

Resource Extraction

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The credibility of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, an initiative to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the multi-billion dollar diamond market, is being questioned by NGO activists ahead of a three day international meeting in Namibia on 23 June. The KPCS calls on governments, the diamond industry, and concerned NGOs to work to eliminate trade in conflict or blood diamonds. DN

Latest events in the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence: 23 June

Media: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Africa.htm#Cha

* Burundi

Dagropass and Colonie des Pionniers du Développement appeared on Public Radio Africa on 18 June to argue that the proliferation of small arms is hindering development. Abel Ntahombaye said the weapons threatened economic development and peace: "Even the elections in 2010 will be jeopardised by this issue." Jacques Ntibarikure added: "The government of Burundi must make every effort for a strict and effective control of small arms and light weapons by signing the Arms Trade Treaty."

* Central African Republic

NGO Femmes de Paix autour du Monde worked in partnership with UNDP to organise a conference and rally highlighting the dangers of gun use. This was supported by a press release and poster campaign.

* Chad

Céline Larmadji, interim coordinator of the Committee of Appeal for Peace and Reconciliation, told a press conference on 20 June that around two million small arms were circulating in Chad. She said the almost permanent sense of crisis in the country had promoted the circulation of small arms at all levels of the population; in the markets, in the streets and at schools.

Media: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Africa.htm#Cha

* Somalia

Somali Women Education Campaigners (SWEC) discussed the problems of small arms in live hour-long radio and TV programmes with SIMBA radio and Universal TV on 16 and 17 June. Speakers included NGO members, academics and artists. All of those who phoned in called for measures to stop the flow of small arms into Somalia. The programmes were also broadcast by Peace Voice Radio. On 18 June, university professors and school teachers discussed the impact of gun violence on educational opportunities during a workshop held by SWEC. On 19 and 20 June SWEC held three hour sessions in internally displaced people (IDP) camps to raise awareness of gun violence. The IDPs reported on their experiences of gun violence, and acknowledged that most guns are used by young people and are widely available at popular shopping areas and markets. They were interviewed by Peace Voice Radio, Simba Radio and Universal TV about their experiences.

FIAN demands profound changes to address the dramatic increase of hunger World Food Summit to focus on the Human Right to Food

Rome/Heidelberg, 22.06.09 - FIAN, the international Human Rights organization for the Right to Food, calls for profound changes in international food-related policies and governance. FIAN welcomes the decision made by the FAO Council to hold the third World Food Summit in November 2009. This announcement was made last Friday in Rome by the FAO Director General; it was stated that the goals of the Summit are to solidify a strong and effective commitment from World leaders to eradicate hunger by 2025 and to address the root causes of the present situation through the full implementation of the Human Right to Food.

Latest FAO figures published on June 19, 2009 indicate that 1.02 billion people, more than ever in human history, are undernourished worldwide. This figure is about 100 million more than last year and represents around one-sixth of all humanity.

FIAN Secretary General Flavio Valente stated: "We are living in a crucial moment. We need a profound change in international food-related policies and governance architecture. We definitively support a World Food Summit which prioritises attacking the structural causes of hunger and mainstreaming the Right to Food on all levels."

"We share the call of the FAO Council for a more coherent and effective system of governance with regards to world food security. We clearly need more accountability of governments and intergovernmental agencies. Real participation of civil society is essential, especially from peasants and farmers movements, indigenous peoples, fisher folks, rural women and agricultural workers. If the chronic food crisis is to be tackled, their voices must be heard." states Valente.

Further information:

Flavio Valente, +49-172-139 4447

Martin Wolpold-Bosien wolpold-bosien@fian.org, +49-177-339 1263

FAO figures on hunger: www.fao.org

FAO Council on Food Summit: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/016/k5140e.pdf>

See also <http://www.fian.org/news/press-releases/fian-demands-profound-changes-to-address-the-dramatic-increase-of-hunger>

FIAN Belgium – 35, Rue Van Elewyck, 1050 Bruxelles - Belgium

Mail to : fian@fian.be - Tel +32 (0)2 640 84 17 - GSM +32 (0)475 84 56 24

www.fian.be - www.face-it-act-now.org

FOOD CRISIS in AFRICA

Source: <http://www.irinnews.org/>

Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) - An increasing number of Africans living in urban areas is finding it harder to put enough food on the table, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has warned.

Released on 28 May, the report, which was jointly prepared by the ECA and the African Union, is an assessment of the continent's economic performance in 2008. It also examines prospects for 2009.

"In many countries, urban populations are finding that there is food on the shelves, but they cannot afford to buy it," it noted. Citing the case of Liberia and Guinea, it said governments there were struggling to import enough to feed their people.

"Pastoralists in Djibouti are discovering that sales of vital livestock fetch very little grain on the market, while in Mozambique and Uganda, rural farmers can hardly afford to buy the seeds and fertilizers they need to grow their family's food, let alone reap the benefit of high food prices," the report said.

"Africa is one of the most affected regions by the high food prices," the ECA noted. "Food prices peaked in June 2008 and declined by more than 50 percent on average during the second half of the year. At the end of 2008, they stood at the level of 2005 but were still considerably higher than the 2000 level."

According to the report, the decline in world market prices had slowly worked its way into domestic prices in many developing countries. "Still we have food shortages in many African countries because of drought and conflict situations. To avert the consequences, emergency aid was needed in many countries, including those in East Africa."

"The recent food crisis and looming starvation are threats to political and social stability, especially in east and west Africa and in conflict countries," the report warned.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food prices had remained high in many developing countries and access to food by the poor remained threatened by loss of employment, income and other effects of the global economic crisis.

AGGRAVATION DRAMATIQUE DE LA FAIM

www.bilaterals.org

Communiqué de presse

FIAN RECLAME DES CHANGEMENTS EN PROFONDEUR

POUR COMBATTRE L'AGGRAVATION DRAMATIQUE DE LA FAIM

Le droit à l'alimentation à l'ordre du jour du prochain Sommet mondial de l'alimentation.

Bruxelles 23 juin 2009- FIAN, l'organisation internationale des Droits de l'Homme pour le droit à l'alimentation, appelle à des changements en profondeur dans la politique internationale sur l'alimentation et la gouvernance du système alimentaire mondial. FIAN salue la décision prise par le Conseil de la FAO d'organiser le troisième Sommet mondial de l'alimentation en novembre 2009, selon une déclaration faite vendredi dernier par le directeur général de la FAO. L'objectif de ce Sommet sera d'obtenir un engagement ferme de la part des leaders mondiaux d'éradiquer la faim d'ici 2025 et de s'attaquer aux causes de la crise actuelle en mettant en oeuvre de manière effective le droit à l'alimentation.

Le dernier rapport de la FAO, publié le 19 juin 2009, indique que 1,02 milliard de personnes souffrent de la faim dans le monde. C'est le nombre le plus élevé de l'histoire, environ 100 millions de plus que l'année dernière et un sixième de la population mondiale.

Le secrétaire général de FIAN, Flavio Valente, constate : « Nous vivons un moment crucial. Il faut des changements en profondeur dans la politique internationale liée à l'alimentation et à la gouvernance du système alimentaire. Nous appuyons un Sommet mondial de l'alimentation qui donne la priorité au combat contre les causes structurelles de la faim et qui intègre le droit à l'alimentation à tous les niveaux.

Nous partageons l'appel de la FAO à un système de gouvernance plus cohérent et effectif en ce qui concerne la sécurité alimentaire mondiale. Il faut que les gouvernements et les agences intergouvernementales répondent davantage de leurs actes. La participation de la société civile est essentielle, surtout celle des mouvements paysans, des peuples indigènes, des pêcheurs artisans, des femmes rurales et des travailleurs agricoles. S'il s'agit de s'attaquer à la crise alimentaire chronique, leurs voix doivent être entendues », affirme Valente.

Plus d'infos :

Flavio Valente, +49-172-139 4447

Martin Wolpold-Bosien wolpold-bosien@fian.org, +49-177-339 1263

Données de la FAO: www.fao.org

Conseil de la FAO sur le Sommet mondial de l'alimentation: <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/016/k5140e.pdf>

Voir aussi <http://www.fian.org/news/press-releases/fian-demands-profound-changes-to-address-the-dramatic-increase-of-hunger>

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Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) - An increasing number of Africans living in urban areas are finding it harder to put enough food on the table, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has warned.

"The food crisis and shortages are still there in some African countries," said Adam Elhiraika, ECA economic affairs officer. "We see [a] crisis when we do not have enough income to buy the food we need."

Elhiraika, coordinator of a team which prepared the ECA's Economic Report on Africa 2009, told IRIN in Addis Ababa: "We have less purchasing power. We also still have food shortages because many African countries do not have the capacity to respond to demand."

Released on 28 May, the report, which was jointly prepared by the ECA and the African Union, is an assessment of the continent's economic performance in 2008. It also examines prospects for 2009.

"In many countries, urban populations are finding that there is food on the shelves, but they cannot afford to buy it," it noted. Citing the case of Liberia and Guinea, it said governments there were struggling to import enough to feed their people.

"Pastoralists in Djibouti are discovering that sales of vital livestock fetch very little grain on the market, while in Mozambique and Uganda, rural farmers can hardly afford to buy the seeds and fertilizers they need to grow their family's food, let alone reap the benefit of high food prices," the report said.

Across Africa, food commodity prices are likely to rise in the next 10 years, even though a decline is expected in 2009 and 2010 as supply and demand respond to high prices resulting from the global economic recession.

"Africa is one of the most affected regions by the high food prices," the ECA noted. "Food prices peaked in June 2008 and declined by more than 50 percent on average during the second half of the year. At the end of 2008, they stood at the level of 2005 but were still considerably higher than the 2000 level."

According to the report, the decline in world market prices had slowly worked its way into domestic prices in many developing countries.

"Still we have food shortages in many African countries because of drought and conflict situations," Elhiraika said.

"We see [a] crisis when we do not have enough income to buy the food we need"
Emergency aid

To avert the consequences, emergency aid was needed in many countries, including those in East Africa.

"The recent food crisis and looming starvation are threats to political and social stability, especially in east and west Africa and in conflict countries," the report warned.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food prices had remained high in many developing countries and access to food by the poor remained threatened by loss of employment, income and other effects of the global economic crisis.

However, in a Food Outlook on 4 June, FAO said the world food supply looked less vulnerable to shocks than it was during the 2008 food crisis.

"In spite of strong gains in recent weeks, international prices of most agricultural commodities have fallen in 2009 from their 2008 heights, an indication that many markets are slowly returning into balance," it said.

The improvement was largely in cereal production - the critical sector for food security - after record production in 2008 overshoot original forecasts. The bumper crop had also facilitated replenishment of global reserves to pre-crisis levels.

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More investment in production will not cure African food crisis

Hilaire Avril interviews Gilles Saint-Martin, Paris 5/11/2009

<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=46793>

The food crisis in African states will not be solved by investment to spur agricultural production because the problem is not food output but poverty that is making food unaffordable for urban Africans. That is the argument of Gilles Saint-Martin, the head of international relations for the French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development, known by its French acronym CIRAD. CIRAD's approach to sustainable development focuses on the long-term ecological, economic and social consequences of change in developing communities and countries.

Saint-Martin talks to Hilaire Avril about the dire need for investment in African agricultural research; the effects that the economic partnership agreements will have on food production; and whether the *African Union* should adopt its own *Common Agricultural Policy* (CAP). The author notes that agricultural production has steadily increased across Africa since the 1960s and more so since the 1980s. Yet poverty makes food unaffordable for urban Africans. Regional policies that foster rural activity and help urban populations access affordable food are needed, and the African research capacities destroyed by IMF policies must be "rebuilt, created or consolidated to preserve limited resources and secure food supply," he concludes.

Food sovereignty: A new model for a human right

<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/comment/56270>

Following UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Olivier De Schutter's comments at the 17th session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), Vía Campesina and Friends of the Earth International give their response to the special rapporteur's comments. While highlighting the recommendations and broad understanding that they share with De Schutter, the authors' statement emphasises the centrality of 'food sovereignty', namely, the right of different communities and peoples to control their own territories. This the authors contend is a process that goes beyond producers' mere 'participation' in high-level decision-making; it is one which actively positions farmers and peasants at the centre of agricultural production and control.

Uganda: Iran to fund oil processing in country

[New Vision \(Uganda\)](#) - May 18, 2009.

Kampala (Uganda) — Iran has agreed to fund the entire value chain of Uganda's oil production. Iran will also jointly fund the construction of an oil refinery in Uganda. The agreement was reached during President Yoweri Museveni's three-day visit to Iran.

A communiqué issued at the end of the visit said the two countries will also expand co-operation in agriculture, especially agro-processing, investment, energy, mining, industry, vocational training, air transport, banking, ICT, public security and foreign relations. The two nations would also carve out a free trade zone.

Iran agreed to train Ugandans in its University of Petroleum Studies and other institutions in Iran in the relevant fields of petroleum," a statement issued by State House said. "Iran also expressed its readiness to invest in the entire value chain of Uganda's petroleum industry."

On international affairs, the Presidents reviewed the situation in the Middle East and Afghanistan as well as the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa. They reiterated their commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. "They also re-affirmed the right of developing countries to develop nuclear energy for peaceful (development) purposes."

Government probes North Mara Gold Mine over river pollution

Nicholas Bariyo, Dowjones Business News ,

http://www.easybourse.com/bourse-actualite/marches/tanzania-government-probes-north-mara-!_gold-mine-over-670572

The Tanzanian government is investigating the operations at *North Mara Gold Mine* following a chemical spill at the mine which polluted the nearby Tigithe river leaving thousands of residents without water for

domestic use. A government team is investigating the circumstances which led to the spill as well as mitigation measures put in place by *Barrick Tanzania Ltd.*, owners of the mine. "Investigations will establish whether the mine's waste disposal measures comply with Tanzanian laws».

Chacha Benedict Wambura, the executive director of the foundation HELP told that the government had already started showing signs of siding with the company. "The law is clear, the government is supposed to protect the environment and its citizens. The matter was brought to the attention of relevant government departments last week but nothing has been done," he said. According to Wambura, the Tigithe River is a source of water for more than 2,534 households in the region. Crops and pastures along the river banks have dried up and up to four heads of cattle died after drinking the water last week, *Foundation HELP* said. Wambura said the management only took action after locals threatened to block roads towards the mine, a charge denied by *Barrick Gold Corp. (ABX)*, the Canadian owners of the mine.

Last week, the local unit *Barrick Tanzania Ltd.* said it had taken water samples from the river, and the acid level was back to normal after rising following the spill on Tuesday. The company partly blames the spill on vandalism of the mine's waste pipes, by locals. North Mara has had stormy relations with local residents and both sides blame each other for strained relations.

African finance ministers to discuss impact of economic crisis

<http://tinyurl.com/pk2ujo>African ministers of finance, planning and economic development have scheduled a meeting in Cairo, Egypt, 6-7 June to discuss measures required to deal with the global economic crisis, a UN think-tank said here. The Addis Ababa-based UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) said on Thursday the meeting would explore ways of dealing with the effects of the global economic crisis through enhanced fiscal planning and ways of raising funds internally with in Africa.

Arms and air transport

www.africafocus.org

"Air cargo companies involved in illicit or destabilizing arms transfers to African conflict zones have also been repeatedly contracted to deliver humanitarian aid and support peacekeeping operations, according to a report released today by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). The report reveals that 90 per cent of the air cargo companies identified in arms trafficking-related reports have also been used ... to transport humanitarian aid, peacekeepers and peacekeeping equipment."
- Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

The report provides extensive documentation on air transport companies related to conflicts in six African countries and on the parallel involvement of these companies in humanitarian aid and peacekeeping contracts. It also proposes measures to track and sanction such companies, with an emphasis on the potential role of the European Commission.

Church people use media to influence European Union trade negotiations

World Alliance of Reformed Churches www.warc.ch/

In a groundbreaking initiative, the *United Church of Zambia* is using *street theatre* and *broadcast media* to encourage church members to get involved in efforts to influence negotiations between the *European Union* and their country on trade issues. At a time when the majority of countries in Africa are involved in bilateral talks with the *European Union* about the terms of *Economic and Partnership Agreements*, intended to open up African markets through deregulation, church people are learning from popular media about the importance of telling their government not to agree to policies which would affect health and education services.