

Germany, Indonesia, South Africa, Dominican Republic, Belgium, elected to Security Council

In a single round of voting on Friday, the United Nations General Assembly elected five new non-permanent Members of the Security Council, who will each serve two-year terms on the body that sets the UN's whole peace and security agenda.

Germany, Indonesia, South Africa, the Dominican Republic and Belgium, will take up their seats from 1 January 2019.

They will fill the seats being vacated by Bolivia, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Netherlands and Sweden at the end of this year, having each served two-year terms on the [15-member](#) Security Council.

Under the [UN Charter](#), the Security Council has the primary [responsibility](#) for international peace and security, with all UN Member States required to comply with Council decisions.

The Council's ten non-permanent seats, are allocated according to a rotation pattern set by the Assembly in 1963, to ensure fair regional representation on the Council: five from African and Asian and Pacific States; one from Eastern Europe; two from Latin American States; and two from Western European and Other States (WEOG).

Belgium and Germany; the Dominican Republic, and South Africa, ran unopposed from their respective regional groups, while Indonesia secured its place following a run-off with the Maldives for the Asia-Pacific Group seat.

This will be the Dominican Republic's first time on the Security Council with the other four countries having [previously served](#) on the body.

The other five seats on the Council – known as permanent seats – are held by China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

World must unite against 'preventable tragedy' of ocean pollution: UN chief

From carrying your own water bottle, to volunteering for a local clean-up, everybody needs to do something to stop plastic pollution from getting into

the world's oceans, said UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his message for [World Oceans Day](#).

Marking the day on Friday, the UN chief reminded everyone of the major role the oceans have in everyday life, as the lungs of the planet, providing most of the oxygen that we breathe.

"The oceans make our blue planet unique in our solar system – and not just visually," he [said](#) adding that they help regulate "the global climate and are the ultimate source of the water that sustains all life on Earth, from coral reefs to snow-covered mountains, from tropical rain forests to mighty rivers, and even deserts."

"However," he continued "the ability of the oceans to provide their essential services is being threatened by climate change, pollution and unsustainable use."

Plastic pollution alone is reeking tremendous havoc on the marine resources of the world, he said, highlighting the problem of plastic pollution in particular.

Eighty per cent of all pollution in the sea comes from land, including some eight million tons of plastic waste each year, that have cost the lives of one million seabirds and 100,000 marine mammals. Moreover, it causes \$8 billion in damage annually to marine ecosystems.

Pollution, said Mr. Guterres, "chokes waterways, harms communities that depend on fishing and tourism, kills turtles and birds, whales and dolphins, and finds its way to the most remote areas of the planet and throughout the food chain on which we ultimately rely."

"Unless we change course, plastic waste could soon outweigh all the fish in the oceans," Mr. Guterres added.

The UN chief urged everyone to work individually and collectively to "stop this preventable tragedy" and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds.

"Action starts at home, and speaks louder than words," he said. "The United Nations aims to lead by example, and more than 30 of our agencies have now begun working to end the use of single-use plastic."

But everyone needs to play a part by taking simple actions like carrying your own water bottle, coffee cup and shopping bags; recycling plastic, said Mr. Guterres; avoiding products that contain microplastics; and volunteering for a local clean-ups.

"If we all do a little, our combined actions can be massive," he added.

"On this World Oceans Day, I urge governments, communities and individuals alike to celebrate our oceans by helping clear them of pollution and ensure they remain vibrant for generations to come," concluded the Secretary-

General.

[250,000 people 'may lose everything – even their lives' in assault on key Yemeni port city: UN humanitarian coordinator](#)

Any attack on the key port city of Hodeidah in Yemen “will impact hundreds of thousands of innocent civilians” and would entail around 250,000 civilians losing everything – “even their lives” – the [UN Humanitarian Coordinator](#) for the war-torn country said on Friday.

Lise Grande’s statement comes amid ongoing fighting in the Arabian peninsula State, where 22 million people are in need of aid and protection; three-quarters of the entire population.

Around 8.4 million of this number are severely food insecure and at risk of starvation, according to UN [Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs \(OCHA\)](#).

OCHA has warned repeatedly of the risks to ordinary Yemenis of being caught up in crossfire, since a military campaign intensified, involving a Saudi-backed international coalition and Houthi opposition forces which escalated in March 2015.

Across the country, people are desperate for food, medical help and protection – *Jens Laerke (OCHA)*

Speaking to journalists in Geneva on behalf of Ms Grande, Jens Laerke said that in a “prolonged worst case (scenario), we fear that as many as 250,000 people may lose everything – even their lives”.

In response to the threat of military attack, humanitarian agencies had developed “contingency plans”, he added.

Since then, according to the UN human rights office, [OHCHR](#), 6,439 civilians have been killed and more than 10,000 have been injured.

The country’s already weak infrastructure has also suffered tremendous damage, including to massive portside cranes in Hodeidah; a city which is “the single most important point of entry for food and basic supplies” for the whole country, Laerke told reporters.

Close to 70 per cent of Yemen's imports, including commercial and humanitarian goods, enter through Hodeidah and Saleef to the north.

As many as 600,000 people live in and around Hodeidah, Mr Laerke continued, before repeating the UN Humanitarian Coordinator's comments that the Red Sea port city needed to stay open to prevent famine and "a recurrence of the cholera epidemic", that began in October 2016.

By the end of January 2018, the number of suspected cases had risen to more than one million, according to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

In addition to concerns for civilians around Hodeidah, needs in Yemen remain massive, said Laerke who described ongoing emergency as "the worst humanitarian crisis in the world".

"Across the country, people are desperate for food, medical help and protection," he explained. "This is why humanitarian organizations have dramatically ramped up the amount of assistance we are providing."

[From the field: Plastic pollution choking world's oceans](#)

An underwater photographer's chance encounter with a starving turtle led to a personal "awakening" about the dangers discarded plastic poses to sea life in the world's oceans.

In November 2017, Saeed Rashid from the United Kingdom was taking photos during a dive on a reef in the Egyptian Red Sea when he came across a female hawksbill turtle that had swallowed a plastic bag and was, as a result, unable to eat.

The turtle probably mistook the floating plastic bag for a jellyfish which hawksbills typically eat.

It is just one example of how discarded plastic items are choking the marine ecosystem.

On [World Oceans Day](#), marked annually on 8 June, the UN and its partners are raising awareness about the destructive force of plastic pollution across the globe.

To read more about Saeed Rashid's turtle rescue exploits and his awakening, as well the global fight against plastic pollution go to:

<https://unworldoceansday.org/spotlight-article/plastic-planet>.

Promoting decent work 'daily challenge' in fragile countries, UN Labour Summit told

The Central African Republic (CAR) has called on the United Nations labour agency to provide special assistance to the conflict-torn nation and make it a "pilot-country" for the implementation of a programme to build peace and resilience through job creation.

"Creating income- and wealth-generating jobs is essential in order to consolidate peace and reinforce resilience" in the country, CAR's President, [Faustin Archange Touadéra](#), said in a keynote address during the [World of Work Summit](#) convened in Geneva by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Entitled 'Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience,' this year's Summit highlighted the importance of employment and decent work for peace and resilience, with a specific focus on tackling the realities on the ground and on partnerships that can achieve real results.

Fighting between the mostly Christian anti-Balaka militia and the mainly Muslim Séléka rebel coalition has plunged the CAR into civil conflict since 2012. A peace agreement was reached in January 2013, but rebels seized the capital, Bangui, in March of that year, forcing the country's former president, François Bozizé, to flee.

President Touadéra highlighted the challenges of restoring an economy ruined by years of conflict, and invited the ILO to send a high-level technical mission to the country's capital Bangui, with a view to help resolve employment and decent work issues.

This would involve reinforcing governance capacities, establishing a working social protection system, promoting social dialogue and women's employment, as well as putting in place an innovative partnership for employment promotion, he said.

Outlining the gravity of the crisis in his country, Touadéra said that reducing unemployment, especially for youth, was a priority, to better fight against poverty and risks of radicalization.

"The economy of survival has taken over the formal sector," he said, underlining that the informal employment now represents more than 75 per cent of national economic activity.

He said that employment is "a determining factor for a lasting peace" but "the battle to promote employment and decent work in favour of peace and

resilience is a daily challenge.”

In his welcoming address, ILO Director-General Guy Ryder underlined the strategic location of the CAR in the sub-region.

“By recognizing the link between work and peace, your main priority is to bring jobs for the people of the Central African Republic to help them reach a decent standard of living,” Mr. Ryder said.



Crozet / Pouteau / Albouy / ILO

Panelists speak at the World of Work Summit held as part of the 107th Session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva, 7 June 2018.

Also addressing the Summit was the President of Ireland, [Michael D. Higgins](#), who said that the ILO “retains the potential to be one of the international organisations best equipped to assist nations and their peoples to build resilience and prevent conflict.”

“Ever [since its inception](#), the International Labour Organisation has been dedicated to the proposition that peace can only be built, and can only be sustained, when it is founded on a just and equal economic order, one capable of meeting the needs and aspirations of all people, in their diversity,” said Mr. Higgins in a keynote speech.

Mr. Higgins said that expanding economic opportunities, ensuring the recognition of fundamental social and economic rights, advocating, advancing and achieving decent work, and facilitating social dialogue between workers, employers and civic organisations, are critical components of recovery from conflict and the prevention of any return to war.

Welcoming an ambition to place ILO at the centre of efforts to create a new global architecture for sustaining peace, he stressed sufficient and effective investment in rights-based peacebuilding programmes will not only save lives, but will offer to the peoples of the world all of the

possibilities for development and human flourishing that peace can bring.

Speaking during a panel discussion, UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said: “The refugees and displaced people, almost 70 million of them around the world today, are the outcome of a failure of peace. And if, among other things, their ability to be respectfully and gainfully employed is not met, then they will continue to be a factor for instability.”