

[Guterres urges Congolese security forces to exercise restraint amid reports six people killed in protests](#)

22 January 2018 – Amid disturbing reports that at least six people were killed on Sunday during political protests in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres has urged Congolese security forces to respect the people's right to free speech and freedom of assembly.

"The Secretary-General urges the Congolese security forces to exercise restraint," said a [statement](#) issued this afternoon by UN Spokesman Stéphane Dujarric, in the wake of reports which suggest that along with the fatalities, that 63 people were injured during the protests, which are calling for implementation of the 31 December 2016 political agreement.

Mr. Guterres called on the Congolese authorities to conduct credible investigations into these incidents and to hold those responsible accountable.

Similar demonstrations three weeks ago led to a number of deaths. The protests have been taking place in the vicinity of churches in and in the regard, the UN chief today, 'called upon all concerned to ensure full respect for places of worship."

The agreement at the heart of the protests — facilitated by *Conférence Episcopale Nationale du Congo* (CENCO) mediators — allowed President Joseph Kabila to stay in power beyond the end of his term and stipulated that peaceful, credible and inclusive elections would be organized in the DRC by the end of December 2017.

The polls were reportedly pushed back to December 2018, sparking violent protests late last month.

"The Secretary-General, once again, calls on Congolese political actors to work towards the full implementation of the 31 December political agreement, which remains the only viable path to the holding of elections, the peaceful transfer of power and the consolidation of stability in the [country]," the statement concluded.

[Afghanistan: UN strongly condemns](#)

[terrorist attack on Kabul hotel](#)

21 January 2018 – Senior United Nations officials, including [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres as well as the head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan ([UNAMA](#)) have strongly condemned a terrorist attack on a hotel in the country's capital, Kabul.

In a [statement](#) attributable to his spokesperson, Secretary-General Guterres offered his deepest condolences to the families of the victims and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

“He expresses his solidarity with the Government and people of Afghanistan,” added the statement.

According to initial reports, at least six civilians, including one woman, were killed and at least three others injured in the attack which took place on Saturday night, local time. The actual number could be higher.

The Intercontinental Hotel was scheduled to hold a technology conference on 21 January, organized by Afghanistan's Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. Also at the hotel, guests had gathered for a wedding ceremony.

According to UNAMA, in claiming responsibility, the Taliban stated that five attackers entered the hotel to target Afghan officials and foreign nationals.

In a separate [statement](#), Tadamichi Yamamoto, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the head of UNAMA said that it is a “moral outrage that the Taliban entered the hotel with the intention of killing civilians.”

Underscoring the obligation on all parties to the armed conflict in the country to respect International Humanitarian Law at all times, he added: “There is simply no justification for this egregious attack, which is specifically prohibited by International Humanitarian Law and may amount to a war crime.”

[Amid unprecedented needs, UN, aid partners launch largest consolidated humanitarian appeal for Yemen](#)

21 January 2018 – With the crisis in war-ravaged Yemen continuing to deteriorate, United Nations agencies and humanitarian partners have launched

a \$2.96 billion response plan to reach over 13 million people with lifesaving assistance.

Launched Sunday, the [2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is the largest consolidated humanitarian appeal for Yemen where over two years of relentless conflict has left three quarters of the population in need of humanitarian assistance, including 11.3 million in acute need who urgently require assistance to survive.

Humanitarian assistance is not the solution to the plight of the people of Yemen, but it is the only lifeline for millions of them, said Jamie McGoldrick, Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen, in a [news releasing announcing the launch](#).

Today, humanitarian partners appeal to the international community to support this critical lifeline.

Worst affected in the midst of the worst man-made humanitarian of current times are the country's children.

[According](#) to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), nearly two million children are out of school, and 1.8 million children under the age of five are acutely malnourished including 400,000 suffering from severe acute malnutrition and are 10 times more likely to die if they do not receive medical treatment.

The Humanitarian Response Plan targets people in acute need or at risk of slipping into acute need.

It also focuses on needs of internally displaced people, returnees and host communities in a more sustainable manner and on working with national institutions, added OCHA.

A strategic priority for the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan is to work with national institutions that provide essential services to prevent their collapse, said Mr. McGoldrick.

We thank donors for their support in 2017, and urge them to support the people of Yemen as they continue to face unprecedented needs, he added.

To see the 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan, [click here](#).

[**Terrorist attack on Kabul hotel 'a moral outrage' – UN envoy for**](#)

[Afghanistan](#)

21 January 2018 – Condemning a terrorist attack on a hotel in the Afghan capital, Kabul, the head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in the country ([UNAMA](#)) has said that the attack may amount to a war crime.

“There is simply no justification for this egregious attack, which is specifically prohibited by International Humanitarian Law and may amount to a war crime,” said Tadamichi Yamamoto, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the head of UNAMA, in a [statement](#).

At least six civilians, including one woman were killed and at least three others injured in the attack which took place on Saturday night, local time.

The Intercontinental Hotel was scheduled to hold a technology conference on 21 January, organized by Afghanistan’s Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. Also at the hotel, guests had gathered for a wedding ceremony.

According to UNAMA, in claiming responsibility, the Taliban stated that five attackers entered the hotel to target Afghan officials and foreign nationals.

“It is a moral outrage that the Taliban entered the hotel with the intention of killing civilians,” said Mr. Yamamoto, underscoring that all parties to the armed conflict in Afghanistan “are bound to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law, at all times.”

In the statement, he also expressed his condolences to the loved ones of those killed and wished a full and speedy recovery to those injured.

[UN chief urges vigilance against anti-Semitism and discrimination of all kinds](#)

20 January 2018 – Warning that hate is on the rise and that Nazi symbols, mindsets and languages are back, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres has called for vigilance against anti-Semitism and discrimination of all kinds.

“[We must stand together against the normalization of hate](#),” said the Secretary-General, speaking at the Park East Synagogue in New York, on Saturday.

“We must reject those who fail to understand that as societies become multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural, diversity must be seen as a source of richness and not a threat,” he underscored.

In his remarks, the UN chief cited examples from around the world showing the rise of the neo-Nazi threat as well as the growing concern that such groups are trying to “rebrand themselves” and present themselves as kinder or gentler to win wider favour.

“They are less crude and more dangerous,” warned Mr. Guterres.

He said that such groups sometimes seek to falsely claim that “they have no problem with Jews, their target is the other group, the other religion, the other minority,” cautioning that whenever and wherever the values of humanity are abandoned, “everyone is at risk.”

We must reject those who fail to understand that as societies become multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural, diversity must be seen as a source of richness and not a threat
Secretary-General
Guterres

Recalling the theme of this year’s Holocaust Remembrance Day that highlights the importance of education as a shared responsibility, the Secretary-General called on leaders across the board to step up.

“Words matter,” he stressed, adding:

“It matters what leaders say. It matters what kind of example is set by public officials from mayors to ministers to heads of state. As Rabbi Schneier has said, all of us have a responsibility to act against indifference.”

Concluding his remarks, the UN chief urged everyone across the globe to stand up to hatred and to work together to build a world of pluralism, mutual respect and coexistence for all.