



1106 AEFJN NEWS English

1. Churches showing more initiative on stemming human rights abuse

“How can churches respond to human rights violations and end the impunity enjoyed by state officials?” was one of the main questions at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC) in Jamaica. Participants agreed that church response, while not easy, is both possible and necessary. Today many churches have adopted the philosophy that there can be no peace without justice. A crucial aspect of social healing is the removal of those responsible for grave violations of human rights committed by the hand, or at the behest, of state leaders. In so doing, justice can be served, even belatedly, years after a crime was perpetrated.

<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/news-management/eng/a/article/1634/churches-showing-more-ini.html>

AFRICA

2. Investment growth benefits few

While foreign direct investment in the least developed countries (LDCs) of Africa has risen sharply over the past decade, 80 percent went to resource-rich economies and had little impact on employment creation. The 2001 Least Developed Countries (LDC) Conference adopted foreign direct investment (FDI) as one of the tools to foster development in poor countries. Ten years later the study of UNCTAD “FDI in LDCs: Lessons learned from the decade 2001 – 2010”, shows that despite the overall growth, foreign investment has not lived up to the high expectations in terms of development that were set up 10 years ago. <http://www.ips.org/africa/2011/05/africa-investment-growth-benefiting-only-some-poor-states/>

3. East Africa - Egypt ready to talk over allocation of Nile waters

The wave of democratic change sweeping North Africa in the past few months has presented an opportunity for upstream Nile countries to overhaul the colonial-era policies that had given Egypt the lion's share of the Nile waters and veto power over hydro projects on the river. The tension between Egypt, Sudan and upstream countries over the construction of the Ethiopia's Grand Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile seems to have eased after Egypt said it was ready for talks. It is hoped that the latest move will culminate in enhancing dialogue on the Nile Basin Co-operative Framework Agreement (CFA). <http://www.jamiiforums.com/business-and-economic-forum/133156-egypt-ready-to-talk-over-allocation-of-nile-waters.html#post1948406>

4. Cash Drain from Poorest African Countries

The 48 countries classified by the United Nations as LDCs [Least Developed Countries], 33 of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa, lost \$246 billion in illicit financial flows (money going out of the country) from 1990 to 2008, according to a new report from Global Financial Integrity prepared for the UNDP. Six of the top ten countries in cumulative outflows were in Africa, included Angola (2nd), Lesotho (3rd), Chad (4th), Uganda (7th), Ethiopia (9th), and Zambia (10th). The sums involved are very high, over \$20 billion a year by 2008. It is difficult to estimate where the money goes, certainly to offshore financial centres and also to banks in developed countries, both identified as "secrecy jurisdictions" because of lack of transparency of data on financial transactions.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201105301876.html>

MEDICINES

5. Indian drug firms use S.Africa to access continent

The three big Indian laboratories, Ranbaxy, Cipla et Dr Reddy's, have shared among themselves the lion's share of the drugs market in Africa thanks to their strong presence in South Africa and to their reduced-price antiretrovirals (ARVs) that have helped slow down the ravages of AIDS. The Indian laboratories have chosen to appoint local people to lead their South African subsidiaries, unlike most multinationals in the country. Cipla is listed on the Johannesburg stock market, thus contributing to the funds flowing into South Africa. Generic medicines offer the same active ingredients as brand names and have been the driving force of the Indian pharmaceutical industry. 14% of their exports went to Africa in 2009.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jx6PKBTvbeWzqLi3K13e8-0WBmhw?docId=CNG.cb370cb25e96ecba584d2568a4f90642.591>

6. Lower Prices for HIV-AIDS Medicines in Developing Countries

Further price reductions on key antiretroviral (ARV) drug regimes used to treat HIV/AIDS in the developing world have been announced. Applying price reductions to 'next-generation' ARVs in place since 2008 will generate global savings of at least \$600 million over the next three years, making HIV treatment more widely accessible. New research recently published proves that treating people living with AIDS immediately not only keeps them alive but is also an effective tool to prevent transmission. Making ARVs more affordable can save countless lives.

<http://www.unitaid.eu/en/resources/news/331-clinton-health-access-initiative-unitaid-and-dfid-announce-lower-prices-for-hiv-aids-medicines-in-developing-countries.html>

TRADE

7. Doha talks on trade may need a reality check

The decade-old Doha round of World Trade Organization negotiations may have to be revamped or ended, U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk said. Kirk's assessment was the most emphatic statement from President Barack Obama's administration that the long-running talks are foundering. Outside analysts such as former U.S. Trade Representative Susan Schwab have called the negotiations "doomed."

<http://www.bilaterals.org/spip.php?article19522>

8. EU reduces the number of developing countries that receive trade preferences

The European Commission has launched a proposal for reforming the system of trade agreements known as the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), through which the EU provides preferential access to the EU market to developing countries, in the form of reduced tariffs for their goods when entering the EU market. It has however to be noted that this represents an increase of tariffs for ACP countries which hitherto benefited from duty free access to the EU market thanks to the Lomé Conventions. Expected to come into force from 2014, the review would see the number of beneficiary countries of this scheme reduced from 176 to around 80. "We want to adapt the current rules to the changing global landscape", declared Commissioner for Trade Karel De Gucht at a press conference on 10 May.

http://www.eurostep.org/wcm/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1573&Itemid=223

9. Diamonds: Still a bloody affair

For a worldwide annual production valued, according to some of the latest estimates, at more than \$8.5 billion with sales topping the \$58 billion mark, the diamond industry remains quite conspicuously on the sidelines of global political concerns, yet the problems remain. In its 11th year of operation, internal cracks in the Kimberley Process are visible, as Zimbabwean, Ivorian and Congolese undocumented diamonds continue to trickle into the global market via third parties such as Mozambique.

<http://reliefweb.int/node/402825>

CLIMATE CHANGE

10. Carbon Exchange, a distraction from the real solution to climate change

The Africa Carbon Exchange (ACX) launched in Nairobi on March 24 is being publicised as the hub of climate change business that will help solve the development gap in Africa. There are plans to replicate the exchange in other African regional blocs. However, “carbon emissions exchanges” in Europe and the United States have suffered many blows at the expense of the environment and the citizens’ money. Before that happens in Africa, governments and parliaments should examine the challenges, the environmental and food security risks and the resources needed to adapt to climate change. There is a real danger that carbon offsets that allow industrialised countries to continue polluting will become a major diversion from the real climate change challenges that Africa faces: adaptation and ensuring resilience of communities.

<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/73132>

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

11. Cutting food waste to feed the world

Roughly one third of the food produced in the world for human consumption every year — approximately 1.3 billion tonnes — gets lost or wasted, according to a FAO study. Every year, consumers in rich countries waste almost as much food (222 million tonnes) as the entire net food production of sub-Saharan Africa (230 million tonnes). While **food waste** is more a problem in industrialized countries, most often caused by both retailers and consumers throwing perfectly edible foodstuffs into the trash, **food losses** — occurring at the production, harvest, post-harvest and processing phases — are most important in developing countries, due to poor infrastructure, low levels of technology and low investment in the food production systems.

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/74192/icode/>

12. EU renewable energy targets may boost land grabbing in developing countries

In the ‘Renewable Energy Roadmap’ of January 2007, the EU adopted the target of meeting 20% of its energy needs with renewable energies by 2020. This decision has come under increasing scrutiny from civil society, as it will cause widespread ‘land-grabbing’ in developing countries. The new Action Aid report “Fuelling evictions — community cost of EU biofuels boom”, shows how the EU’s renewables targets may have disastrous impacts in developing countries. The report cites the example of Dakatcha Woodlands in Kenya’ coast region. Due to an Italian biofuel company’s plans to establish a plantation, 20,000 people are at risk from losing their homes and being evicted. The communities’ opinions are not considered and there is no compensation for forcing them to leave their home.

<http://www.actionaid.org/eu/publications/fuelling-evictions-community-cost-eu-biofuels-boom>

Video: <http://www.actionaid.org/eu/what-we-do/biofuels-dakatcha-woodlands-kenya>

SMALL ARMS

13. Survivors of gun violence Network

IANSA, the Network on small arms of which AEFJN is a member, is establishing a “Survivor’s Network” to provide long-term support and engagement with those who have been directly affected by gun violence. The Survivor’s Network will advocate and campaign for the rights of survivors in relation to stronger gun laws, and through on-going international small arms control and disarmament processes. The first opportunity will be at the UN July 11-25 PrepCom to strengthen the outcome of Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) negotiations in 2012. IANSA aims to ensure

that survivors of gun violence have the opportunity to engage with the ATT process at the PrepCom, through to the ATT Negotiating Conference in 2012, and beyond.

<http://iansa.org/resource/2011/05/survivors-participation-at-the-att-prepcom-11-15-july-2011>