



Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Newsletter

September 2009

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

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1. Global Developments on Children's Rights

UNICEF releases figures on dropping global child mortality rates

10 September 2009 – UNICEF released new figures that show the rate of deaths of children under five years of age continued to decline in 2008. The data shows a 28 per cent decline in the under-five mortality rate, from 90 deaths per 1000 live births in 1990, to 65 deaths per 1000 live births in 2008. According to these estimates, the absolute number of child deaths in 2008 declined to an estimated 8.8 million from 12.5 million in 1990, the base line year for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The annual average reduction rate for the MENA region is 3.2%, which is deemed to be insufficient for the attainment of the MDG target.

[Full article](#) and [more information](#) – UNICEF

US study lists countries exploiting child labour

11 September 2009 – Children around the world are producing numerous goods being sold globally, says a report released by the U.S. Department of Labour. The report released Thursday found that 218 million children work worldwide, and that 126 million of them perform dangerous jobs. The U.S. Labour Department has identified 122 goods from 58 countries it believes to be produced by forced labour, child labour or a combination of the two. Children commonly work to produce products or crops such as cotton, sugar cane, tobacco, coffee, rice, cocoa, bricks, garments, carpets, footwear, gold, and coal. Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon are part of the countries researched by the Department of Labour's Bureau of International Labour Affairs.

[Full article](#) and [report](#) – CBC

What Happened? A study by Save the Children Sweden on the impact of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in five countries: Estonia, Nepal, Peru, Uganda and Yemen

17 September 2005 – The Convention has had an undeniable impact at national level shown by changes to legislation, the creation of new programs of policies that deal with specific concerns, the creation of national child rights institutions and coordinating mechanisms, changes in attitude towards children. But are these changes due to the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child? This study seeks to take stock of what impact the concluding observations in the area of general measures of implementation have had at national level.

[Full report](#) – NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Peace Operations Training Institute translates its course text into Arabic

September 2009 - The Peace Operations Training Institute is pleased to present our first course text in Arabic: Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR).

[For more information](#)



2. MENA Regional Child Related Activities (events, research on the need for safe urban spaces for children and youth in the MENA region, conferences, news, vacancies, announcements, reportages, campaigns)

Meeting with the families of victims of irregular migration to be held in Cairo

September 2009 – The Land Center for Human Rights (LCHR) in cooperation with the Press Syndicate is organising a symposium entitled "Meeting with the families of victims of irregular migration" at the headquarters of the Journalists' Syndicate in Cairo on September 30th, 2009. The workshop will be an open discussion among many experts, researchers, academics, members of the People's Assembly, Shura Council and Agricultural Committees, journalists, farmers and representatives from rural civil society organizations, and political parties. The goal of the symposium is to identify the causes of and the solutions to illegal migration and their effects on the Egyptian youth. It also aims at activating the role of the governmental and non-governmental bodies to guarantee the rights of migrant workers.

[For more information](#) – LCHR

First Arabic Conference on the Rights of Persons with Intellectual Disability to be held in Libya

The First Arab Conference on the Human Right of Persons with Intellectual disability will be held in Benghazi, Libya, on Dec.13-15/2009. This decision was taken after signing an agreement with The Libyan League of Disabled People, The Wa'etassimu Association and Inclusion International MENA in Tripoli, Libya. The conference will present the first discussion for the current Social policies on Intellectual Disability in the same principle as Poverty & Disability. Invitations and call for country papers will start shortly. Information on this conference will soon be published on the website of [Inclusion International](#).

Vacancy – Child Protection Specialist, L-4, with UNICEF, based in Beirut, Lebanon

Closing date: 09 October 2009. Under the guidance of the Deputy Representative, the Child Specialist will be responsible for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Rights Programme Component, with a particular focus on the situation of the Palestinian Children and women in Lebanon.

[More information](#) – Reliefweb

Vacancy – Programme Manager with Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP), based in OPT

Closing date: 12 October 2009. Medical Aid for Palestinians (MAP) is an independent UK charity providing practical support to the health and medical needs of Palestinians and other vulnerable communities in the occupied Palestinian territory (oPt), Lebanon and other countries in the Middle East. The post holder will be responsible for the development and delivery of MAP's programme in the West Bank and Gaza, reporting to the Director of Programmes, oPt.

Responsibilities will include development, management and support of MAP's programme portfolio, funded by MAP, as well as institutional donors.

[More information](#) – Reliefweb

Vacancy – Education Consultants with CHF International, based in Lebanon

Closing date: 31 October 2009. CHF International is recruiting staff for an anticipated USAID education project in Lebanon. CHF is seeking education consultants with experience in one or more of the following areas: teacher education, training, and leadership development; workforce development, after school programs, and youth development; infrastructure improvements, new school development; school reconstruction; creating or building the capacity of parent teacher associations, academic/education partnerships and other linkages; education policy, advocacy, education reform; community/school health; girl's education programs; early child care learning/development/interventions; special education.

[More information](#) – Reliefweb

3. Sub-Regional and Country Updates:

In the Levant:

Iraq – Six new city parks under way in Kirkuk

23 September 2009 - President Herbert Hoover once said, “Children are our most valuable resource.” The city of Kirkuk, Iraq — in partnership with the Gulf Region Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — is cultivating that valuable resource through the construction of six new city parks. The parks are a part of the Kirkuk Reconciliation Initiative and are situated and designed to provide a safe, clean recreational area for more than 40,000 Kirkuk residents.

[Full article](#) – Multi-National Force Iraq

Iraq – School brings hope of bright future

21 September 2009 - Hundreds of students at the Thugger al-Iraq Primary and Secondary School here in the Qarguli neighborhood have something to look forward to this year thanks to the efforts of West Virginia National Guardsmen. A \$467,000 project to overhaul the school and add four new buildings began Aug. 28, according to Capt. James Bowen, commander of Troop B, 1st Battalion, 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team. The project, which should finish a few weeks into the school year, is scheduled to take a hundred days to complete.

[Full story](#) – Multi-National Force Iraq

Iraq – Clothing and Toys Collected for Children of Female Prison Inmates

6 September 2009 – Hundreds of children in Iraq’s prison system received new clothes, shoes and toys Sept. 3 thanks to the efforts of some caring U.S. military personnel, citizens and organizations in the United States. U.S. Navy Master at Arms Chief Hector Villanueva, lead advisor for Tribal Affairs, Multi-national Security Transition Command-Iraq and U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Anita Francis with Law and Order Task Force have been collecting



clothing, shoes and toys to distribute to these children who stay with their mothers in Iraq's prisons.

[Full story](#) – Multi-National Force Iraq

Israel/Opt - New report highlights educational poverty in East Jerusalem

3 September 2009 – Palestinian East Jerusalem lacks public educational facilities and many classrooms are cramped, according to a new report by Ir Amim, an NGO working in East Jerusalem, and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI). About 94,000 school age Palestinian children live in East Jerusalem, said the report, which was based on municipality records and public and private schools' enrolment data, and published on 31 August. East Jerusalem is poor, school drop-out rates are higher than in other parts of the city, and many children do not attend school. Expenditure on education in West Jerusalem is 2-4 times higher than in East Jerusalem, according to the Haaretz newspaper, though the municipality is reportedly seeking to close the gap. Educational attainment in Arab communities is generally much lower than in Jewish communities, according to a report by the Avda Centre, an Israeli NGO.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

Israel/Opt - Gaza schoolchildren lack basic equipment

9 September 2009 - Some 1,200 students at al-Karmel High School for boys in Gaza City returned to class on 25 August without history and English textbooks, or notebooks and pens - all unavailable on the local market. Severe damage to the school - caused during the 23-day Israeli offensive on the Gaza Strip which ended on 18 January - has yet to be repaired. Al-Karmel's principal, Majed Yasin, has had to cover scores of broken windows with plastic sheeting. Educational institutions across Gaza are still reeling from the effects of the Israeli offensive, compounded by the more than two-year Israeli blockade (tightened after Hamas seized power in June 2007), according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

[Full Article](#) – IRIN

Israel/Opt – Israel's war on Gaza killed 252 children

9 September 2009 – The Israeli official figures seriously underestimated the civilian Palestinian death toll exacted during its onslaught in Gaza early this year, according to painstaking research to be published today. The first detailed casualty figures from an Israeli human rights organisation since the war ended puts the number of children under 16 killed in the offensive at 252 as opposed to the 89 cited by the military. B'Tselem says its fieldworkers gathered death certificates, photos, and testimonies relating to all 252 of the children.

[Full article](#) – The Independent

Israel/Opt – Child detention figures remain high

14 September 2009 - According to the latest figures compiled by DCI-Palestine from sources including the Israeli Prison Service (IPS) and temporary Israeli army detention, the number of Palestinian children detained in Israeli prisons and detention centres inside Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory at the end of August, was 339. Although there was a slight reduction in the number of children in detention compared with the previous month (3



children), the average number of Palestinian children held in Israeli detention in 2009 remains high, at 375 per month, compared with 319, in 2008. This represents an increase of 17.5%.

[Full article and report](#) – DCI Palestine

Israel/Opt – Goldstone Report expresses alarm at the detention of hundreds of young children

24 September 2009 – On 15 September 2009, the Goldstone Mission published a 575 page [report](#) based on the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (the Report). The fact finding mission was established by the UN in April 2009, following the 23 day war in Gaza which killed over 1,400 hundred Palestinians, including 353 children. Eighteen Israelis were also killed during the conflict. The Report not only deals with the direct impact of the war but also considers the broader effects, including the effect on Palestinian children from the West Bank detained by Israel during, and immediately after, the offensive.

[Full article and report](#) – DCI-Palestine

Israel/Opt – The Rubber-Tyre School

September 2009 – On a clear and sunny morning in September 2009, some 40 kids came to the Khan Al Ahmar Primary Mixed School to start the new school year and the first day of class. At first glance, all looks as one would expect: the girls turned out with white ribbons in their hair and the boys boisterously running through the generous school yard and the freshly painted classrooms. Khan Al Ahmar, however, is no ordinary school. It is a school serving Bedouin children from various clans of the Jahalin tribe, all of them UNRWA-registered refugees who live on a dusty outcrop off the main road between Jerusalem and Jericho. This school is built entirely out of rubber tyres.

[Full story](#) – UNRWA

Israel/Opt – Japan Scholarships for Hundreds of Palestinian Students

September 2009 – “Now, I look forward to helping patients, healing them, raising their morale and helping my father pay the expenses of my sisters’ education to give them the chance to complete their studies,” says Wafa Tawfiq Mohammad El-Qadri, a scholarship alumnus in Jordan. Wafa is one of more than 900 young Palestinians who were awarded higher education scholarships by the Government of Japan through UNRWA. Wafa studied nursing at the University of Jordan and graduated in the year 2007/2008 with excellent results. Since graduating, she has been working at University of Jordan Hospital. The Japan Scholarship Program has enabled Wafa to help not only her family but also her own people and society.

[Full story](#) – UNRWA

Israel/Opt – Human Rights Council discusses human rights situation in Palestine and other Occupied Arab Territories

29 September 2009 - The Human Rights Council this afternoon listened to a presentation by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on her first periodic report on the implementation of the Council resolution on the grave violations of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, particularly due to the recent Israeli military attacks against the Occupied Gaza Strip, and held a general debate on the situation in Palestine and other Occupied



Arab Territories. The Council also concluded its interactive dialogue with the Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict.

[Full press release](#) – UNOG

Jordan – National campaign for students' rights issues report on students' freedoms

The national campaign for student rights issues its annual report for students freedoms. It monitors student freedoms in universities. It also discloses the inhibitive atmosphere which the universities and student movements are suffering through a chain of laws and decisions.

[For details](#) – ANHRI

Jordan - 12 more swine flu cases confirmed in schools, nurseries in Amman

16 September 2009 - Twelve more H1N1 (swine) flu cases were confirmed at schools and nurseries in Amman on Tuesday, raising the number of schoolchildren diagnosed with the virus to 62. The new cases prompted authorities to close four schools for one week and two nurseries for two weeks, in addition to suspending classes at other schools for a week, according to a Health Ministry statement sent to The Jordan Times.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Jordan - Initiative brings life skills to the classroom

13 September 2009 – Seeking to arm students with the fundamental skills to become constructive members of society, the Education Ministry and UNICEF are applying life skills-based education (LSBE) in the Kingdom's schools. The process of integrating LSBE in the Jordanian curricula started five years ago with two subjects (physical and pre-vocational education), according to Jumana Haj Ahmad, the director of the LSBE project. She underlined the importance of applying LSBE at the classroom level in supporting children's development.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Jordan – Queen Rania inspects local development projects in Balama

10 September 2009 - Her Majesty Queen Rania on Wednesday highlighted the importance of integrating children with special learning needs in diverse educational programmes during a visit to the community of Balama in Mafraq Governorate, where she inspected development efforts led by local organisations. Mercy Corps Country Director David Brigham highlighted local capacity development initiatives aimed at building secure and productive communities in poverty pockets across the Kingdom. As an international organisation working in 40 countries, Mercy Corps provides communities with the necessary tools and support to transform their lives. In Jordan, the NGO works on a project to support the Balama Charity Society increase its capacity to serve vulnerable groups such as women and children with disabilities.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Lebanon – Children in Lebanon pursue peace through art

7 September 2009 - With posters, plays and pictures, about 200 Lebanese and Palestinian children celebrated tolerance and diversity at World Vision's Arts for Peace Exhibition held recently at a centre 30 kilometres north of Beirut. The daylong exhibit concluded the three-month Arts for Peace project, which brought together small groups of children in communities



all over Lebanon to consider the themes of diversity and tolerance as key components of a peaceful society, and to express their thoughts and feelings about these themes in creative ways.

[Full article](#) – World Vision

Lebanon – Move to take domestic violence cases out of religious courts

23 September 2009 - As lawmakers struggle to form a government three months after Lebanon's parliamentary elections, women's rights activists await the opening of parliament to debate a new bill on domestic violence. With 18 different religious confessions officially recognized by the state, Lebanon has 15 religious courts to rule on matters of marriage, divorce, custody and other personal matters, including domestic violence. The differences between religious and civil law and between the laws for Christian and Muslim women are clear. The minimum age at which a girl can marry is far lower in all religious courts for girls than boys, and lower for Muslims than Christians; in some cases Islamic law permits girls as young as nine to marry. Islamic religious laws do not prosecute marital rape nor so-called honour killings while the custody of children in divorce cases is usually awarded to the father.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

Syria – UNHCR Holds Conference in Syria to Address Iraqi Refugee Crisis

19 September 2009 – The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) held a three-day conference on Iraqi refugees and their rights to international protection from August 11 through August 13 at Damascus's Four Seasons Hotel. The workshop discussed such topics as international refugee law, refugee status determination, the rights and duties of refugees and asylum seekers and the protection of refugees with special needs. The workshop focused mainly on the ever growing Iraqi refugee crisis in Syria. As of August 2009, there were over two-hundred thousand Iraqi refugees registered with the UNHCR in Syria, of which 82, 427 were identified as children, adolescents, women, elderly people at risk or disabled persons with critical medical conditions or with special needs protection. Yet, the numbers hardly end there.

[Full article](#) – Impunity Watch

In North Africa:

Algeria – Classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles: regroupement d'enseignants à Alger

25 septembre 2009 – Près de 300 enseignants, dont des experts étrangers, ont pris part, jeudi à Alger, pour la deuxième journée consécutive à un regroupement d'enseignants des écoles préparatoires aux grandes écoles en vue de parachever la préparation de la rentrée universitaire 2009-2010, prévue le 4 octobre. Ce regroupement permettra, selon les organisateurs, la finalisation du programme des activités pédagogiques pour cette année universitaire au sein des écoles préparatoires. Ce programme de travail annuel est élaboré par un collège d'enseignants encadreurs des différentes formations dispensées au sein des classes préparatoires.

[Full article](#) – Africtice Network

Algeria – L'école et l'enseignement des arts - Une vue de l'esprit

24 septembre 2009 - Il y a trois ans, nous considérons dans ces mêmes colonnes qu'il existait très peu de chances pour que les intentions conjuguées des ministres de la Culture et de l'Education nationale en restent justement au stade de l'intention. Une année auparavant, une



escouade de cadres du ministère de l'Education nationale a fait une descente dans la ville des Ponts et investi une suite de classes du lycée El Houria, mobilisé des dizaines d'enseignants principalement parmi ceux qui avaient des accointances avec les arts, notamment le quatrième, et, pour les encadrer, une brochette de comédiens réputés du Théâtre régional de Constantine (TRC).

[Full article](#) – La Tribune

Algeria – Manque d'hygiène et d'entretien dans les établissements scolaires

20 septembre 2009 – La santé scolaire en Algérie n'est pas au top. Loin de là. En effet, rares sont les établissements où l'on trouve des infirmeries, encore moins des médecins. Les unités de dépistage scolaire (UDS) ne couvrent pas toutes les écoles et ne disposent pas suffisamment de moyens pour répondre convenablement aux besoins des élèves.

[Full article](#) – La Tribune

Algeria – Trois enfants meurent emportés par les crues

9 September 2009 - Les intempéries qui ont touché plusieurs localités du Sud et des Hauts-Plateaux ont fait trois morts dans la wilaya d'El-Bayadh et provoqué des inondations, entraînant le recasement de plusieurs familles. Trois enfants sont décédés suite aux crues de Oued Zerzour dans la commune de Arbaouet, selon un bilan de la direction générale de la protection civile.

[Full article](#) – Top Actus Santé

Egypt – Egypt convicts 2 US couples for illegal adoption

18 September 2009 - An Egyptian judge on Thursday convicted two American couples of human trafficking in an illegal adoptions case and sentenced them to two years in prison, in a trial that highlighted bureaucratic entanglements and murky legislation on adopting children in this predominantly Muslim country. Islamic law observed in Egypt bans Muslims from adopting children, in the name of maintaining clear bloodlines to ensure lines of patrimony and inheritance. However, adoptions within the minority Christian community in Egypt do take place -- including by Egyptian Christians living abroad. But experts say they face enormous obstacles from authorities, so many couples and those arranging adoptions resort to forging documents and bribes.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

[Full article](#) – New York Times

Egypt – Discrimination continues despite law reform

15 September 2009 – In Egypt, the nationality law was reformed in 2004 to allow women to pass their nationality to their children. Even though the reform includes children born before the law amendment, the process specified by the law is too complicated, expensive, and requires the approval of the Minister of Interior. The minister's approval has been arbitrary and usually excludes children of Palestinian and Sudanese fathers for geo-political reasons.

[Full article](#) – Claiming Equal Citizenship

Libya – 1,6 million d'élèves reprennent le chemin des classes en Libye

13 septembre 2009 – Quelque 1 million 600 mille écoliers libyens des cycles d'enseignement de base et moyen ont repris ce dimanche le chemin des classes au titre de l'année académique 2009-2010. La présente rentrée scolaire s'est effectuée sous le signe de la poursuite de la réforme du



système éducatif du pays. Dans une déclaration à la presse, le secrétaire du comité populaire général libyen de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche scientifique, Mohamed Al-Hosn, a indiqué que 80 mille nouveaux élèves entreront cette année au cycle de l'enseignement de base alors que 65 mille autres accéderont au cycle d'enseignement moyen (secondaire spécialisé). Au niveau des infrastructures, le responsable libyen a signalé que 506 établissements scolaires répartis dans toutes les municipalités du pays ont été réfectionnés, avec des laboratoires, salles d'informatique et les moyens pédagogiques fournis. Il a ajouté que 129 institutions publiques d'enseignement dans les différentes municipalités ont été transformées en établissements d'enseignement privés et dotés d'équipements de pointe et d'instruments didactiques modernes.

[Full article](#) – Afrique en ligne

Morocco – Quelle place pour les TICE au Maroc ?

24 September 2009 – Le ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de l'Enseignement supérieur a lancé il y a trois ans un programme intitulé GENIE (pour « généralisation de l'informatique dans l'enseignement ») pour l'enseignement primaire et secondaire et GENIE Sup pour les universités. Ce programme, dont l'investissement financier a été très important, a pour objectif d'équiper les établissements scolaires et les universités, de former les enseignants à ces nouveaux outils et de développer les ressources numériques.

[Full article](#) – Africtice Network

Morocco – Gare aux châtiments corporels à l'école !

24 September 2009 – Barbare, injuste, sadique, archaïque... les critiques contre les châtiments corporels des élèves se font de plus en plus nombreuses. Pratique répandue dans nos écoles primaires, ce type de sanctions soulève un déluge de protestations chez les parents et tuteurs des écoliers, victimes d'agressions injustifiables de la part de leurs enseignants. Il y a longtemps que le ministère de l'Éducation nationale a donné de fermes instructions prohibant les punitions physiques à l'école, mais force est de constater qu'elles sont restées encre sur papier en l'absence de mécanismes efficaces de contrôle. Il semble, d'emblée, qu'une large frange des enseignants marocains sont profondément convaincus de l'utilité de cette méthode et ne cessent de vanter ses « bienfaits » comme moyen efficace d'éducation et de correction.

[Full article](#) – Le Matin

Morocco – Rencontre familiale au village d'enfants de Dar Bouazza

22 septembre 2009 – Le village d'enfants SOS de Dar Bouazza a accueilli récemment un "ftour" convivial. Au rendez-vous, des partenaires de marque et d'autres acteurs du tissu associatif. « Nous sommes très heureux de vous accueillir parmi nous. Je tiens à remercier nos partenaires qui ont démontré et démontre encore l'intérêt porter au soutien des enfants en situation difficile. Donner une seconde chance aux orphelins, aux abandonnés, aux marginalisés et à tous ceux qui se sont séparés de leurs familles pour une raison ou pour une autre», ainsi s'exprime Béatrice Beloubad, directrice nationale de SOS villages d'enfant, «un soutien qui va permettre d'agrandir notre notoriété, et va crédibiliser d'avantage notre travail».

[Full article](#) – Le Matin

Morocco – Des écoles modèles pour plus de performance

20 septembre 2009 – Onze écoles préscolaires prévus sur tout le territoire national sont «fins prêts» pour la rentrée 2009-2010 et devraient ouvrir leurs portes le 28 septembre. La Fondation



Mohammed VI à travers la Fondation marocaine pour la promotion de l'enseignement préscolaire (FMPS) est à l'origine de cette initiative destinée en premier lieu aux enfants d'enseignants de 4 à 6 ans. Les journées portes ouvertes organisées par cette institution du 10 au 18 septembre ont permis de faire découvrir au grand public ces nouveaux locaux, l'environnement pédagogique mis en place ainsi que les animations spécifiques qu'offrent ces nouveaux établissements répartis sur les grandes villes comme Casablanca, Rabat, Marrakech, Meknès, Fès mais aussi Sala Al Jadida, Settat, Al Hoceima, Laâyoune et Tétouan.

[Full article](#) – Le Matin

Morocco – Festival « Les arts de ruelles » : Première édition à Khouribgade

18 septembre 2009 – La ville du Khouribga abrite, du 25 au 27 septembre, la première édition du Festival «Les arts des ruelles de Khouribga». Cette manifestation artistique cible en particulier les jeunes des différents quartiers de la ville qui vont donner libre cours à leur expression corporelle et exprimer, en cette occasion, ce qui effleure leur esprit et ce qu'ils veulent transmettre comme création.

[Full article](#) – Le Matin

Morocco – Le conseil de gouvernement poursuit la discussion des exposés sur l'agriculture, le sport et l'enseignement scolaire

17 septembre 2009 – Le conseil de gouvernement réuni jeudi sous la présidence du Premier ministre, M. Abbas El Fassi a poursuivi la discussion des exposés présentés, jeudi dernier, sur les secteurs de l'agriculture, du sport et de l'enseignement scolaire.

[Full article](#) – Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse

Morocco – Inquiétudes du Maroc au sujet de la persistance de pratiques d'esclavagisme dans les camps de Tindouf

17 septembre 2009 - Le Maroc a exprimé, mercredi devant le Conseil des droits de l'Homme (CDH) de l'ONU, ses inquiétudes au sujet de la persistance de certaines pratiques d'esclavagisme et de travail forcé exercées par les dirigeants du polsario à l'encontre de certaines tranches des populations des camps de Tindouf où sont séquestrées des populations marocaines. M. Hilale, [représentant permanent du Maroc auprès de l'Office des Nations unies à Genève], a invité, à ce propos, la Rapporteuse spéciale sur la vente d'enfants, la prostitution d'enfants et la pornographie impliquant des enfants, à se saisir de cette question de toute urgence afin d'alerter la communauté internationale sur cette situation anachronique et à tout mettre en oeuvre pour permettre à ces populations de vivre dignement et d'exercer pleinement leurs droits les plus élémentaires, notamment celui de recouvrer leur pleine et totale liberté.

[Full article](#) – Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse

Morocco – Vers une stratégie nationale pour la prise en charge de l'autisme

14 septembre 2009 – Une commission mixte chargée d'élaborer une stratégie et un plan d'action nationaux pour la prise en charge de l'autisme sera mise en place dans les prochains jours, a annoncé lundi à Rabat, la ministre du Développement social, de la Famille et de la Solidarité, Mme Nouzha Skalli. Lors d'un Ftour-débat sur le thème "prise en charge de l'autisme au Maroc", Mme Skalli a précisé que cette commission réunira le département de la Famille, aux côtés d'autres secteurs gouvernementaux et du Collectif autisme Maroc.

[Full article](#) – Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse



Maroc – L'enquête confirme l'implication de l'ambassade de Norvège dans la sortie des enfants de Skah du Maroc

4 septembre 2009 – Le Royaume du Maroc confirme, après enquête diligentée par les autorités nationales compétentes que Selma et Tarek Skah, enfants de M. Khalid Skah et de Mme Anne Cecile Hobscot, ont bel et bien été exfiltrés du territoire national, de manière illégale, avec l'aide avérée de l'ambassade de Norvège à Rabat, indique un communiqué du ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération. Le dénommé Stein Haugen, attaché de police chargé de l'immigration à l'ambassade, a joué un rôle central dans cette opération de sortie frauduleuse, en violation flagrante de la législation marocaine relative au déplacement à l'étranger d'enfants mineurs, tout en ayant recours aux méthodes et moyens propres aux réseaux de trafic de drogue ou de migration illégale, ajoute le communiqué.

[Full communiqué](#) – Ministère des Affaires Étrangères et de la Coopération

Morocco – Probe confirms involvement of Norway embassy in illegal exit of Skah children

4 September 2009 – The Kingdom of Morocco confirms, following the investigation conducted by national authorities, that Selma and Tarek Skah, children of Khalid Skah and Anne Cecile Hobscot, have left Morocco illegally, through the help of Norway's embassy in Rabat, says on Friday a release of the Foreign Ministry.

[Full article](#) – Agence Maghreb Arabe Presse

Tunisia – Suivi du déroulement de la rentrée scolaire dans la région de Bizerte

22 septembre 2009 – Le suivi du déroulement de la rentrée scolaire 2009/2010, a été au centre de la visite que M. Hatem Ben Salem, ministre de l'Éducation et de la Formation, a effectuée, mardi, dans la région de Bizerte. M. Ben Salem a insisté, à cette occasion, sur la bonne application des dispositions préventives décidées par le ministère de l'Éducation et de la Formation, en coordination avec le ministère de la Santé publique, pour la protection des élèves du virus A/H1N1.

[Full article](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

Tunisia – Annual report on Youth for June 2008-July 2009 period

17 September 2009 – The annual report on youth for the period between June 2008 and July 2009 was the focal point of a news conference held on Thursday by Minister of Youth, Sport and Physical Education Samir Laabidi, with attendance of Secretary of State for Sports Béchir Louzir and representatives of youth structures. "The report drawn up by different ministries and structures related to youth contains six major aspects," he specified: "the national strategy in matters of youth," "youth and education and training," "youth: professional integration and employment," "youth and health and social coverage," "youth and leisure institutions for youngsters," "dialogue with youth" and "youth and sports activities."

[Full article](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

Tunisia – New school and academic year: strategy of prevention against H1N1 flu

16 September 2009 – Preventive measures against the A (H1N1) flu in schools and universities, especially that the seasonal flu is drawing nearer, were the focal point of a news conference held on Wednesday in Tunis, with attendance of representatives of concerned ministries. Action



plans have been devised to this effect to cope with the spread of the virus in schools, all the more so that the pandemic has not come under control yet on the world scale.

[Full article](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

Tunisia – Rencontre sur la promotion des écoles coraniques en Tunisie

8 septembre 2009 - M. Boubaker El Akhzouri, ministre des Affaires religieuses, a mis l'accent sur le rôle éducatif qui incombe aux Koutteb (écoles coraniques) dans la Tunisie de l'ère nouvelle. Il a rappelé la stratégie de réforme globale mise en oeuvre par le ministère et appliquée depuis l'année scolaire 2001-2002 visant à promouvoir les méthodes et les programmes pédagogiques de ces établissements, en les adaptant à l'esprit de l'époque.

[Full article](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

Tunisia – La Tunisie à la conférence internationale à Rome sur la violence à l'égard de la femme

7 septembre 2009 - La Tunisie a participé à la conférence internationale sur la violence à l'égard de la femme, organisée par le ministère italien de l'égalité des chances, les 9 et 10 septembre 2009, à Rome. Au cours des travaux, Mme Sarra Kanoun Jarraya, ministre des Affaires de la Femme, de la Famille, de l'Enfance et des Personnes âgées, a fait un exposé sur le thème: "accès de la femme à l'enseignement".

[Full article](#) – Agence Tunis Afrique Presse

In the Gulf:

The Gulf – Gender Discrimination in Citizenship Rights

17 September 2009 - Here in Bahrain, women who marry foreigners cannot obtain citizenship for their husbands or children. But men can apply for citizenship for their foreign wives after five years of marriage, while their children are nationals from birth. In fact, citizenship laws are roughly similar in all the Gulf states, except in Saudi Arabia, where a small change was made in the law in 2007. Sons of citizen mothers and foreign fathers qualify for citizenship when they turn 18. The daughters, however, can become nationals only if they marry Saudis. The discrimination in citizenship laws means there are "stateless" children in the Gulf. Bahrain has roughly 2,000. Kuwait 8,000, and the United Arab Emirates 14,000, according to its Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour. As non-nationals, they cannot claim any of the generous social welfare measures legislated by Gulf governments for their citizens.

[Full article](#) – Inter Press Service

Bahrain – Student punished for ridiculing university administration

Nour Hussein, a student, was punished by dropping one whole semester from her academic record accused of distributing papers ridiculing the university administration and stirring the students against the university rules. Bahrain human rights institute condemned this practice and requested to lift the punishment done against Nour and maintaining her academic record and not punishing her in any other way.

[Full article](#) – ANHRI



Bahrain – Two more schools closed down in Bahrain

17 September 2009 – Two more schools have been shut down in Bahrain after students tested positive for the swine flu. Ibn Khuldoon National School, one of the largest private schools in the country, and Al Rawabi School will be closed for one week in line with the directives issued by the education ministry in coordination with the health ministry.

[Full article](#) – Gulf news

Bahrain – Officials split over school closures

23 September 2009 – There has been "serious disagreement" among the Health and Education Ministry officials over the closure of schools to combat swine flu, it emerged yesterday. Senior Health Ministry officials claimed they were against the extended closure of schools, arguing it went against the spirit of World Health Organisation's (WHO) recommendations.

[Full article](#) – Gulf Daily News

Kuwait – Naturalize children of divorced Kuwaiti women, widows

16 September 2009 – MP Faisal Al-Duwaisan has asked the Ministry of Interior to immediately grant citizenship to the children of divorced Kuwaiti women, widows, and naturalized Kuwaitis who have fulfilled the specified conditions. Al-Duwaisan claimed several files of children under the abovementioned categories have been left pending and were not referred to the Cabinet. He lamented the negligence of the concerned officials has disrupted the educational, employment and social aspects of the lives of these children. He pointed out "we can easily solve this problem as there are laws regarding the issue, yet the ministry has not taken any tangible step in this regard."

[Full article](#) – Zawya

Oman – Oman again postpones reopening of schools due to H1N1 scare

16 September 2009 – In a bid to further tighten their defences against the fast spreading H1N1 virus, the Oman government has decided to postpone reopening of the 1,053 Education Ministry run schools. The schools, imparting education to nearly 600,000 students, were due to open on September 26 after the regular reopening of August 29 was put off.

[Full article](#) – Gulf news

Qatar – CRC examines report of Qatar

29 September 2009 – The Committee on the Rights of the Child today reviewed the second periodic report of Qatar on how that country is implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

[Full press release](#) – UNOG

Saudi Arabia – Saudi Arabia's US\$100 million donation for IDPs biggest to date

27 September 2009 – Saudi Arabia's US\$100 million pledge to the UN for the specific purpose of meeting the needs of some 2.7 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in northern Pakistan is the largest single contribution to date for that cause, according to Martin Mogwanja, UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Pakistan. "It will enable the humanitarian community in



Pakistan to reach hundreds of thousands of people in need and help restore their homes and livelihoods,” Mogwanja said in a statement.

[Full article](#) – IRIN news

United Arab Emirates – Community Development Authority organises entertainment day for children with disabilities

9 September 2009 – The Disability Services Department at the Community Development Authority (CDA) in Dubai recently organized a fun-filled day for children with disabilities at the Dubai Early Childhood Development Centre (DECDC), which will launch its services for the community in October. The initiative is part of CDA’s commitment to provide a healthy social environment for children and to include them in a wide spectrum of social activities.

[Full article](#) – Eye of Dubai

United Arab Emirates – Emirates NBD supports Al Noor Centre for Children with Special Needs

3 September 2009 – To help contribute to the great cause of the Al Noor organization and assist with providing the means for the children with special needs to meet their full potential, Emirates NBD customers will be encouraged to contribute a monthly donation of AED 25 and above through their credit cards.

[Full article](#) – Eye of Dubai

Yemen – Workshop on children protection mechanisms started in Aden

5 September 2009 – A workshop on the mechanisms of protecting children began on Saturday in Aden, organized by the Coordination Body for the Yemeni Non-Government Organizations in cooperation with the European Union and the Children Welfare Organization in Yemen under the slogan (Every Child Has the Right of Life).

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – Huda Omar, "My children cry out for food day and night"

6 September 2009 – Huda Omar, 30, fled war-torn Somalia by boat in 2006 to Oman, where she spent more than two and a half years before paying traffickers to smuggle her to Yemen. But in Yemen she is eligible for protection only, and not support, as she has not been allowed to register as a refugee with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). Living in the street with her two young daughters, just metres away from UNHCR’s office in Sanaa, Huda told IRIN her story.

[Full story](#) – IRIN

Yemen – Children bear brunt of Saada conflict

7 September 2009 – Living with a host family in the capital Sanaa, Hamid al-Dhahiri never thinks about returning to his home village in Saada Province where fighting between the army and Houthi rebels claimed the lives of his wife and two of his six children on 14 August. “I fled... just to save the lives of the rest of my children and help them continue their education,” al-Dhahiri said. “The war has forced my two elder sons Osama and Aiman to drop out of school... and destroyed our home and farmland.” Children have been deeply affected by the conflict and would continue to feel its impact for many years to come, Aboudou Karimou Adjibade, country representative for the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in Yemen, said.



UNICEF is seeking US\$6.1 million to meet the needs of war-affected women and children.

[Full article](#) – IRIN

Yemen – NGOs slam using children as human shields by rebels

7 September 2009 – Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) for childhood care in Yemen have expressed their conviction to using children as human shields by the rebels group in some areas of Yemen's northern province of Saada. In a statement issued by those organizations, they described those acts as irresponsible and reckless, affirming their condemnation for the criminal acts carried out by al-Houthi rebels against children and involving them in fighting.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – Le drame des «fiancées de la mort» au Yémen

13 septembre 2009 – L'Organisation yéménite pour la protection de l'enfance (Siyaj) a annoncé dimanche que la petite Fawzia Abdallah Youssef était décédée vendredi d'une hémorragie dans un hôpital de la province de Hajja (au nord de Sanaa). La fillette est décédée peu après son arrivée à l'hôpital et l'enfant est mort-né, selon un communiqué de l'organisation. Fawzia «avait été retirée de l'école et mariée de force à onze ans par sa famille qui vit dans le besoin», a indiqué l'organisation, ajoutant que son père souffrait d'insuffisance rénale. «Le cas de Fawzia illustre le drame de celles que nous appelons "les fiancées de la mort", des fillettes de moins de 15 ans que l'on marie de force le plus souvent pour des raisons économiques», a déclaré à l'AFP le directeur de Siyaj, Ahmad al-Qourashi. Il estime à «près de 50% la proportion de fillettes et d'adolescentes mariées avant 15 ans» dans les zones rurales du Yémen.

[Full article](#) – La Presse

Yemen – Yemen, UNICEF discuss displaced children situation

17 September 2009 – Minister of Education Abdul-Salam al-Jawfi held Wednesday talks with UNICEF Representative Yemen Aboudou Karimou Adjibade on conditions of displaced children who left their homes due to Sa'ada rebellion in some regions of Saada, Amran and Hajjah camps.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – More than 80 civilians killed in Yemen air raid

18 September 2009 - More than 80 civilians were killed when an air raid blasted a makeshift camp of displaced people in northern Yemen, witnesses said on Thursday, as the army pursued its offensive on Shiite rebels. One witness told AFP by telephone that most of those killed in Wednesday's raid were women and children.

[Full article](#) – The Jordan Times

Yemen – Children detained illegally in private jails

September 2009 – Nidhal, 14, from Sana'a, pushed his wheelbarrow around the vegetable market every day selling potatoes to help his poor family. When he came back home, his mother was very grateful for his small contribution in saving his family from begging. Then one day, when he was in the market with his wheelbarrow, he quarreled with a 19-year-old. As they argued, Nidhal grabbed a jambiyya from a passerby and stabbed him in the back. The man was admitted to hospital, and his family arranged for Nidhal to be put in their sheikh's private jail.

[Full story](#) – The Yemen Times



Yemen – Traumatized women and children try to cope with displacement

25 September 2009 – Elham roams aimlessly around the settlement of tents that is now her home. She claps her hands, mutters incomprehensibly and, from time to time, screams hysterically to nobody in particular. The six-year-old suffers from deep trauma, one of the many young victims of the fighting in northern Yemen between government troops and Al Houthi forces that has forced thousands of people to leave their homes in and around the city of Sa'ada since the beginning of August. Vulnerable women have also been traumatized and, like the children, need help. Elham is one of about 5,500 people who have fled to Al Mazraq Camp in the district of Haradh, which is located south-west of Sa'ada governorate. The UN refugee agency has been setting up tents and distributing non-food aid items, but people like Elham need specialist counselling that is difficult to provide in the deep field.

[Full story](#) – CRIN

Yemen – Special children center to be established in Taiz

27 September 2009 – Governor of Taiz Hamoud al-Soffi agreed on Sunday with the head of delegation of the German charitable association "Hammer Forum" Iman Wilies to establish a special center for the children at al-Thawra Hospital in Taiz.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – GCC approves Yemen's propose over inserting human rights concepts into curricula

29 September 2009 – The executive council of the Arab education office for Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) approved in its 68th round the Yemen propose presented to the round over inserting concepts of human rights into the curriculums in the GCC states and Yemen, Deputy Minister of Education Abdullah al-Hamadi said.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – Yemen starts awareness campaign on H1N1 flu in schools

30 September 2009 – A national awareness campaign on protection from H1N1 flu was launched Wednesday, Information Official in Ministry of Education Esmail Zaidan said. Zaidan indicated that the campaign targets schools managers, preachers, parents councils, education and health officials in the different provinces in the country.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – Yemen planned 'temporary schools' for displaced in north

30 September 2009 – Under an emergency plan, Yemen and Unicef have agreed to set up temporary schools at the displaced camps in the northern provinces of Saada and Amran, a move which comes as the new school year, postponed in some provinces amid swine flu surge, approaches.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen - \$2 mn in Saudi aid for displaced in north

30 September 2009 - Saudi Arabia has provided \$ 2 million in aid for the war-displaced people in northern Yemen, minister of Public Health and Population has said. Abdul Karim Ras'a also said that Yemen and Saudi Arabia were discussing the establishment of a displaced camp at the Alib



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crossing to house 2000 refugees as well as allowing relief agencies to deliver aid for the affected there.

[Full article](#) – Yemen News Agency

Yemen – CRC examines report of Yemen on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

30 September 2009 – The Committee on the Rights of the Child this morning reviewed the initial report of Yemen on how that country is implementing the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

[Full press release](#) – UNOG