. A draft Anti-Discrimination Act to implement this (and other EU provisions) was rejected by the Czech parliament in January 2006, and still remains outstanding.

What's a 'good practice'? Although the EU presents itself as a 'champion' of gender equality and has committed itself to mainstreaming gender through all its activities, there is no consensus about how this should be done. Even in such key areas as employment and social exclusion, where the EU is committed to the 'open method of coordination' based on peer review and the exchange of 'good practice', the important debates about what good practice might entail continue. A variety of strategies and arrangements exist in the 'old' member states, none of which can claim superiority, as the persistence of employment and pay gaps in all Member States readily testifies.[1] Is the Lisbon Strategy target of 60 percent participation of women in the labour market by 2010 appropriate for all states? How should this participation be defined? While the Netherlands can claim a female labour force participation rate of 67.5 percent, 74.7 percent of these women work part-time. Bulgaria, on the other hand, falls below the target with 55 percent of women in employment, but only 2.7 percent of women work part-time, as this is not traditionally an employment option.[2]

For these and other reasons, the picture of gender equality in the new Member States is one of patchy implementation and progress.[3] However, as this conclusion could also apply to old Member States – some of which have been working towards this goal for decades – this is perhaps not so surprising.

Future Prospects

Accession is the beginning, rather than the end, of a debate about the role of the EU as a promoter of equality in Central and Eastern Europe. Enlargement should also herald a new chapter in debates within the 'old' Member States about future gender equality policy – not least due to the increasing dependence of those states on migrants from new Member States to fill gaps in the employment market, often in low-paid occupations, with serious repercussions for family and domestic life. Recent moves to extend the scope of EU gender policy to embrace areas such as domestic violence and health[4] require the development of wider and more inclusive processes, embracing viewpoints from all over the EU. However, progress on gender equality within Member States – especially the new Member States and candidate countries – will depend on the more gradual evolution of domestic attitudes, public institutions, and behaviour. Better statistics, new laws and regulations, and new gender equality bodies will help, but common efforts from many actors are required for any real improvements to emerge.

This article was written by Fiona Beveridge and published in the new issue of the tri-annual newsletter *Development and Transition*. The issue mainly focuses on the gender issue.

To read other articles please visit www.developmentandtransition.net

[1] For example, see Plantenga, J. and Remery, C. (2006), *The Gender Pay Gap: Origins and Policy Responses. A Comparative Review of 30 European Countries*, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Brussels: The European Commission.

[2] All figures from EUROSTAT, 2006. In Bulgaria, rates of part-time female employment are particularly low, but they are generally low across Central and Eastern Europe, compared with 'old' Member States.

[3] For statistical information and an overview, see the EU's Annual Reports on equality between women and men, at http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/gender_equality/gender_mainstreaming/activity_reports_en.html For States outside the EU see e.g. Open Society Institute *On the Road to the EU: Monitoring Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in South Eastern Europe*, May 2006.

[4] European Commission (2006). *Roadmap for Equality Between Women and Men for the Period 2006-10*. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/news/2006/mar/com06092_roadmap_en.pdf.

