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INTERNATIONAL  
DES DROITS DES ENFANTS

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BUREAU  
FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

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LOS DERECHOS DEL NIÑO

# Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Newsletter

May 2010

Submitted by: the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR)

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## **1. Global Developments on Children's Rights**

### **Save the Children Releases New Report, Launches Campaign with Ad Council: "For a Mother's Day Gift with Lasting Appeal, Invest in Female Health Workers"**

4 May 2010 – To address the global shortfall of 4.3 million health care workers needed to end preventable maternal and child deaths, countries must invest in female front-line health care workers, Save the Children says in its new *State of the World's Mothers* report. Annually, 8.8 million children die before their fifth birthday and nearly 350,000 women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. Most of these deaths could be prevented if skilled and equipped health care providers were available in communities and clinics.

[Full article](#) – Save the Children

### **New UN working group on sport pushes for child protection and education**

6 May 2010 – A new addition to the United Nations Sport for Development and Peace office has held its inaugural meeting with dozens of government representatives agreeing to cooperate on using sport to support children and youth development. Representatives from 50 countries and various UN agencies, including the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), met in Geneva to discuss child protection in sport. They also discussed the uses of sport to strengthen child and youth education, and sport to enhance transferable skills and employment opportunities.

[Full article](#) – UN News Center

### **New UN report urges greater global efforts to end child labour**

8 May 2010 – The Global Report on Child Labour assessed progress made so far and highlighted the challenges that remain if the goal of eliminating the worst forms of child labour by the target date of 2016 is to be achieved. "Progress is uneven: neither fast enough nor comprehensive enough to reach the goals that we have set," said Juan Somavia, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO). "New and large-scale efforts are needed. The situation calls for a re-energized campaign against child labour..." The report breaks down data by age, gender and region. It showed that Africa has the highest incidence of children working, making it among the key remaining challenges in tackling child labour. Other challenges include a much-needed breakthrough in agriculture, where most child labourers work, and the need to address often hidden forms of child labour.

[Full article](#) – UN News Center

### **UN agencies highlight problem of child labour in fisheries**

10 May 2010 – The plight of child workers in fisheries largely goes unnoticed because data on the issue is not readily available, a group of experts brought together by the United Nations has warned, saying possible solutions to the problem will be unveiled at a forum that opened in The Hague today. "Worldwide, 132 million girls and boys aged 5 to 14 years old work in agriculture – this figure includes children working in fisheries and aquaculture,"

said Rolf Willmann of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) Fisheries and Aquaculture Department. "Child labour often reinforces a vicious cycle of poverty, has a negative impact on literacy rates and school attendance and limits children's mental and physical health and development," according to Mr. Willmann.

[Full article](#) – UN News Center

### **Better baby care key to reducing deaths, reports UN health agency**

10 May 2010 – Better care for babies during the first month after they are born is key to reducing child mortality rates in developing countries, the United Nations health agency said today, in an update on measures that are essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). An estimated 40 per cent of deaths of children under the age of five occur in the first month of life, most in the first week, the UN World Health Organization (WHO) said in a new report. The report – compiled annually and based on more than 100 health indicators reported by WHO's 193 Member States – also showed that deaths among children under the age of five have dropped by 30 per cent from 12.5 million in 1990 to 8.8 million in 2008.

### **UNICEF calls for renewed efforts and investment to combat child labour**

11 May 2010 – "Identifying the most vulnerable children requires new efforts and increased funding," UNICEF said today, on the opening day of The Hague Global Child Labour Conference. "To achieve long-term results for tomorrow's children, we must invest in creating new solutions today." Ten years after the coming into force of the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (WFCL) - the most widely-ratified international labour convention - and just six years ahead of the global target of eliminating this problem, UNICEF has partnered with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank in this global gathering hosted by the Dutch Government from 10 to 11 May. The conference brings together 80 governments, UN agencies, multinational companies and NGO's to highlight the reality that child labour is significantly undermining progress towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. At the conference, UNICEF will call upon governments and donors to increase investment in accessible, quality education, support the establishment of social protection measures, generate sustainable livelihoods for families and, above all, create the conditions for a protective environment that covers all children. For further information, please visit <http://www.childlabourconference2010.com>.

### **Countries agree to UN-backed roadmap to curb child labour**

12 May 2010 – At the end of a two-day Global Child Labour Conference in The Hague, more than 450 delegates from 80 countries agreed on a so-called roadmap, which characterizes the effective abolition of child labour as a "moral necessity." The programme also emphasized that "government responsibility should be assumed at the highest level and with the best interests of children in mind...and should include due attention to the most vulnerable children and the conditions that create their vulnerability." Therefore, authorities should consider the impact of policies on child labour by taking in account gender and age, among other measures, it said.

[Full article](#) – UN News Center

## **UNGEI global conference on girls' education focuses on preventing "56 million wasted opportunities"**

17 May 2010 – The “Engendering Empowerment: Education and Equality” (E4) conference on gender equality and education was organized by the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) and marks the tenth anniversary of the UNGEI global partnership. Anthony Lake, UNICEF Executive Director said that “at current rates of progress, 56 million lives will be blighted by lack of access to education in 2015, and 56 million opportunities to promote economic development will have been missed.” This conference examines how to improve children’s access to a classroom and so to a better life. Various studies have shown that educated girls grow into agents of change for their families, economies, and societies. Thus, providing girls with a quality education is a highly effective tool to address poverty, fight disease, and improve economies.

[Full article](#) – UNICEF

## **UNICEF chief calls for accelerated action on out-of-school children**

18 May 2010 – The new head of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has appealed for greater efforts to ease the plight of nearly 60 million “forgotten children” who are out of school, with only five years remaining to achieve the globally agreed target of ensuring universal primary education. “The sad reality is that if our progress continues at its current pace, by 2015, there will still be approximately 56 million children out of school,” he said. “And worse: You can count on those children being the hardest to reach, living in the poorest countries, with the highest and hardest barriers to overcome.” Participants at the Dakar gathering discussed how to boost funding for education and gender equality, as well as advocating for governments to make positive changes in their national education policies. But the UNICEF head emphasized that “education alone does not equal empowerment,” noting that countries can enhance gender parity in schools while still failing to translate such gains into increased women’s participation at all levels of society.

[Full article](#) – UN News Center

## **On 10th Anniversary, Renewed Action Needed to End Sexual Exploitation, Use of Child Soldiers**

24 May 2010 – May 25, 2010, is the 10th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of two treaties prohibiting the use of child soldiers, the sale of children and child prostitution and pornography. The treaties - both optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child - have won wide support, but 44 countries have yet to ratify either protocol. The optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict has been ratified by 132 countries, and the optional protocol on the sale of children, child pornography, and child prostitution has been ratified by 137 states. A group of 12 international human rights, humanitarian, and child rights organizations, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Save the Children International, and World Vision sent joint letters today to the UN ambassadors of countries that have not yet ratified one or both protocols, urging them to do so as soon as possible in order to strengthen an "unequivocal norm" against the use of child soldiers, and the sale and sexual exploitation of children.

[Full article](#) – Human Rights Watch

## **CRC 54th session: Committee on Rights of Child opens fifty-fourth session**

25 May 2010 – The Committee on the Rights of the Child opened its fifty-fourth session, hearing an address by Navi Pillay, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The Committee also adopted its agenda and programme of work for the session, and a new Committee member, Azza El-Ashmawy, took the solemn oath. Ms. Pillay noted that today marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The official commemoration would take place in New York later today and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had co-organised this event with several other bodies. She was pleased that the Chairperson of this Committee, Yanghee Lee, would be among the panellists. Two global campaigns would also be launched on this occasion to promote the universal ratification of the Optional Protocols by 2012, the year that will mark the tenth anniversary of their entry into force.

## **Consultation on protection of the rights of the child in the context of migration**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is hosting a consultation on protection of the rights of the child in the context of migration on 25 May 2010 in Geneva. The Human Rights Council requested the Office of the High Commissioner “to prepare a study on challenges and best practices in the implementation of the international framework for the protection of the rights of the child in the context of migration.” The Office of the High Commissioner was also requested to consult with States and other relevant stakeholders during the study’s preparation.

[Full article](#) – Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

## **Register Now: The 2010 EHL Institute for Educators. Washington, DC - August 2-5!**

Registration Now Open! The American Red Cross Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) Summer Institute for Educators will be held at the National Headquarters, Washington, DC, August 2-5. The cost to attend is \$75.00 with participants responsible for their transportation, accommodations and some meals. A limited number of scholarships of up to \$450 are available to help participants cover the cost of attending the EHL training. Continuing Education Units will also be offered to interested attendees. To learn more, please visit the EHL website <http://ehl.redcross.org/> to see U.S. educators teaching EHL in the classroom. For additional information please email [EHL@usa.redcross.org](mailto:EHL@usa.redcross.org) or contact Phebean Cole by phone at (202) 303-5224 or by email at [ColePhe@usa.redcross.org](mailto:ColePhe@usa.redcross.org).

## **Advanced Geneva Training Course on International Human Rights Law and Advocacy**

From 13 to 24 September 2010, the International Service for Human Rights will organize its Advanced Geneva Training Course on International Human Rights Law and Advocacy. The course will be conducted in parallel to the 15th session of the Human Rights Council. The course is designed for experienced human rights defenders and organizations that have

the capacity to use the international human rights system in their work. For more information on the course, and how to apply: [Click here](#).

### **Supporting Birth Families and Contact in Adoption: New Research for Practice**

The University of East Anglia announces the 2010 Annual Conference of the Centre for Research on the Child and Family that will be held on July 6th. The conference will present the findings of two major studies funded by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as part of their Adoption Research Initiative. The Helping Birth Families study looks at the provision of independent support for birth relatives, and the Supporting Contact study examines the role of agencies in helping families maintain face-to-face contact. The British Association for Adoption and Fostering are publishing both studies, and the conference will include the launch of the Helping Birth Families book. The main speakers will be members of the research team and the event will include pre-recorded contributions from birth relatives, and a contribution from an adoptive parent.

[For further information](#)

### **Conference 'Educating for Human Rights, Peace and Intercultural Dialogue' (Sydney, 4-6 November 2010)**

The conference will examine the contribution of human rights culture to the good functioning of the civil society; highlight key trends and achievements in human rights education in particular, and aim to secure greater commitment for future human rights education. The conference will have a strong development and Indigenous component. It will be held on the Parramatta Campus of the University of Western Sydney from 4-6 November 2010. For further information, please visit the website <http://www.humanrightseducationconference2010.com.au>

### **UNU-ONY Internship Opportunities – Junior Professional Fellows' Programme – Application Deadline May 31, 2010**

The United Nations University Office at the United Nations in New York (UNU-ONY) is recruiting Junior Professional Fellows (JPFs) for the next session, **from 1 August 2010 to 31 January 2011**. Participants in UNU's internship programme are called Junior Professional Fellows as this title reflects their combination of academic excellence and professional aptitude. For further information, please visit the website <http://www.ony.unu.edu/internships/>

### **Job Posting– UNICEF: Director, International Advocacy and Programmes (*Maternity Leave Contract*)**

The Director, International Advocacy and Programmes is responsible for crafting, leading and executing strategic initiatives that engage government, institutions, civil society organizations and other relevant decision makers to promote change in Canadian foreign policy and practice in respect of children's rights. The Director also acts as the organizational expert on UNICEF's field work both internally and externally, and collaborates with other departments, UNICEF headquarters and country offices to ensure proper representation of UNICEF policies and programmes in the organization's outreach to donors and the media. A valid passport with availability for limited domestic/international travel is required. Work

experience in French is an asset. For further information, please visit [www.unicef.ca](http://www.unicef.ca). Applications will be accepted until June 4, 2010.

## **2. MENA Regional Child Related Activities (events, conferences, news, vacancies, announcements, reportages, campaigns)**

### **Marwan Abado launches Middle East tour for UNRWA**

14 May 2010- Marwan Abado launched his “Palestine Remains My Melody” tour in Mar Elias, Lebanon. Its purpose is to support the educational work which UNRWA carries out in the three countries included in his visit. His three-leg tour of the region also takes place in Syria and Jordan. At a press conference at the Al Kabri School in the Mar Elias Refugee Camp, Abado spoke of the personal commitment he felt to his latest tour which comes in the effort to raise funds for scholarships for Palestinian refugee students.

[Full article](#) - United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)

### **Vacancy Announcement– UNHCR (Sana’a, Republic of Yemen)**

UNHCR is seeking a Senior Protection Officer (P-4) in Sana’a, Republic of Yemen. The Senior Protection Officer is responsible for ensuring the protection of refugees, IDPs, and returnees; planning and supervising protection activities; providing legal advice and guidance on protection issues; drafting official UNHCR documents, in addition to undertaking other duties as required. The closing date is 11 June 2010.

[Full article](#) - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

### **The EMHRN is looking for a Human Rights Education Coordinator**

The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network invites candidates to apply for the post of Human Rights Education Coordinator (HRE Coordinator). Duty station: Cairo. Candidates should forward a letter of application and curriculum vitae, both in English, before Friday 28 May 2010. For further information, you are welcome to contact Marit Floe Jorgensen, Programme Director at EMHRN, at [mfj@euromedrights.net](mailto:mfj@euromedrights.net) for further information on the position. For information on the EMHRN, please refer to [www.euromedrights.net](http://www.euromedrights.net)

### **Middle East & North Africa Regional technical workshop: Law reform to prohibit all forms of corporal punishment of children**

The League of Arab States, the Higher Council for Childhood Lebanon, The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children With the attendance of the UN Special Representative on Violence against Children are organizing a workshop that will be held from June 30 – July 2, 2010 in Beirut, Lebanon. The workshop consists of a 3 day technical workshop for governmental representatives and civil society organizations from states in membership of the League of Arab States.

The objectives of the workshop will be:

- To promote effective follow-up to the UN Secretary General’s Study on violence against children

- To promote the human rights imperative to prohibit all corporal punishment of children, including in the home
- To increase knowledge about the content and process of law reform and how to achieve it, exploring the challenges.

For registration please complete the questionnaire and registration forms and send them attached to [mpinheiro@scsmena.org](mailto:mpinheiro@scsmena.org) latest Monday 31 May. Both documents need to be completed in full.

### **The organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) sets up human rights division**

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) has announced that it is setting up a special division that will deal with human rights. The OIC spans 57 countries over four continents, making it the second-largest inter-governmental organization after the United Nations. The announcement came after the visit of UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay to Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Pillay began a 10-day visit to six Gulf countries last week in an effort to improve cooperation between the UN human rights system and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the United Arab Emirates. Pillay said the GCC showed an "encouraging level of governmental activity to improve human rights," particularly in the areas of economic and social rights, children's rights and human trafficking. However she noted continuing concerns about women's rights, migration, statelessness, and freedom of expression, association and assembly. For further infomations, please visit <http://www.jpost.com/MiddleEast/Article.aspx?id=173731>

## **3. Sub-Regional and Country Updates:**

### ***In the Levant:***

#### **Iraq – UNICEF concludes child protection mission to Kirkuk**

11 May 2010 – UNICEF recently conducted a three-day technical mission to Kirkuk to discuss child protection issues in the governorate and explore prospects of creating a protective environment for children in Kirkuk. The mission included UNICEF Iraq's Deputy Representative, Mr. Osama Makkawi, the Chief of North Zonal Office, Mrs. Joyce Gachiri, as well as UNICEF's Protection Specialist and Communications Specialist. The mission, coordinated by the Human Rights Office of the United Nation's Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI) and joined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), focused on issues children are currently facing such as children who are in conflict with the law, child labor, orphans, street children, violence against women and girls and the use of children by armed groups.

[Full article](#) – UNICEF

## **Iraq- Former Iraqi refugees benefit from UNHCR shelter programme in the south**

20 May 2010- A group of 180 Iraqi families, gathering more than 1,000 people, were given the keys to new houses earlier this month in the southern province of Missan under a UNHCR shelter programme. UNHCR staff identified some pre-2003 refugees as particularly vulnerable and decided to include them in the agency's shelter programme, which saw UNHCR fund the construction or rehabilitation of more than 10,000 houses around the country last year. UNHCR's implementing partner, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), organized the construction of the shelters that were handed over last month at a ceremony attended by UNHCR and DRC staff as well as government officials.

[Full article](#) - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

## **Israel/Opt – DCI concerned by continued use of children as human shields by Israeli soldiers**

11 May 2010 – DCI-Palestine has documented two new cases of children used as human shields by Israeli soldiers during military operations. The use of civilians, especially children, as human shields is clearly prohibited by applicable international law and by Israel's domestic legislation. Israel is party to the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, which it ratified in 2005, the same year the Israeli High Court of Justice banned the use of civilians as human shields. On 19 January this year, Israel's implementation of the Optional Protocol was reviewed by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, which issued strong [recommendations](#) to Israel on the ongoing practice of using Palestinian children as human shields.

[Full article](#) – Defence for Children International

## **Israel/Opt – Gaza youth learn music and challenge the occupation**

14 May 2010 – The music school opened about six months before the Gaza assault in December 2008-January 2009 as a response to the demand at the Qattan Center for the Child in Gaza City. School director Ibrahim Najjar holds a music degree from Cairo. Mohammed Omer studied *oud* in Iraq. The piano and violin teachers are from Russia. Tala, 11, is a second-year student, having studied piano in her first year. She sits with a *qanoon* before her, slowly plucking her way through a song, starting to find the techniques necessary to make music. When I play, I forget any problems and just think about the music", she says.

[Full article](#) – Middle East Children's Alliance

## **Israel/Opt- Palestinian Youth Shot Dead in West Bank**

14 May 2010- A 16-year-old Palestinian boy who had been throwing stones at Israeli cars passing his West Bank village near the city of Ramallah was shot dead on Thursday after an Israeli settler whose car was hit opened fire. His family found his body face down in a field of their village, Mazraa al Sharqiya, between the Israeli settlements of Shiloh and Ofra. An Israeli military spokesman said a joint forensic team of Israelis and Palestinians was examining the circumstances of the death.

[Full article](#) – New York Times

## **Israel/ Opt – DCI - Palestine submits 14 cases of sexual assault and threats to the UN for investigation**

18 May 2010 – DCI-Palestine submitted 14 cases to the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture for investigation. The submission relates to the sexual assault, or threat of sexual assault, of Palestinian children at the hands of Israeli soldiers, interrogators and police between January 2009 and April 2010. The ages of the children range from 13 to 16 years. DCI-Palestine is requesting that the Special Rapporteur investigates these and other reports relating to the apparent widespread and systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children by Israeli authorities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and to publish the findings. For further information please see DCI-Palestine's [Latest report](#) on Palestinian child prisoners.

[Full article](#) – CRIN

## **Jordan – Queen Rania Al Abdullah launches the Family Counseling Campaign**

4 May 2010- Aiming to raise awareness about the importance of family counseling in Jordan, Queen Rania launched the Family Counseling Campaign. Organized by the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), and funded by the Embassy of the Netherlands, it includes a nationwide media campaign as well as training programs in the field of counseling. Dr. Suhaila Banat, the workshop trainer, talked about the training programme which includes 12 different areas, such as dealing with family abuse cases, childhood and adolescence families, and the most effective approaches for counseling.

[Full article](#) – National Council for Family Affairs

## **Jordan – Wildlife garden helping Petra children break bad habits**

16 May 2010 – Young children in the Petra area are learning how to better take care of their animals and respect the Kingdom's archaeological sites with the help of a new wildlife garden. Established by the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANNA), the wildlife garden seeks to revive Petra area children's interest in school and teach respect for animals. Children receive classes on animal welfare in addition to the standard government curriculum in order to better prepare them to become productive members of their community, according to SPANNA.

[Full article](#) – Jordan Times

## **Jordan – Jordanian children demand 'right of return'**

16 May 2010 – Thirteen-year-old Sabah's grandparents were probably her age when they fled their home in "historical Palestine" as Israel emerged 62 years ago. The girl, who lives with her family in the Zarqa refugee camp, northeast of Amman, is one of about 200 children from refugee camps in Jordan who demonstrated in front of a UN building in the capital on Saturday, marking the 62nd anniversary of the Palestinian Nakba (or catastrophe). Organisers said the demonstration aims to "keep the Palestinian cause alive from generation to generation" and reaffirm the right of refugees to return to their original homes and receive compensation. Some of the children held black banners where the number "62" was written in Arabic, while others lined up to form the word "aaidoun" (we are returning).

[Full article](#) – Jordan Times

### **Jordan – Youngsters awarded for media project**

17 May 2010 – In collaboration with the Princess Basma Youth and Research Center, Radio Monte Carlo Doualiya held a workshop for 15 youngsters on news reports production in addition to a short film about the workshop and the participants. On May 11, the youngsters' project and the film documenting their work were featured in the Royal Film Commission in the presence of HH Princess Reem Ali, who awarded the participants, highlighting the importance of such workshop and hoping they continue to pursue their education especially in terms of journalism.

[Full article](#) – The Star

### **Jordan – 1GOAL launches mobile phone campaign for education**

19 May 2010 – The 1GOAL: Education for All initiative launched the world's largest-ever mobile phone campaign in support of 72 million children still denied access to basic primary education. An estimated \$16 billion a year is needed to make universal education a reality, but currently only \$4 billion is spent on primary education and 1GOAL is calling for further funding from both developing and rich countries to get every child into a classroom. Backed by the football world and FIFA, 1GOAL seeks to get every child into school by 2015, rallying support from footballers and fans across the world.

[Full article](#) – Jordan Times

### **Jordan – Status of children worldwide to take centre stage**

21 May 2010 – Dozens of international and local, legal and educational experts will gather in the capital, Amman, on Monday to highlight the status of children's rights worldwide. "The major purpose of the event is to identify the educational and legal rights granted to children by international law and the role of the UN and international organizations in improving the status of children," Zahria Abdul Haq, president of the conference's preparatory committee told The Jordan Times. She added that the conference also seeks to shed light on Jordanian legislation pertaining to families and children.

[Full article](#) – Jordan Times

### **Jordan – Experts to review efforts**

25 May 2010 – Jordanian leaders and experts are set to review the Kingdom's efforts to uphold the rights of children as part of a Swedish initiative. Jordan is the second Arab country to take part in the Sweden International Development Agency (SIDA) Advanced International Training Programme, "The Rights of the Child – A Practical Approach", according to programme founder Bereket Yebio. During the opening ceremony of an international conference on the "Rights of Children from Legal and Educational Perspectives" on Monday, Yebio said the programme aims to create taskforces across the world that can follow up on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in their respective countries.

[Full article](#) – Jordan Times

### **Lebanon- Landmark ruling granting citizenship to children of Lebanese mother overturned**

19 May 2010- A landmark ruling which granted citizenship to the children of a Lebanese mother was overturned by an appeals court Tuesday in a move that has left human rights

activists reeling. Samira Soueidan filed a lawsuit five years ago demanding her four children be granted citizenship rights following the death of her Egyptian husband. Lebanese law permits men to pass on their nationality to their non-Lebanese wives and children but bars women married to non-Lebanese from doing the same. There are around 18,000 Lebanese women married to non-Lebanese in Lebanon, according to a study by the UN Development Programme. Around 80,000 children and husbands are potentially made stateless by the current legislation. Deprived of state protection and recognition, those without citizenship live in a precarious legal vacuum and cannot benefit from state education or health care, work in the formal economy or vote.

[Full article](#) - The Daily Star

### **Occupied Palestinian territories (oPt) – Murder in the name of family honour**

7 May 2010- At a landmark conference held recently in Ramallah in the occupied Palestinian territory, delegates were told of documented cases of “honour” crimes where women and girls had been poisoned, strangled, shot and forced to commit suicide by relatives because their alleged behaviours had tarnished the family “honour”. The objective of the gathering attended by representatives from the Palestinian Authority, the Christian and Islamic communities, civil society and the UN was to pool the available knowledge, raise awareness and launch a national strategy to eradicate the practice. Participants agreed that the current laws are discriminatory and do not adequately protect women and girls from “honour” crimes, rape, sexual abuse or incest. The central recommendation arising from the conference is for reform and standardization of relevant legislation and criminal codes.

[Full article](#) - CRIN

### **Opt – UNRWA Girls Scoop “Special Award” At World’s Top Science Competition**

15 May 2010- Three girls from the UNRWA School at Askar Camp in Nablus have made history by becoming the first Palestinians to win an award at the world’s premier youth science competition. Aseel Abu Aleil, Aseel Alshaar and Noor Alarada were competing with 1500 finalists from around the world at the Intel Science and Engineering Fair in San Jose, California. The 14-year-olds picked up a “special award in applied electronics” for inventing an electronic “sensor cane” for the visually impaired. Margot Ellis, UNRWA’s Deputy Commissioner-General, said: “These students show the enormous potential of Palestinian girls and boys. UNRWA in its education programmes wants to bring this out. I pay tribute to them and their teachers.”

[Full article](#) - UNRWA

### **Opt – A disabled child is injured**

22 May 2010 – The Israeli repression of the weekly protest against the Wall has resulted in the injury of Tarek Adnan Abo Rahma, 14 years old, who was shot in the foot by a teargas canister. Along with international supporters, the people from Bil’in dedicated this week’s protest against the Wall and the settlements once again to the commemoration of the 62nd anniversary of the Nakba. The Participants in the march raised Palestinian flags and banners calling for the boycott of Israeli settlement products and others condemning the recent home demolitions in Jerusalem and the siege on Gaza. They further called for an end to the

arrest campaign against anti-wall activists and the release of all Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails.

[Full article](#) – Middle East Children's Alliance

### **Opt – UNRWA condemns attack on its Summer Games location**

23 May 2010 – On Sunday 23 May 2010, a group of approximately 30 armed and masked men attacked and set fire to an UNRWA recreation facility under construction on the beach in Gaza City. The location is one of 35 beach facilities currently under construction, which will form part of UNRWA's annual "Summer Games" programme for over 250,000 refugee children in Gaza, due to commence on 12 June. UNRWA's Summer Games is of immense physical and psychological importance for children who would otherwise have no other similar recreation opportunity.

[Full article](#) – UNRWA

### **Opt – Gaza children's camp torched**

24 May 2010 – Armed assailants in black masks burned and vandalised a UN summer camp site yesterday and left behind three bullets next to written death threats against UN officials - the latest escalation of tensions between Islamic extremists and UN representatives in Hamas-ruled Gaza. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack on the camp site on the Gaza shore, near Gaza City. However, Islamic extremists, including Hamas hard-liners, have repeatedly railed against the UN as being a bridgehead for the West and for corrupting Gaza's youth by teaching "un-Islamic" subjects in schools and summer camps.

[Full article](#) – Gulf daily News

## ***In North Africa:***

### **Algérie – Ouverture d'une classe pour les enfants trisomiques**

05 May 2010 – Une classe spéciale pour enfants trisomiques vient d'être lancée à l'école primaire Mourad Zouatine de Dellys. Ceci a été rendu possible grâce à une enseignante en retraite, Mme Gaceb, qui en a formulé la demande qui a trouvé un écho favorable auprès de la direction de l'éducation. Dans cette classe, dix enfants dont l'âge varie de 6 à 10 ans, encadrés par une enseignante (orthophoniste) et une éducatrice, suivent leur cursus scolaire adapté. « C'est un programme un peu spécial sûrement, mais inspiré du programme scolaire dispensé pour les enfants dits normaux », a-t-elle confirmé.

[Article complet](#) – El watan

### **Algérie – El Besma fait sourire les écoliers**

18 May 2010 – L'association pour enfants El Besma de la wilaya de Boumerdès a organisé, vendredi dernier, en collaboration avec l'association Mechâal El Hayat de Kherrouba, une course inter-écoles pour les enfants au niveau de la ville de l'ex-Rocher noir. Cette course ayant regroupé 120 écoliers, 60 filles et 60 garçons, issus de différents établissements scolaires de Figuier, Corso, Kherrouba et Boumerdès, a démarré du jardin de la cité des 800 Logements, dit Djnina, vers 10h. Âgés de 12 à 15 ans, les participants sont arrivés à la maison de la culture Rachid Mimouni, ligne d'arrivée, vers 11h. Les cinq premiers arrivés des filles et des garçons ont été primés. Après la cérémonie de remise des prix, qui s'est déroulée dans ledit établissement, un film pour enfants y a été projeté vers midi, en guise de clôture.

Cette manifestation s'est déroulée dans de très bonnes conditions et a ravi tant les participants que les organisateurs.

[Article complet](#) – El watan

### **Egypt – Anti-trafficking law “not sufficient”**

4 May 2010 – The issue of sex tourism is growing as hundreds of rich Arabs come to Egypt for temporary marriage. Some parents, particularly in the poor countryside and the slums of Cairo, marry off their underage daughters to rich men- usually 30 or 40 years older- for money. “Extreme poverty stands behind the rise in this phenomenon,” said Ahmed Seif el-Islam, a lawyer and a human rights advocate. The new anti-trafficking law states that individuals or groups who commit human trafficking crimes will be given life sentences and fined. But some rights activists were not convinced. “Laws alone can’t bring a social ailment like this one to an end,” Seif el-Islam said. “This is a matter of culture and social habits. We must address the root causes of the problem in order to solve it,” he said.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

### **Egypt- Child Marriage: NGO takes governments of Nigeria and Egypt before African Commission**

25 May 2010- Nigerian NGO Women Empowerment and Legal Aid (WELA) has taken the governments of Nigeria and Egypt to the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights in Banjul, the Gambia, over allegations of child abuse involving a former governor of Zamfara State, Senator Ahmed Sani. The group’s petition specifically addresses Sani’s alleged marriage to a 13-year old Egyptian girl, after he had purportedly paid the sum of \$100,000 to the parents of the underage girl. Executive Director of WELA, Mrs Funmi Falana, said: “WELA is concerned that Senator Sani, an elderly Nigerian man, married a child as young as 13-years-old in contravention of national laws and human rights conventions that protect children.”

[Full article](#)- CRIN

### **Maroc – Une sortie à la forêt de Bouskoura pour les enfants à risque**

06 May 2010 – Dans le cadre de l’accompagnement des enfants en situation difficile et à risque, le Programme en Milieu Ouvert et la Cellule Pédagogique de BAYTI ont organisé le 24 avril dernier une sortie à la forêt de Bouskoura. L’objectif de cette sortie était d’offrir aux enfants un moment de plaisir et de distraction et leur donner un nouveau cadre de rencontre autre que les classes de l’école. Cette rencontre a été l’occasion de sensibiliser les enfants à certaines questions d’hygiène ainsi qu’à certaines questions liées au respect de l’environnement.

[Article complet](#) – Bayti

### **Maroc – Scolarisation des filles rurales: Entre engagements et contraintes**

24 May 2010 – La garantie de la scolarisation des jeunes filles, surtout en milieu rural, reste toujours une problématique d’actualité. En effet, malgré les efforts déployés par le ministère de l’Education nationale pour assurer une égalité des chances dans l’accès à l’enseignement, cet objectif reste confronté à de nombreuses contraintes notamment la mentalité de la population dans le milieu rural qui a du mal à changer. La plupart des familles considèrent

toujours l'école comme «une notion étrangère» et confinent le rôle que la femme est appelée à jouer dans la société à l'accomplissement des tâches ménagères et l'éducation des enfants. Conscientes de cette situation, plusieurs composantes de la société civile se sont engagées à accompagner les efforts déployés par le département de tutelle. Dans ce sens, une campagne d'aide à la scolarisation des jeunes filles en milieu rural a été lancée par le Comité de soutien à la scolarisation des jeunes filles rurales (CSSF).

[Article complet](#) – Le matin

### **Tunisie – Institution d'un régime pénal particulier aux jeunes de 18 à 21 ans : nouveau mécanisme pour favoriser la réinsertion sociale des jeunes délinquants**

21 May 2010 – Dans le droit tunisien, le degré de responsabilité pénale varie selon les tranches d'âge. Le législateur tunisien a institué le principe d'irresponsabilité pénale pour les mineurs de moins de 13 ans. Les enfants âgés entre 13 et 18 ans sont soumis aux dispositions du code de la protection de l'enfance. Les jeunes de plus de 18 ans, sont soumis au régime pénal applicable aux adultes. Le projet de loi examiné mercredi en conseil des ministres vise à permettre aux jeunes âgés de 18 à 21 ans de passer progressivement du statut d'enfant à celui d'adulte. Toutes les études juridiques montrent, en effet, que cette période de la vie est l'une des plus sensibles dans la formation de la personnalité des jeunes.

[Article complet](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

### ***In the Gulf:***

#### **Bahrain – Ministry quashes fake children's medicines fears**

03 May 2010 – A Health Ministry official yesterday dispelled fears that Bahrain might be among several countries affected by flawed medicines for children. Material management director Dr Mohammed Nasser reassured Bahrainis that the defective medications were not on shelves at the kingdom's pharmacies. "As soon as we received the report of the recall we immediately reviewed medicines being sold in Bahrain," said Dr Nasser.

[Full article](#) – Gulf Daily News

#### **Bahrain – Bahrain shocked by news of five-year-old girl's circumcision**

11 May 2010 – Authorities in Bahrain are investigating allegations that a five-year-old girl has been circumcised by a maid. The girl, who could not be named, was living with her father in a Gulf country following his divorce from her Bahraini mother. The couple married six years ago, but divorced soon after the birth of their only daughter. The mother won a custody battle in Bahrain in 2006, but the father eventually had custody of the daughter after a court in his country ruled in his favour.

[Full article](#) – Gulf News

#### **United Arab Emirates (UAE) – Physical education mandatory in Abu Dhabi schools**

18 May 2010 – Physical education in public and private schools has become mandatory across the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, a senior official at the first school health development

strategy workshop on Monday confirmed. The decision was taken by the Health Authority Abu Dhabi (HAAD) and the Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC), after findings issued by the Global School Survey showed that 12.1 per cent of adolescents across the emirate were obese or overweight.

[Full article](#) – Gulf News

### **UAE – Kids’ salons a high priority for Dubai Municipality**

18 May 2010 – Kids’ salons should not only be child-friendly, but also keep high standards in hygiene, insists Dubai Municipality which is conducting a campaign to address hygiene issues in salons and beauty parlours. The specialty salons for children, which are mushrooming in the emirate, mainly in shopping malls, are under the strict scrutiny of the civic body which gives high priority for the safety of the little customers they cater to. “We are addressing the hygiene issues in every type of salons. When it comes to kids, we classify them in the high priority list and we are taking even stricter action if any violation is reported in any kids’ salon,” Director of Public Health and Safety Redha Hassan Salman told *Khaleej Times*.

[Full article](#) – Khaleej Times

### **Yemen – The ever-present landmine threat**

3 May 2010 – Problems with assisting landmine victims are persistent in Yemen. According to the Landmine Monitor (LM) report, care for persons with disabilities is primarily urban-based and largely inaccessible to those in need. Psychosocial support for landmine/ERW is also very limited. Moreover, victim assistance is severely hampered by financial difficulties. Despite a mine risk education campaign that took place in March, accidents are still likely to happen since the deadly devices are often hidden or moved due to seasonal floods. Civilians, particularly children are at the greatest risk, aid workers say.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

### **Yemen – Encouraging girls to go to school: Focus on Dhamar Governorate**

10 May 2010 – Around 90 percent of the girls in Dhamar drop out of school, starting from the fourth grade, because of cultural barriers, according to, Jalila Sharhan, Director of the Girl’s Education Department at Dhamar’s Education Office. However, in order to mitigate this problem, there are several initiatives being implemented by both local authorities and donors, with the support of civil society organizations. “Coordination councils for girls’ education have been created to carry out specific projects and improve girls’ education in this governorate. Some of these initiatives involve fee exemption for girls and contracting girls with secondary level degrees to teach in girls’ schools,” explained Sharhan, adding that the council carries out awareness events as well.

[Full article](#) – Yemen Times

### **Yemen – UNICEF voices concern about school siege in northern Yemen**

12 May 2010 – The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) expressed today its deep concern about reports that rebel occupation is preventing children in the northern Yemeni governorate of Saada from attending classes in a country that already has the lowest school enrolment rates in the region. “Schools should be zones of peace where children can learn

and thrive. Using them for military or inappropriate political purposes is a violation of children's rights and of international humanitarian law," said Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Representative in Yemen, in a statement released today following reports that some schools were occupied by armed men.

[Full article](#) – UN Centre

### **Yemen – Measles deaths on the rise in Saada**

16 May 2010 – Six rounds of fighting between the army and Houthi-led rebels in northern Yemen since 2004 have prevented or limited immunization campaigns in the area and have subsequently led to a higher prevalence of measles. Up to 120 children under five have died of measles since 1 March in nine Houthi-controlled districts in Saada Governorate. The head of the governorate's Public Health & Population Office stated: "More deaths are expected due to the spread of the epidemic and obstacles to vaccination efforts." Paramedics told local media that 700 children have measles in Saada, adding that the more than 20,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the governorate still living in the open were contributing to the spread of the disease.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

### **Yemen – UNICEF country programme in Yemen discussed**

17 May 2010 – Yemen and UNICEF discussed here on Monday cooperation aspects related to mechanism of implementing the UNICEF country programme in Yemen. During his meeting with the newly-appointed representative of UNICEF in Yemen Geert Cappelaere, Minister of Planning and International Cooperation Abdul-Karim al-Arhabi affirmed Yemen's keenness to provide all the required facilities to ease carrying out his tasks. The two sides also talked about means of activating the contribution of non-governmental organizations in order to prop up the Yemen-UNICEF joint efforts to reduce the problem of children malnutrition in Yemen.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

### **Yemen – More women benefiting from antenatal health care**

19 May 2010 – There has been some increase in the number of women accessing antenatal healthcare services in Yemen over the past four years, but most mothers still deliver at home and their health situation remains rather bleak, according to new reports from the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization (WHO). The proportion of women benefiting from antenatal healthcare services has increased from 40 to 55 percent over the past four years, according to an 18 May Health Ministry report covering 2006-2010. At a conference in Sanaa on 18 May sponsored by the National Women's Committee and the Health Ministry, some women's rights activists criticized slow progress in antenatal healthcare coverage.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

### **Yemen – Teenage girl kidnapped and raped**

27 May 2010 –

**Yemen – SEYAJ Organization for Childhood Protection: Conference for victims of landmines**

31 May 2010 -