

[At epicentre of Indonesia disaster, Guterres praises resilience of Sulawesi people](#)

Standing amidst the wreckage of Balaroa, one of the worst hit areas of Palu, Indonesia, on Friday, [UN Secretary-General](#) António Guterres said it was “impossible not to feel heart-broken” at the destruction caused by the huge earthquake and tsunami that struck the island two weeks ago.

According to news reports, the village of Balaroa, virtually disappeared into a sinkhole due to the earthquake and around 70 per cent of the population lost their lives.

Latest figures from the UN humanitarian affairs office (OCHA) say that around 2,000 died overall in the disaster, with 11,000 injured and 680 still officially missing.

The UN chief, talking to reporters in Palu, said it was “the moment to express – and I want to do it on behalf of the UN and, I believe, the whole international community – full solidarity with the people of Sulawesi and the people of Indonesia, and an enormous admiration for the resilience that was demonstrated by the population impacted by this earthquake.”

“Their courage, their spirit of solidarity is remarkable” he added, saying that the response led by the Indonesian government had been “very rapid and effective”.

“As the UN, we are ready to support the government; we already have people on the ground. But the leadership must always be the leadership of the government of the country and the international community needs to be supportive of that effort.”

More to come on this story later...