

News Briefs

G-8 OFFERS \$60BILLION TO COMBAT AIDS IN AFRICA

BERLIN (AP) - Germany's development minister said Friday the Group of Eight member states had agreed on a program worth more than \$60 billion to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa.

"That has been agreed upon," Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul told state ZDF television, ahead of talks between the leaders at the G-8 summit in the northern German resort of Heiligendamm.

U.S. WARSHIP LAUNCHES STRIKES AT SOMALI TARGET

(GIN) - U.S. military involvement in Somalia's factional fighting took a new and worrying turn with a series of naval strikes on suspected al-Qaeda targets.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates declined to comment on the naval strikes, saying it was possibly an ongoing operation.

An American and five foreign nationals are said to be among the casualties of Friday's attack by cruise missiles fired by the American warship.

According to the vice president of Puntland, a semi-autonomous region, American Special Operations soldiers are also on the ground, helping Somali security forces. "Three Americans came into the mountains with us," he said. "They are counter-terrorism experts and they are investigating the computers that the militants were carrying." The United States launched air strikes in southern Somalia in January aimed at three top al-Qaeda suspects but killed national allies instead, U.S. officials have said.

AGENTS RAID MEDIA HOUSE IN SENEGAL

(GIN) - Sixty armed Senegalese government security agents raided the headquarters of Premiere FM, a new radio station, seizing transmitters and other equipment of the all-news station as it was about to go on their air.

The radio station's owner, Madiambal Diagne, is also the executive director of Le Quotidien, a Senegalese daily known for its criticism of President Abdoulaye Wade. In 2004, Diagne published a confidential government memo that admitted internal corruption. The journalist was arrested and held in jail for more than two weeks on charges of endangering the country's security.

His arrest sparked a national media blackout and international condemnation. Senegal's Regulatory Agency of Telecommunications says it closed the radio station temporarily, because it lacked proper authorization.

But NY-based radio host Dame Babou criticized the repression of the radio station. "We're losing ground on democracy," he warned.

CANADA DENIES VISA TO WINNIE FOR FUNDRAISING TRIP

(GIN) - Canada has denied a visa to South African anti-apartheid leader Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, who was to be the keynote speaker at a fundraising gala in Toronto recently, featuring an opera about her life.

Madikizela-Mandela, the ex-wife of former South African President Nelson Mandela, was about to set out for the airport when the Canadian embassy notified her that she would not be allowed to enter the country, organizers of the Toronto event said.

In Ottawa, opposition Liberal Party Leader Stephane Dion called the visa refusal surprising.

"There have been problems in the past," Dion said of Madikizela-Mandela's criminal convictions, but to prevent her from coming in the country, it is something that they need to justify." In 1991, the former Mrs. Mandela was sentenced to six years in jail for her role in a kidnapping case. The sentence was reduced to a fine on appeal, but she was later convicted of fraud and theft charges.

Madikizela-Mandela, 73, was in New York two weeks ago to receive an award for her charity work in South Africa. "We didn't dream that we would have a problem like this on our hands."

"The Passion of Winnie," a new opera based on Madikizela-Mandela's life, is scheduled to be presented as part of Toronto's upcoming Luminato Festival.

Black teens get obesity solutions

By Shari Logan

Special to Sentinel-Voice

WASHINGTON (NNPA) - Colletta Washington, an 18-year-old from Oxon Hills, Md., is feeling good about herself. She just graduated from Potomac High School even though she struggled to maintain good grades throughout the four years. One semester, her report card had mostly Cs and some As. But in the fall, she will attend Howard University with her tuition paid. Many teenagers like her would be proud as well. But some of her peers who look like her are suffering inside. Washington is five feet, 190 pounds and is considered obese. Low self-esteem, loss of confidence, and depression are just some of the pains experienced by obese teens, says Dr. Robin E. Drucker, a pediatrician at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic in California.

"There is a negativity associated with obesity in America," said Drucker. "Some children are perceived to be lazy or unintelligent." Washington says her weight does not bother her as much as some teens. "I grew up around big women, and they always looked good when they stepped out," she

said.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that at least 21 percent of Black teens between 12 and 19 are obese, increasing the chances of obesity-related diseases, such as heart disease, high blood pressure and childhood diabetes. That compares to 14 percent of obese White teens of the same age group.

Washington, who has not had other health problems so far, says that she began to put on weight rapidly one year after ending her PE requirements in the ninth grade. When she entered high school she had weighed only 149 pounds.

"In [the] ninth grade I had gym and I had to run a mile but I still ate chips and drank soda," she said. After she ended PE, she said that she went from eating three bags of chips and drinking a can of soda to eating one bag of chips and occasionally drinking a can of soda. She even eats fruits now like grapes and said that she walks everywhere but has not seen a significant weight loss.

Washington said that her doctor has instructed her to lose weight because of potential health concerns.

"I want to lose weight but I don't know what to do," Washington said. "I have tried diets and even vitamins that say they'll make you lose weight."

Drucker recommends getting youth involved in activities that they enjoy. "I tell them to go skating or walking for 15 minutes three times a week." For kids that live in unsafe lower income areas or attend school where PE classes have been cut out, Drucker encourages parents to find a neighborhood recreation center that offers some kind of physical activity for their children. They should participate in that activity for at least 30 minutes three times a week. The CDC reports that daily participation in school physical education among adolescents dropped 14 percentage points — from 42 percent in 1991 to 28 percent in 2003. However, Dr. Shane Perrault, an adolescent and family counseling specialist at Lifetime Fitness in Silver Spring, Md., does not recommend team sports initially since there is a possibility for more teasing. He believes that team sports should come after the obese child has "developed a skill set for an activity other than

moving a video joy stick around.

"Once that is done, children can begin to have healthy relationships with their peers." Drucker also believes that the psychological and environmental issues for many lower income families create a vicious cycle for youth. She said that overweight youth are less likely to participate in physical education classes even though they need it the most because they already doubt their abilities to perform. That's why she has set three goals that she wants the youth to accomplish in two to three months.

The goals are: more exercise, changing the foods they eat, and cutting back on the time they spend in front of the television.

Of the three goals, Drucker says the most challenging is getting the family to change the foods they eat. "Sadly, juice is cheaper than milk," she said. "For lower income families, it sometimes seems that everything is against them. The kids rely on their schools for most meals, which are not the most nutritious foods. In addition, there are two working par-

(See Teens, Page 19)

Bush

(Continued from Page 4)

lack of support for, or even the basic understanding of the civil rights of African-Americans in the American legal system."

Shelton also criticized Bush for failing to nominate a Black to the Fifth Circuit.

"This is especially mind boggling, given that 37 percent of Mississippi's population is African-American, the highest percentage of all 50 states," he said.

Shelton urged the Senate to reject the Southwick nomination if it comes up for confirmation.

Wade Henderson, president and chief executive officer of the Leadership Con-

ference on Civil Rights, said that a lifetime appointment for Southwick may not be the best thing for the country.

"Given the tremendous impact that federal judges have on civil rights and liberties, and because of the lifetime nature of federal judgeships, no judge should be confirmed unless he or she demonstrates a solid commitment to protecting the rights of all Americans," Henderson said.

"Because Judge Southwick has failed to meet this burden, we must oppose his confirmation."

The AFRO attempted to contact the Democratic senators on the Judiciary Com-

mittee to measure Southwick's support. The spokesmen for Sens. Herb Kohl (Wisc.) Benjamin Cardin (Md.), and committee chairman, Patrick Leahy

(Vt.) said that their bosses have not made up their mind regarding Southwick at press time.

James Wright writes for Afro-American Newspapers.

Children

(Continued from Page 12)

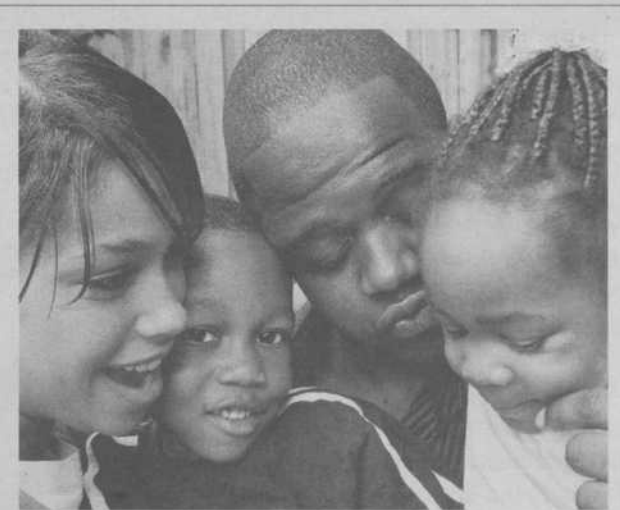
not much was done with that information."

One of the actions the agency has to implement is a Commissioner's Action Line that will exist outside the offices of the department.

The purpose of which is to allow clients and other providers to communicate issues directly related to child safety. That information is to be relayed directly to the commissioner and the Action Line is to be implemented no later than August 31 of this year.

Ransome-Garner could not be reached to comment for this report.

Larry Miller writes for the Philadelphia Tribune.



Give the joy of life

About 95,000 people in the U.S. are waiting for a life-saving organ or tissue transplant. Every 14 minutes someone's dad or mom, son or daughter is added to the national waiting list. Each day 16 people die waiting for an organ or tissue. Save lives by becoming a donor. When you receive or renew your driver's license, get the heart logo placed on your license. The logo shows that you are proud to be an organ and tissue donor.

For information, call 702-796-9600 or visit giftoflife.nv.gov.
A special program of the University of Nevada School of Medicine.
Paid for by the Nevada State Trust Fund for Public Health.

