

## [UN chief denounces terrorist attack in southern France; commends response of security forces](#)

Strongly condemning the terrorist attack in France, the United Nations Secretary-General has reiterated his support to the Government in its fight against violent extremism.

In a [statement](#) attributable to his spokesperson, [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) also commended the response of the security forces, noting “[their] quick action helped save lives.”

“The UN stands in solidarity with the Government of France in its fight against terrorism and violent extremism,” the statement added.

Mr. Guterres also extended his condolences to the families of the victims and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

According to reports, three people lost their lives and at least 16 were injured in the attack that took place at a supermarket in the town of Trèbes in southern France.

Among those who died was a French police official who swapped himself for one of the hostages taken by the gunman.

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## [UN Commission delivers a blueprint to ensure the rights and development of rural women and girls](#)

The United Nations’ largest annual gathering on gender equality and women’s rights wrapped up Friday in New York with the strong commitment by its Member States to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

Coming on the heels of unprecedented global activism and public outcry to end gender injustice and discrimination worldwide, the 62nd session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women ([CSW](#)) reached a robust agreement highlighting the urgency of empowering and supporting those who need it most and have, for too long, been left behind.

The outcome of the two-week meeting, known as the Agreed Conclusions adopted by Member States, puts forth concrete measures to lift rural women and girls out of poverty and to ensure their rights, well-being and resilience.

These include ensuring their adequate living standards with equal access to land and productive assets, ending poverty, enhancing their food security and nutrition, decent work, infrastructure and technology, education and health, including their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, and ending all forms of violence and harmful practices.

- Please read the full wrap up of CSW62 from UN Women [here](#).

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## [Security Council can and must do more to break the link between conflict and hunger, says UN relief officials](#)

Hunger is on the rise worldwide mainly because “people won’t stop shooting at each other,” the head of the United Nations food relief agency said Friday, telling the Security Council that if it did more to break the link between conflict and hunger, countless lives could be saved.

David Beasley, the head of the UN World Food Programme (WFP) told the 15-member body that resolving conflicts and ensuring peace are indispensable to achieve food security.

That link, he underscored, is both strong and highly destructive.

“If you don’t know where your child’s next meal is coming from, you may be forced to make impossible choices,” he said, noting that for one per cent rise in the rate of hunger, there is a two per cent increase in migration.

Speaking via videoconference from Biel, Switzerland, he called on the Council to help end war and stressed that the price of programmes to tackle the root causes of hunger is far cheaper than the cost of the current conflict cycle.

WFP can save one billion dollars a year if all armed groups respected international humanitarian law and provided unimpeded access to civilian populations, explained Mr. Beasley.

Briefing the Council alongside the WFP chief, Mark Lowcock, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, explained that almost two-thirds of the world’s hungry live in conflict-torn countries.

Conflict – often conflated with extreme climatic shock and high

prices of staple food – is the main driver of global food insecurity – *UN aid chief Mark Lowcock*

“Conflict – often conflated with extreme climatic shock and high prices of staple food – is the main driver of global food insecurity,” he added, speaking via videoconference from Dublin.

On top of this, the conduct of combatants worsens the situation with their actions – contrary to international law – resulting in damage and destruction of water systems, farms, livestock and markets.

It is, therefore, crucial that all States ensure that international humanitarian law is respected by parties to conflict as per their obligation to do so, said Mr. Lowcock, calling on the Security Council to investigate violations of international law and ensure that those who violate it are held accountable.

“This Council’s main responsibility is peace and international security. In other words, this Council can help prevent famine to ever occur again,” he stressed.

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## **‘Bold action’ needed to end tuberculosis, AIDS – UN**

Claiming more than 4,500 lives daily, tuberculosis (TB) continues to be the top infectious killer worldwide as well as the leading cause of death among people living with HIV, the United Nations said Friday, ahead of [World Tuberculosis Day](#).

“The world has the resources to [end the interlinked epidemics](#) of tuberculosis and HIV, but political commitment and country action are lacking,” said the Executive Director of UNAIDS – the Joint UN Programme on HIV and AIDS – Michel Sidibé.

“Political, religious and civil society leaders need to step up to guarantee everyone the right to breathe, to live free from tuberculosis and AIDS,” he added.

For his part, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) noted the “devastating” social and economic impacts of TB, including poverty, stigma and discrimination – adding that antibiotic resistance has caused many drugs to lose their efficacy in combatting the disease.

“While the world has committed to end the TB epidemic by 2030, as part of the

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), actions and [investments do not match](#) the political reality,” he stressed in a video message.

The UN is calling on all partners to take unprecedented and bold action to advance efforts to end TB and AIDS by 2030.

“Now is the time to make commitments become actions, we need increased and sustained financing,” Mr. Tedros spelled out, calling World Tuberculosis Day an opportunity “to mobilize political and social commitment for accelerated progress to end TB.”

While preventable and curable, persistent challenges remain, many of which are shared by the HIV response, including unequal access to services.

Noting that both can be addressed effectively with integrated programmes, UNAIDS outlined five important actions for partners, beginning with impelling political, religious and civil society leaders to champion the universal right to live free from TB and HIV.

Secondly, communities must be empowered to call on governments to demand their right to health – improving living standards to reduce the burden of TB and HIV.

The third action endorses promoting non-discriminatory service delivery to protect all against catastrophic health expenditures in the context of universal health coverage – extending care beyond health to include safe workplaces and places of detention.

Next, UNAIDS advocates that finance ministers be engaged to approach health as an investment, not an expenditure, in which returns demonstrate their long-term value to societies and economies.

Finally, the Joint UN Programme also recommends greater public-private sector partnerships to accelerate for innovative new medicines and vaccines.

## **Ending global TB and HIV epidemics is possible**

In September 2018, world leaders will come together at UN Headquarters in New York for the first-ever UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Tuberculosis to adopt a progressive, visionary and actionable political declaration on the disease.

Both agency heads said that the High-Level Meeting could provide the political, social and financial momentum needed to end TB.

“This year could be the most important since Robert Koch discovered the cause of TB, 136 years ago, but only if we all show leadership,” said Mr Sidibé.

“I’m stepping forward for a TB-free world,” Mr. Tedros said, “please join me.”

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## No 'fancy suits and long speeches' at UN-backed sustainable development festival in Bonn

A United Nations forum showcasing the latest innovations, tools and approaches that will make sustainable development a reality wrapped up in Bonn, Germany, on Friday.

Some 1,500 participants from more than 100 countries attended the three-day [Global Festival of Action for Sustainable Development](#).

The gathering sought to inspire action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) aimed at ending extreme poverty and hunger while also ensuring a healthy environment for all people and the planet.

Billed as “a new type of UN conference” devoid of “fancy suits and long speeches,” the festival featured various immersive experiences such as a virtual reality zone showing the human stories behind development challenges, in addition to workshops, demo sessions and film screenings.

Those who could not travel to Bonn were encouraged to follow the activities on UN Web TV and social media, with more than 30,000 watching the livestream while #SDGglobalFest trended across the world.

Among the festival highlights was the presentation of the [UN SDG Action Awards](#), celebrating individuals and organizations from all regions who are working to implement the 17 goals, which have a deadline of 2030.

The awards covered seven categories, including mobilizer, storyteller and connector.

“I’m going to learn from these seven other people to create a movement and change the world,” said one of the winners, Foluke Michael of Nigeria, founder of Creative Youth Initiative Against Corruption, speaking at the closing ceremony.

His organization won the innovator category for its “Corruption Busters” campaign which targeted the general public and focused on corrupt practices associated with everyday life and how they have an impact on individuals and society.

This was the second edition of the Global Festival of Action for Sustainable Development which was hosted by the [UN SDG Action Campaign](#) with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Discussions revolved around five main key themes: innovative approaches,

citizen engagement, communicating the SDGs, mobilizing action, and multi-stakeholder engagement.

“The world is facing tremendous challenges, and for the first time there is an innovative plan to solve them,” said Mitchell Toomey, the Global Director of the UN SDG Action Campaign.

“But we can’t do this alone, we need everyone to be part of it. We are very excited to once more bring together different key players from governments, civil society, UN agencies, cities, business, and academia in this dynamic, inclusive and innovative festival.”