

NTS Bulletin May 2010 (Issue 1)

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MAIN HIGHLIGHT

Earthquake rocks China again – were lessons learnt from Sichuan?

An earthquake measuring 7.1 on the Richter scale rocked Southern Qinghai in China on Wednesday, 14 April 2010. Over 2,200 people have died in the earthquake. The population of the province is largely Tibetan. Despite the rough terrain, soldiers, civilians and Tibetan monks were seen working together in providing relief to those affected. However, looking at some lessons learnt from the Sichuan's earthquake in 2008, questions about the preparedness of the authorities in the face of natural disasters still remain. Besides, with the collapse of many buildings, issues regarding shoddy construction are also being raised, with blame directed at the Chinese government for overlooking the issue of unauthorised construction and for the region's relative poverty, which makes them more vulnerable to the impact of the disaster.

Additional Info:

- 'Fault Lines: Earthquakes in China's Qinghai province kill hundreds of people', *The Economist*, 14 April 2010.
- 'Death toll rises in China earthquake', *CNN*, 25 April 2010.
- 'Reconstruction of quake zone faces difficulties: vice governor', *Xinhua*, 26 April 2010.
- 'Vice Premier urges quake relief efforts to focus on resettlement, reconstruction', *Xinhua*, 24 April 2010.
- 'China steps up epidemic prevention in quake zone', *Xinhua*, 25 April 2010.
- 'China mourns victims of Qinghai earthquake', *DNAIndia*, 21 April 2010.
- 'UNICEF Situation Report (China)', UNICEF, 23 April 2010.
- Tania Branigan, 'Aid-giving monks told to leave China earthquake zone', *The Guardian*, 22 April 2010.

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HEALTH SECURITY

News and Commentaries

- Sheeran, Josette, 'G8 Leaders should focus on maternal and child nutrition', *The Toronto Star*, 26 April 2010.
- 'Eruption Health Risks', *Asia One Health*, 23 April 2010.
- 'The numbers tell a promising story for World Malaria Day', *The Financial Times*, 22 April 2010.
- Sternberg, Steve, 'Lessons from the swine flu pandemic', *USA Today*, 22 April 2010.
- Butler, Declan, 'Portrait of a year-old pandemic', *Nature News*, 21 April 2010.
- Wentz, Margaret, 'Playing Politics with Dying Mothers', *The Globe and Mail*, 20 April 2010.
- Jackson, Derrick Z., 'The Threat of Chronic Diseases', *The Boston Globe*, 20 April 2010.
- 'Ash Cloud 'poses no health risk'', *BBC*, 20 April 2010.
- Rodriguez, Gregory, 'Can we be too healthy and live too long?' *Los Angeles Times*, 19 April 2010.
- 'Why urban health matters', WHO, April 2010.



Papers and Reports

- Feldbaum, Harley and Joshua Michaud, 'Health Diplomacy and the Enduring Relevance of Foreign Policy Interests', *PLoS Med* 7(4): e1000226, 20 April 2010.

The rise of global health issues within the world of foreign policy is precipitating great interest in the concept and practice of health diplomacy. Much discussion of this new field, particularly within the global health community, has narrowly focused on how diplomatic negotiations and foreign policy can be used to support global health goals. Recent articles claim, for example, that 'foreign policy is now being driven substantially by health' and that health can move 'foreign policy away from a debate about interests to one about global altruism'.

New and unprecedented opportunities to bolster global health through diplomacy have emerged, but claims that health now drives foreign policy fail to appreciate how significantly traditional foreign policy interests continue to shape health diplomacy. Foreign policy interests play a critical role in determining which global health issues achieve political priority and attract funding. In addition, an

important, but less analysed trend involves the increasing use of health interventions as *instruments* to advance foreign policy interests. Countries are increasingly using health initiatives as a means to improve security, project power and influence, improve their international image, or support other traditional foreign policy objectives.

- James, Chris D., et al, 'Health-financing strategy for WHO's Asia-Pacific Region', *The Lancet*, Volume 375, 24 April 2010.

WHO has developed a new health-financing strategy (2010–2015) for the Asia-Pacific region, which was adopted by Member States in September 2009. This article summarises the strategy's four target indicators, comments on health expenditure within the region and outlines some of WHO's guidelines for policymakers on appropriate health-financing policies.

- 'The Global Monitoring Report: The MDGs after the Crisis', The World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund, 26 April 2010.

The global economic crisis has slowed the pace of poverty reduction in developing countries, and is hampering progress toward the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), says a new report from the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund. The crisis is having an impact in several key MDG areas, including those related to hunger, child and maternal health, gender equality, access to clean water, and disease control, and it will continue to affect development prospects well beyond 2015, says the *Global Monitoring Report 2010: The MDGs after the Crisis*. The report projects that the number of extreme poor could total around 920 million five years from now, marking a significant decline from the 1.8 billion people living in extreme poverty in 1990.

- Hogan, Margaret C., et al., 'Maternal Mortality for 181 Countries, 1980–2008: a systematic analysis of progress towards Millennium Development Goal 5', *The Lancet*, 12 April 2010.

Maternal mortality remains a major challenge to health systems worldwide. Reliable information about the rates and trends in maternal mortality is essential for resource mobilisation, and for planning and assessment of progress towards Millennium Development Goal 5 (MDG 5), the target for which is a 75 per cent reduction in the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) from 1990 to 2015. Levels and trends in maternal mortality for 181 countries have been assessed in this article.

According to the authors, substantial, albeit varied, progress has been made towards MDG 5. Although only 23 countries are on track to achieve a 75 per cent decrease in MMR by 2015, countries such as Egypt, China, Ecuador, and Bolivia have been achieving accelerated progress.

Events & Announcements

- World Malaria Day, 25 April 2010.
- Third Geneva Conference on Person-centred Medicine, Geneva, Switzerland, 3–5 May 2010.
- Sixty-third World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland, 17–21 May 2010.
- World No Tobacco Day, 31 May 2010.

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FOOD SECURITY

News & Commentaries

- 'India opposition parties strike over high food prices', *BBC News*, 27 April 2010.
- 'Food insecurity should be dealt with urgency', *Nepal News*, 27 April 2010.
- 'Water scarcity causing food insecurity in Mali', *AlertNet NewsDesk*, 26 April 2010.
- 'TIMOR-LESTE: Poor storage adds to food insecurity', *AlertNet NewsDesk*, 26 April 2010.
- 'Echoes of 2005: CARE urges international community not to make the same mistakes in Niger food crisis', *AlertNet NewsDesk*, 26 April 2010.
- 'UN official urges responsible investment in agriculture in poorer countries', UN News Centre, 26 April 2010.
- 'UN food agency steps up response amid growing food crisis in Niger', UN News Centre, 26 April 2010.
- 'New market access rules, economic crisis affecting seafood industry', FAO Media Centre, 26 April 2010.
- 'Agriculture and food security trust fund launched', FAO Media Centre, 22 April 2010.
- Kristin Davis, 'Commentary: Putting Agricultural Extension Back on the Development Agenda', *IFPRI Forum*, 30 March 2010.
- 'Putting Poverty and Hunger Solutions to the Test', *IFPRI Forum*, 30 March 2010.



Papers & Reports

- 'Beyond Copenhagen: mitigating climate change and achieving food security through soil carbon sequestration', *Food Security Journal*, 22 April 2010.

This article explains the technical potential of C (carbon) sequestration in world soils for mitigating climate change and describes its positive impacts on agronomic productivity and global food security through the improvement of soil quality. It also supports the idea of economic development through the provision of payments to farmers in developing countries for their stewardship and enhancement of ecosystem services. These would be generated by their use of recommended management practices for improved agriculture. Depending upon climate and other variables, C sequestration could increase cereal and food legume production in developing countries. It is precisely this strategy which would have received broad political support at the COP-15 meeting in Copenhagen in December 2009 from developing countries, emerging economies and the industrialised world. Addressing the issue of food insecurity and global warming through sequestration of C in soils and the biota, along with payments to resource-poor farmers for the ecosystem services rendered, would be a timely win-win strategy.

Events & Announcements

- Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) Launch Conference: Building food security in the face of climate change,

CLIMATE CHANGE, ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY AND NATURAL DISASTERS



News & Commentaries

- Shachtman, Noah, 'Green Monster', *Foreign Policy*, May/June 2010.
- 'Climate change increases heat waves, floods – U.S. EPA', *Reuters*, 28 April 2010.
- Grattan, Michelle, 'PM's climate credibility undermined', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 April 2010.
- 'SAARC leaders assemble to address climate issue', *The Daily Star*, 27 April 2010.
- Van der Merwe, Christy, 'Key developing country bloc puts climate ball back in rich-country court', *Engineering News*, 26 April 2010.
- 'People's World Conference on Climate Change Adopts Declaration', *Climate-L.org*, 23 April 2010.
- Yunus, Khairdzir, 'Malaysia, Japan Announce Initiative for Environment, Energy', *Bernama*, 19 April 2010.
- Mariagabriela, Flores, 'WFP launches Carbon Footprint Calculator', World Food Programme, 13 April 2010.

Papers & Reports

- Meinzen-Dick, Ruth; Helen Markelova and Kelsey Moore, 'The Role of Collective Action and Property Rights in Climate Change Strategies', CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights, Policy Brief No. 7, International Food and Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), February 2010.

This brief provides an overview of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies, highlighting the institutional arrangements for each component, to ensure that poor people in developing countries are not excluded.

- Müller, Benito, 'The Reformed Financial Mechanism of the UNFCCC, Part II: The Question of Oversight – Post Copenhagen Synthesis Report', Oxford Energy and Environment Background Paper, Oxford Institute for Energy Studies, April 2010.

This Synthesis Report presents the key results of the second phase of a major analytic project on a reform of the Financial Mechanism of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It synthesises four OIES Energy and Environment Papers, and (updated versions) of four preliminary policy briefs by the lead author of this report, published in the run up to the recent Copenhagen Climate Conference.

- China Human Development Report 2009/10: China and a Sustainable Future, Towards a Low Carbon Economy and Society', Beijing: United Nations Development Programme, April 2010.

By analysing both the risks and benefits to China of a shift to a low carbon economy and society, it is hoped that the National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2009/10 will provide considerable contribution to China's rapidly evolving policies in this area. The 2009/10 NHDR highlights that if China can fully grasp and seize the opportunities at hand, it will be possible to move to a society which is not only environmentally sustainable, but with better conditions for greater job creation, resource efficiency, energy security, food security, and a much improved health situation for its people; a society which, in line with China's own 'Xiaokang' vision, is well-balanced and moderately prosperous. In order for China to achieve a balanced low carbon development, the 2009/10 NHDR recommends a phased approach divided in urgent policies and measures, and a broader menu of mid- and long-term actions, in turn, divided into mitigation, carbon sink enhancement, technology, and capacity development and consumption.

- Mazo, Jeffrey, 'Climate Conflict: How global warming threatens security and what to do about it', Adelphi 409, International Institute for Strategic Studies, 2010.

The author argues that climate change has been a key factor in the rise and fall of societies and states from prehistory to the recent fighting in the Sudanese state of Darfur. It drives instability, conflict and collapse, but also expansion and reorganisation. He further argues that the ways cultures have met the climate challenge provide object lessons for how the modern world can handle the new security threats posed by unprecedented global warming. Combining historical precedents with current thinking on state stability, internal conflict and state failure suggests that overcoming cultural, social, political and economic barriers to successful adaptation to a changing climate is the most important factor in avoiding instability in a warming world.

Events & Announcements

- Securing Food Security in the Face of Climate Change, Nairobi, Kenya, 3–6 May 2010.
- 5th Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts and Islands, Paris, France, 3–7 May 2010.
- Thirty second sessions of the UNFCCC Convention subsidiary bodies, Bonn, Germany, 31 May–9 June 2010.

ENERGY SECURITY



News & Commentaries

- 'Indonesia aims to tap volcano power', *Channel NewsAsia*, 24 April 2010.
- 'Vietnam planning construction of 8 nuclear reactors by 2030', *Electric Daily News*, 23 April 2010.
- 'WB urges sustainable energy development in East Asia', *Vietnam News Agency*, 19 April 2010.
- Domingo, Ronnel, 'Nuclear best near-term solution to power crunch' – solon', *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, 19 April 2010.
- Chua Chin Hon, 'S'pore considers nuke energy', *The Straits Times*, 15 April 2010.

- Kabling, Genalyn, 'No to nuke arms – ASEAN', *Manila Bulletin*, 11 April 2010.
- Wang Fengfeng, 'Interview: Only disarmament can bring true nuclear security: former UN expert', *Xinhua News Agency*, 8 April 2010.
- 'Thailand: Energy Ministry claims nuclear power plant will help reduce electricity bills', *Thai-ASEAN News Network*, 31 March 2010.

Papers & Reports

- Loschel, Andreas et al., 'Indicators of energy security in industrialised countries', *Energy Policy*, Vol. 38, Issue 4, 1665–1671, April 2010.

In this paper, the authors discuss the issue of energy supply security with the aim of explaining the roles of science and economics in structuring this concept. After a brief survey of past and contemporary literature on the definition and measurement of energy security, they propose an additional dimension along which the indicators of energy security may be classified. These indicators – ex-post (mostly based on price developments) and ex-ante (largely aimed at illustrating potential problems) – are used for the authors' illustration of the energy security concept. In conclusion, this paper suggests that the market structure needs to be taken into account alongside the political stability of energy exporting countries.

- Zerriffi, Hisham and Elizabeth Wilson, 'Leapfrogging over development? Promoting rural renewables for climate change mitigation', *Energy Policy*, Vol. 38, Issue 4, 1689–1700, April 2010.

While renewable energy (RE) technologies possess the potential to mitigate climate change and meet rural electrification needs, the authors argue, the tendency to simply conflate these two drivers by installing RE technologies in rural regions for climate change mitigation rather than for development purposes can compromise both goals. The risk, they pointed out, is the support for sub-optimal rural RE policies especially in the real-world context of limited funding available for achieving both aims all at once. As such, the authors evaluate how these rural energy aims have been balanced by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) project. Using GEF project documents, the research yielded results which raise concerns about the effectiveness and appropriateness of GEF project funding and highlights the importance of post-Kyoto framework design to reduce carbon emissions while simultaneously promote development in the rural areas.

- Yudin, Yury, 'Multilateralization of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle: The Need to Build Trust', United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2010.

Nuclear can potentially form a vital part of the future energy mix. Notwithstanding the worldwide appeal of nuclear energy, the author in this report pointed out that nuclear expansion and the uncontrolled dissemination of fuel cycle technologies carry the potential of nuclear weapons proliferation. To date, a range of proposals had been recommended in the multilateralisation of the nuclear fuel cycle as a solution to the proliferation risks. However, these proposals had been rejected or blocked by nuclear fuel non-supplier states for a variety of reasons. In order to achieve real progress toward a multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle, the author suggests that an international non-discriminatory nuclear fuel cycle control regime based on mutual interstate understanding is the way to go. Still, attaining this aim will require broad political consensus among the international community with due regard to an array of priorities and concerns surrounding technological access and the protection of national rights to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Events & Announcements

- Nuclear Interim Storage 2010, 18–19 May 2010, London, United Kingdom.
- Nuclear 2010 – The Third Annual International Conference on Sustainable Development through Nuclear Research and Education, 26–28 May 2010, Pitesti, Romania.
- Regional Conference on Renewable Energy Asia: Market, Technology, Trend and Development, 2 June 2010, Bangkok, Thailand.
- 5th International Conference on Green Energy Technology and Management, 5–6 June 2010, Changhua County, Taiwan.
- Renewable Energy Research Conference: Renewable Energy beyond 2020, 7–8 June 2010, Trondheim, Norway.

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About the Centre:

The Centre for NTS Studies, based in the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, was inaugurated by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Secretary-General Dr Surin Pitsuwan in May 2008. The Centre maintains research in the fields of Climate Change, Energy Security, Health Security, as well as Internal and Cross Border Conflict. It produces policy-relevant analyses aimed at furthering awareness and building capacity to address NTS issues and challenges in the Asia Pacific region and beyond. The Centre also provides a platform for scholars and policymakers within and outside Asia to discuss and analyse NTS issues in the region.

In 2009, the Centre was chosen by the MacArthur Foundation as a lead institution for the MacArthur Asia Security Initiative, to develop policy research capacity and recommend policies on the critical security challenges facing the Asia-Pacific.

The Centre is also a founding member and the Secretariat for the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia). More information on the Centre can be found at www.rsis.edu.sg/nts