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***Topic of the Month: Zimbabwe Cholera Crisis***

**Death toll from Zimbabwe's cholera outbreak tops 1,000 – UN**

*18 December 2008*



**UNHCR Emergency Fund**

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The United Nations said today that the death toll from the worst cholera outbreak in Zimbabwe's history has now surpassed 1,100 and the epidemic continues to spread to new areas of the capital, Harare.

In addition, the number of suspected cases as of 17 December has now reached nearly 20,600, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

"The UN is planning for a worst-case scenario of 60,000 cases before the end of the rainy season," UN spokesperson Marie Okabe told reporters. "That's based on an estimate that half of the country's population is potentially at risk of contracting cholera."

In addition to affecting nine out of the country's ten provinces, the outbreak

has also spilled across borders into South Africa, Botswana, and Mozambique.

OCHA said cases and fatalities of cholera – an acute intestinal infection caused by contaminated food or water – have decreased substantially in areas where aid agencies are present.

The UN World Health Organization (WHO) has already flown in medical supplies to treat 50,000 people. The agency is also working with OCHA to coordinate the response through a donor-funded Cholera Command and Control Centre.

In addition, the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) is intensifying its support to cholera treatment centres across the country.

[More Details](#)

**UNICEF steps up assistance efforts to Zimbabweans amid humanitarian crisis**

*3 December 2008*

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is intensifying its assistance humanitarian suffering engulfing





This tent is part of a UNICEF cholera treatment and control centre

to Zimbabwe's swelling population of children in need, outlining a four-month response plan to deal with the Southern African country's multiple crises, including a deadly cholera outbreak, the closure of many hospitals and the collapse of the education sector.

The agency announced the 120-day plan yesterday in Harare, the capital, as it warned that women and children

Zimbabwe, where the economy is largely shattered and severe food shortages have become standard.

Schools and hospitals are closing, while teachers, nurses and doctors are not reporting for duty. Under the 120-day emergency response plan, UNICEF will focus on providing basic social services to a country where millions of people lack reliable access to food, water or decent health care.

[More Details](#)

## Peace and Security

28 November 2008

### Security Council condemns 'reprehensible' terrorist attacks in Mumbai

The United Nations Security Council has strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Mumbai that started on 26 November, which included the taking of hostages and caused numerous deaths and injuries in India's financial capital.

The attacks targeted two major hotel complexes and several other locations in India's largest city, leaving at least 140 people dead and more than 300 wounded.

The Mumbai attacks are just the latest in a series of acts of terrorism to strike the South Asian nation over the course of the past year. The north-eastern state of Assam and the cities of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Jaipur and Delhi have all fallen victim to the scourge.

The Council reiterated in its statement that "All acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation".

[More Details](#)

### Dozens of nations sign up to UN-backed treaty banning use of cluster bombs

3rd December 2008

Representatives of around 100 countries gathered in Oslo, Norway, today to sign an historic United Nations-sponsored treaty formally renouncing the use of cluster bombs, a weapon that frequently maims and kills scores of refugees, nurses, journalists, passers-by, women and men working in fields and orchards, and children helping with household chores or at play for decades after hostilities have ceased.

At least 15 countries and a number of non-State actors are known to have

used cluster munitions in at least 32 countries or territories. Thirty-four countries have produced more than 200 types of cluster munitions. Billions of these munitions are stockpiled in 75 countries.

"The conclusion of this Convention indicates a significant and fundamental change in the position of many governments that, until recently, regarded cluster munitions as essential to their security policies and military doctrines," the Secretary-General noted.

[More Details](#)

## Health and Poverty

### 3 million children immunized against measles in Côte d'Ivoire

December 2008



Peace & Security:

- [DR Congo: talks between government, rebels making headway - UN](#)



Cluster munitions designed to disperse over an area of seven football fields





A child is immunised in Côte d'Ivoire

December 2008

In November 2008, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire conducted a nationwide measles immunization campaign targeting children from nine months to five years.

Côte d'Ivoire has suffered from significant periods of crisis, beginning with a coup in 1999 and then the conflict in 2002. With a peace agreement signed, general elections are expected to take place in 2009. According to the WHO-UNICEF immunization coverage estimates, in

2007, only 67% of children received one dose of measles vaccine by their first birthday through routine health services.

Organized with support from WHO, the Measles Initiative and other partner agencies, this year's campaign aimed to immunize 3.2 million children. The objective of the campaign was to provide all children under the age of five with a second opportunity for measles vaccination.

[More Details](#)

## Human Rights

### DR Congo: concern for displaced grows as girls shot, woman raped near UN camp

12th December 2008

Armed militia this morning shot two young girls who were sheltered at a United Nations camp in the conflict-ridden eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), from which the Organization's refugee agency has been relocating thousands of displaced people due to concerns for their safety.

The five-year-old girl died instantly and the seven-year-old was left critically injured and is fighting for her life in a local hospital. A woman was also raped by armed men close to the camp in Kibati, north of Goma, the day before the shooting, according to

the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Expressing extreme concern for the safety of the Congolese civilians in their two camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kibati, UNHCR have started to voluntarily transfer IDPs to a new camp west of Goma, the capital of North Kivu.

"We have so far moved 616 families, or 1,780 IDPs, to sites in the Mugunga area," UNHCR spokesperson Ron Redmond told reporters in Geneva today.

[More Details](#)

## UNAA News & Events

### UNAA Member Christmas Drinks

UNAA member Christmas Drinks were held on Tuesday, 9th December at The Apartment on Little Bourke St.

The night was a fitting end to another great year for the Association, with many new faces and friends of the Association joining with us to celebrate 2008 and the holiday season.

New Executive Committee members



Adam Blight, Graeme Hunter and Murray McInnis were in attendance and members were given the opportunity to meet and speak with them and other board members in an informal setting.

Thank you to all those who came along to the Christmas Drinks, and we look forward to seeing more of our members at events in 2009.

## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Wishing all UNAA members and their families a safe and happy festive season.

We thank you for all your support during this year and we look forward to continuing our work with your support in 2009.



### Model UN Conference: Geelong College

The Association's extensive Model United Nations Conference program concluded for 2008 with a two day Conference at Geelong College on the 4th and 5th December.

Approximately 120 year 9 students were given the opportunity to debate and discuss the topic *Terrorism – A Threat to International Peace and Security? A Global Response*.

In addition to the formal Conference proceedings, students were also involved in a wide variety of cultural activities, such as karate and meditation workshops, and Ghanaian African drumming.

The Model UN Conference program will continue to grow in 2009, with the introduction of a conference format designed for the corporate sector.

### UN Observances

#### 20 December: International Human Solidarity Day

Established by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 2005 as an initiative in the fight against poverty, International Human Solidarity Day is a celebration of unity in diversity, and aims to raise awareness of the importance of solidarity and, in particular, the Millennium Development Goals.

[More Details](#)

#### 27 January: International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust

*"Denying historical facts, especially on such an important subject as the Holocaust, is just not acceptable. Nor is it acceptable to call for the elimination of any State or people. I would like to see this fundamental principle respected both in rhetoric and in practice by all the members of the international community."*

- United Nations Secretary-General  
Ban Ki-moon

[More Details](#)



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