

Recent news from WHO

- WHO and other United Nations agencies made the first high-level international visit since last month's peace accord to the central west Sudanese town of Abyei on 19 June. The mission was to plan for the **reconstruction of health facilities** and other vital infrastructure in the town, as well as for the return of thousands of people.
- China and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have made impressive strides in tackling the risk of contamination from **unsafe blood** by reaching close to 100% voluntary blood donation. Their efforts to increase their safe blood base were promoted as models for other countries to follow, on the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, on 14 June.
- The first ever **HIV/tuberculosis** Global Leaders' Forum called for action to strengthen the response to this lethal dual infection. The forum, held in New York on 9 June, was the largest gathering of world leaders at a tuberculosis event. Speakers included UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan.
- Nearly 3 million people are now receiving **antiretroviral therapy** in low- and middle-income countries, according to a new report launched 2 June by WHO, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and United Nations Children's Fund. The 3 by 5 campaign that sought to have 3 million people living with HIV on treatment by 2005 has now been met. The report, *Towards universal access: scaling up priority HIV/AIDS interventions in the health sector*, can be found at: <http://www.who.int/hiv/mediacentre/2008progressreport/en/index.htm>
- WHO urged governments to protect the world's 1.8 billion young people by imposing a **ban on all tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship**. WHO's call to action came on the eve of World No Tobacco Day on 31 May. Recent studies show that the more young people are exposed to tobacco advertising, the more likely they are to start smoking. Despite this, only 5% of the world's population is covered by comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship. Tobacco companies, meanwhile, continue targeting young people by falsely associating use of tobacco products with qualities such as glamour, energy and sex appeal.
- WHO and its Health Cluster partners in Myanmar launched a six-month action plan on 30 May to provide immediate **health care for cyclone survivors** and to support longer-term efforts to rebuild the country's ravaged health system.

For more about these and other WHO news items please see: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre>