Teenage Wasteland

September 1, 2005 By Laurie Garrett

"In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the United States tends to define all national security concerns through the prism of terrorism. That framework is overly limited even for the U.S. and an absurdly narrow template to apply to the security of most other countries. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is aggravating a laundry list of underlying tensions [such as military instability, domination by tiny groups of wealthy elites, a surplus of unskilled labor and an unprecedented youth-population bulge] in developing, declining and failed states.

“As the burden of death due to HIV/AIDS skyrockets around the world over the next five to 10 years, the disease may well play a more profound role on the security stage of many nations and present the wealthy world with a challenge the likes of which it has never experienced. How countries, rich and poor, frame HIV/AIDS within their national security debates today may well determine how well they respond to the massive grief, demographic destruction and security threats that the pandemic will present tomorrow.”

—Laurie Garrett, “The Lesson of HIV/AIDS,” July/August 2005 Foreign Affairs (www.foreignaffairs.org)

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