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NEWS FROM AEFJN

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Nigeria: Toxic container - back to sender

Ejiofor Alike, Lagos <http://www.thisdayonline.com/nview.php?id=171312>

Maersk Line, the operator of MV Maersk Nashville, has been directed by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency (NESREA) to retain the container NO. UESU4635950, carrying toxic waste onboard MV Maersk Nashville but return it to the port of loading in Rotterdam, Netherlands. The vessel was detained by port authorities for some days earlier this month and then released. Commenting on this development, Managing Director of Maersk Nigeria Ltd, Mr. David Skov, said in a statement that the said container was then inspected by NESREA then. According to him, Maersk Line is still awaiting the official report from the authorities as to the exact nature of the cargo.

Dutch Parliament supports fund for foreign victims of corporate misbehaviour

Paul de Clerck, Amsterdam www.milieudefensie.nl

The lower house of the Dutch parliament approved a motion that requests the government to work out the possibilities for a fund for financial support for juridical costs of foreign victims of irresponsible behaviour of Dutch multinationals that come to Dutch courts. The motion was inspired on proposals tabled by Friends of the Earth Netherlands during a parliamentary hearing last year and was written by a MP of the Christians Party. This party is in the current government, but the request to investigate possibilities for a fund will be dealt with by a new government, after the upcoming elections in June.

The idea behind the motion is that it must be possible for victims of companies based in the Netherlands to claim financial damages in a civil court case, if this is not feasible in their home country. Criminal damages are very restricted under Dutch law. Friends of the Earth is campaigning for other improvements in the field of corporate liability, such as a powerful "ombudsman" and more clarity in Dutch laws on the responsibilities of Dutch multinationals for the acts of daughter companies abroad.

Funding threatens HIV/AIDS prevention

Susan Anyangu-Amu, Nairobi <http://ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=50892>

Kenya was denied 270 million dollars in funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria because of a major concern over two ministries of health jostling over control of the funds. A shortage of essential drugs for public hospitals is the result. Government will not continue to provide free access to HIV/AIDS drugs. Currently, the government allocates 6.6 million dollars for each financial year towards fighting HIV, a far cry from the estimated 133 million dollars spent annually in previous years. Pregnant mothers who are HIV-positive could soon find it challenging to access life-saving HIV drugs because Kenya was denied 270 million dollars in funding from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The Global Fund cited the existence of two ministries of health and the jostling between them over control of funds as a major source of concern. According to James Kamau, coordinator of *Kenya Treatment Access Movement*, jostling between the ministry of medical services and that of public health over who should handle donor money is already affecting the smooth functioning of the health sector. "Already, due to the confusion and competition between the two ministries on who should control the money, procurement of essential drugs for public hospitals has not been done leading to shortages," Kamau says.

South Africa: Over 32,000 guns collected during amnesty

www.iansa.org

Some 32,169 guns are no longer in circulation thanks to the joint efforts of South Africa's police and citizens during the nationwide Firearms Amnesty, which ended on 11 April. Of the total guns recovered, 53% were voluntarily surrendered and 21% were confiscated by police in roadblock, search and seizure operations. 27% of the weapons were illegal. Pamela Crowsley from Gun-Free South Africa said: "we are very happy with the amount of firearms that were retrieved and also with the processes that the amnesty triggered. Police have been actively working with local organisations, creating better communication and a sense of trust. The public learnt about the firearms law and lots of public discussions about the dangers of gun ownership were held"

G(irls)20 Summit in Toronto – Canada June 16-18, 2010 http://www.girlsandwomen.com/apply_to_attend-9.html

The viral global campaign to solicit grassroots ideas on how to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that most impact women and girls will culminate in the inaugural, ground-breaking G(irls)20 Summit. The Summit will bring together one girl from each of the G20 countries to Toronto ten days before the official G20 Summit. This inaugural G(irls)20 Summit will reconvene prior to next year's G20 Summit in France. Ultimately, the goal is to bring the economic prowess of girls and women to the attention of G20 leaders and ensure that the role of girls and women claims a place on future G20 agendas. On June 26th and 27th, G20 leaders will gather in Toronto to discuss measures to promote global financial stability and ways to achieve a sustainable economic growth and development. All organizations and businesses striving for economic growth and development understand the need to utilize all resources – financial, material and human. Similarly, world leaders must recognize the importance of leveraging the world's 3.3 billion girls and women in the search for innovative, sustainable and socially responsible solutions to global challenges.

That's why, from Jun 16th -18th, twenty girls from the G20 countries will come together in Toronto to present, discuss and promote tangible, innovative and scalable solutions that put girls and women front and centre on the G20 agenda.

Jesuits JCTR urges USA and west to ban vulture funds as Britain did Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection-Press Release www.jctr.org.zm

Britain has banned vulture funds which have been cashing on poor countries debt repayment. Following devastating impact vulture funds have had on African economy, Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection is calling other rich nations to follow Britain's move and ban vulture funds. "The effects of the vulture funds on the development of low income countries have been very devastating the last few years," observes Privilege Haang'andu, JCTR's Programme Officer for Debt and Public Resource Monitoring. "In this vein", Haang'andu says, "the JCTR applauds the British Government for being the first country to ban vulture funds. The British House of Lords passed the law banning the vulture funds on 08 April 2010. Vulture funds are private specialist predators that buy up poor countries' debt at dramatically reduced prices and sue poor countries for their full value plus costs. What the British Government has done sets good precedence to other European countries and the United States to stop the injustice perpetrated by vulture funds".

European Biofuels Policy Prejudiced *New GlobEcon¹ report concludes Renewable Energy Directive's foreign biofuel GHG calculations faulty, intentionally discriminate against palm oil.* <http://www.globecon.org/en/publications/globecon-research-papers.html>

In the European Parliament, [GlobEcon's](#) Dr Gernot Pehnelt released a new study that revealed the prejudice nature of the Renewable Energy Directive towards foreign biofuels. The report, entitled "[European Policies Towards Palm Oil: Sorting Out Some Facts.](#)" demonstrates that the default assumptions embedded in the directive about the ecological impact of foreign biofuels reflect politics, not scientific or economic reality. Warning that the side effects range from political friction and trade disputes to severe economic handicaps for developing countries, Dr Pehnelt explains: « *many of the claims that foreign biofuels, specifically palm oil, are a threat to the environment are seriously flawed, some even completely unfounded....The EU has embedded protectionist measures into the Directive at the behest of anti-development environmentalists and the uncompetitive European biofuels industry. These measures set unfair values on greenhouse gas savings for foreign biofuels, thus precluding market access... The rich biodiversity in oil palm plantations, the excellent crown cover oil palms provide and the yield per hectare advantages of this low-energy, low-fertilizer crop... Palm oil acts as a substantial driver of economic growth in the developing world, drastically reducing hunger and poverty in regions that actively cultivate this valuable crop. It's time for Europe to not only recognize the energy and environment benefits of palm oil, but also the suffering in low-income, tropical countries that palm oil critics continue to perpetuate.* »

Health does not follow wealth

Geoffrey York, Matala

The first of 3 articles by Geoffrey York from Angola. "Despite Angola's vast oil wealth the country still has one of the lowest life expectancies in the world and one of the highest rates of child mortality... Its oil riches buy modern hospitals, but a shortage of doctors and nurses means they do little good ." GY see video - New hospital, no staff 2 min. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/in-angola-health-does-not-follow-wealth/article1527033/>

The average Angolan can expect to live only to the age of 42, one of the worst life expectancies in the world. Angola's child mortality rate is among the highest in Africa, with children still dying from preventable causes like measles, tetanus .

¹ [GlobEcon](#) is an independent research and consulting institute based in Jena, Germany. Together with its partners, GlobEcon develops well-founded and practice-oriented studies on current economic and political issues. The consultancy's research focuses on health economics, development economics, competition policy and international relations. In addition, GlobEcon provides decision makers with comprehensive background information and tailor-made analysis and consulting services.