

[Libya's planned transit centre would keep migrants from risky Mediterranean crossing – UN agency](#)

29 November 2017 – The United Nations refugee agency has welcomed the decision by the Libyan authorities to set up a “transit and departure facility” in Tripoli for [refugees and migrants](#) in need of international protection – an initiative that offers viable alternatives to their dangerous journeys along the Central Mediterranean route.

“We hope that thousands of the most vulnerable refugees currently in Libya will benefit from this [forward-looking initiative](#),” said Roberto Mignone, Libya Representative of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)).

The initiative, which is supported by the Italian Government, will facilitate the transfer of thousands of vulnerable refugees to third countries.

Mr. Mignone added that the main objective is to speed up the process of securing solutions in third countries, particularly for unaccompanied and separated children and women at risk. These solutions will include resettlement, family reunification, evacuation to UNHCR-run emergency facilities in other countries, or voluntary return.

At the facility, UNHCR staff and partners will provide registration and life-saving assistance such as accommodation, food, medical care and psychosocial support.

In September, UNHCR called for an additional 40,000 resettlement places to be made available for refugees located in 15 countries along this route. So far, only 10,500 pledges have been made.

“We now need EU member States and others to step up with offers of resettlement places and other solutions, including family reunification slots,” said Mr. Mignone. “Together, these will be an important platform for securing solutions for these vulnerable people, based on shared responsibility.”

[On Day of Solidarity, UN reaffirms two-state solution as only answer to](#)

'question of Palestine'

29 November 2017 – The Question of Palestine is inextricably linked with the history of the United Nations and is one of the longest-standing issues on the Organization's agenda, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António said in his message commemorating the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.

The Question of Palestine is inextricably linked with the history of the United Nations and is one of the longest-standing issues on the Organization's agenda, United Nations Secretary-General António said in his message commemorating the International Day of [Solidarity with the Palestinian People](#).

Seventy years since General Assembly Resolution 181 was adopted, a sovereign and independent State of Palestine has yet to emerge alongside the State of Israel.

"I remain convinced that the [two-state solution is the only one](#) for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israelis and Palestinians. The resolution of this conflict would also create momentum for greater stability throughout the region," stated Mr. Guterres.

Recalling his August visit to Israel and Palestine, the UN chief said leaders on both sides restated their commitment to a negotiated peace.

"I encourage them to tangibly challenge this commitment and create conditions for a meaningful negotiation. The recent positive developments in intra-Palestinian unity should be taken up by the leadership," he asserted.

The Secretary-General also reiterated his readiness "to work with all stakeholders, including the Middle East Quartet and countries in the region, to support a serious political process, drawing on all under UN resolutions, international law and agreements, that will achieve a two-State solution, end half a century of occupation and resolve all final status issues."

Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed read Mr. Guterres' message at a Special Meeting of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, before adding her own words.

Ms. Mohammed observed that for 70 years the UN has gathered on 29 November to support the Palestinian right to self-determination and independence and the establishment of a Palestinian State.

"Ending illegal Israeli settlement activity and demolitions in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is [crucial to the viability of a future Palestinian state](#) and to realizing the legitimate national and historic aspirations of both people. Eliminating violence and incitement is essential to building trust," she told the participants.

Ms. Mohammed stressed that with crumbling infrastructure, chronic

unemployment and a paralyzed economy, Gaza is in a state of constant humanitarian emergency.

“This unsustainable reality demands urgent humanitarian, economic and political measures to support the Palestinian population. We must not leave women, children and youth behind,” she asserted.

“Ending the occupation and achieving a two-state solution is the only path to enduring peace between Israelis and Palestinians. There is no other option,” emphasized Ms. Mohammed. For his part, General Assembly President Miroslav Lajčák underscored that the situation needs full-time attention that extends beyond humanitarian support, to facilitate a peaceful resolution.

“I firmly believe that a two-state solution is [the only answer](#) to what we call the question of Palestine,” he underscored.

According to Mr. Lajčák, the international community must support conditions conducive to a successful peace process. In addition to immediately halting settlement expansion, other actions encompassed the cessation and condemnation of all acts of violence, including terrorism, as well as the incitement to these acts.

“When it comes to the question of Palestine, we have a responsibility and we have an interest. Palestinian people do not need our sympathy – they deserve our solidarity,” he declared.

[UN aid chief spotlights challenges delivering relief inside war-torn Syria, urges continued support](#)

29 November 2017 – The conflict in Syria – now into its seventh year, longer than World War II – continues to ratchet up misery on its people, with millions living in besieged and hard-to-reach areas, a third of the country’s children out of school, and over half of its health facilities rendered inoperable, the United Nations top relief official said today.

The situation is [most dire in rural Damascus’ eastern Ghouta](#) (where 94 per cent of the besieged population is located), where fighting has seen a recent escalation and where, despite efforts of humanitarians, only about 100,000 out of an estimated population of 400,000 have received food assistance this year.

“The available evidence suggests severe acute malnutrition rates among children in eastern Ghouta have increased five-fold in the past ten months,” said Mark Lowcock, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-

General for Humanitarian Affairs, briefing the Security Council.

Deaths of people, especially children, from preventable can be prevented if aid convoys can be increased and made more regular, he expressed, adding: "Against this background, news over the last two days of a ceasefire in eastern Ghouta would be – if true and if sustained – important."



Mark Lowcock, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, briefs the Security Council on the humanitarian situation in Syria. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

In his briefing, the senior UN relief official also spoke of the recently released [2018 Humanitarian Needs Overview for Syria](#) as well as of increased displacement in north-west Syria, worsening fighting in north-east Syria, threats of explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices and the precarious humanitarian access as a result.

"At the same time, new restrictions on access and aid delivery in the north-east are limiting access to a number of people we had previously been able to reach with help," said Mr. Lowcock, noting that since 9 November, the UN has faced a series of bureaucratic impediments imposed by the parties in the area resulting in the curtailment of humanitarian assistance for much of the past month.

Further, concerning delivery of aid, he also updated the Security Council of the efforts of UN actors to ensure aid reaches those that need it as well as of the challenges they face in the process.

"It is clear that each of the three modes of delivery [to Government-controlled areas, cross-line deliveries, and cross-border assistance] is critical for the people of Syria, and that there is complementarity between them. As needs remain high, it is important to preserve all means of access," said the UN official, stressing that the renewal of the Security Council [resolution 2165 \(2014\)](#), which [authorized the UN and relief agencies to use the most direct routes for aid delivery](#) is "essential to save lives."

Concluding his briefing, Mr. Lowcock also told the Security Council that following consultations with the authorities, he plans to visit Syria in early January 2018 to assess the situation and to discuss assistance to those in need can be improved.

[Antalya: South-South cooperation can](#)

spur great humanitarian, development impact – UN relief official

29 November 2017 – With actors from the Global South increasingly among the frontline responders in fragile and protracted crises, fully leveraging the comparative advantage of South-South cooperation has the potential to have great humanitarian and development impact, a senior United Nations relief official said Wednesday.

This message was delivered by Ursula Mueller, the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, to the final [Leadership Roundtable](#) of the [Global South-South Development Expo 2017](#), which is under way in Antalya, Turkey.

“Southern actors respond as donors, hosts, operational and technical partners. They lend a crucial perspective for oftentimes they have faced similar challenges and know all too well that saving lives is just the first of many steps,” said Ms. Mueller as she co-chaired the discussion, under the theme ‘South-South Cooperation for Peace, Prosperity and Partnership: From Delivering Aid to Ending Need – Advancing the [2030 Agenda](#) in Crisis Contexts.’

Ms. Mueller is participating in the 2017 Global Expo along with other senior UN officials, government ministers, national development agency directors, and civil society representatives, who have gathered to share innovative local solutions and push for scaling up concrete initiatives from the Global South to achieve the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

“South-South Cooperation is about saving livelihoods and sustainable solutions. It is about offering a helping hand to nations as equal partners. And it is about sharing experiences and lessons learned, knowledge and technical expertise,” noted Ms. Mueller, who is also the UN Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

This year, the UN global humanitarian appeal reached \$24 billion to help 145 million people. “Even though donors contributed \$11 billion so far this year, the funding gap remains wide,” warned Ms. Mueller.

Nine UN agencies, with support from the World Bank, adopted the [New Way of Working](#) at the Istanbul [World Humanitarian Summit](#) in May 2016.

“The New Way of Working aims to transcend the divide between short-term humanitarian action and long-term development by fostering closer collaboration between humanitarian and development actors in fragile contexts – where conditions allow – so that we not only save lives, but also reduce need and build resilience,” emphasized Ms. Mueller.

Following her visit to Antalya, Ms. Mueller will go to Gaziantep, the largest and most populous city in southern Turkey, which has hosted hundreds of

thousands of refugees who have fled from Syria.

“In Gaziantep, I will have opportunity to see close to the Syrian border how the humanitarian operation is working,” Ms. Mueller told *UN News*.

“There are still 13 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria. We as humanitarians have to keep every possibility open for access to Syrians inside Syria. And we are grateful for the support by the Turkish Government to enable cross-border operations,” she said.

In 2016, Turkey was the world’s second largest humanitarian donor and most generous country in terms of ratio to its national income, spending \$6 billion on humanitarian assistance. Turkey now hosts 3.2 million refugees from Syria.

Ms. Mueller met Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavusoglu in Antalya on the first day of the Global Expo and said the meeting provided an opportunity to thank the Turkish Government and Turkish people [...] I commend them for the services, the protection they provide for the Syrian refugees,” she stated.

“With the Foreign Minister, I also raised the extension of Security Council [resolution 2165 \(2014\)](#) that provides modality to deliver humanitarian assistance into Syria from Turkey. This is a very important way and entry point of humanitarian assistance into Syria. And it depends on the extension of the resolution. And I was requesting the Foreign Minister to use his influence and good efforts that he will do everything that is possible to support the extension of this resolution,” she explained.

On Tuesday, Ms. Mueller also visited Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, to meet with senior officials and Presidents of Turkish Red Crescent and AFAD, both of which have been playing an active role in providing humanitarian assistance in several the world’s humanitarian crises, including in Syria.

[Malaria response at ‘crossroads,’ risks backward slide – UN](#)

29 November 2017 – After unprecedented global success in controlling malaria, progress has stalled, the United Nations health agency reported Wednesday, citing an estimated four million more cases in 2016 than in 2015, and around 445,000 deaths.

The 2017 [World Malaria Report](#) presents a comprehensive state of play in global progress in the fight against malaria.

“In recent years, we have made major gains in the [fight against malaria](#),” said Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health

Organization ([WHO](#)).

“We are now at a turning point. Without urgent action, we risk going backwards, and missing the global malaria targets for 2020 and beyond,” he added.

The WHO [Global Technical Strategy for Malaria](#) calls for reductions of at least 40 per cent in malaria case incidence and mortality rates by the year 2020. Yet, according to the new report, the world is not on track to reach these critical milestones.

A major problem is insufficient funding, resulting in major coverage gaps for insecticide-treated nets, medicines and other life-saving tools.

In 2016, a \$2.7 billion investment in malaria control efforts was well below the global \$6.5 billion required annually by 2020 to meet the 2030 targets of the WHO global malaria strategy. Providing \$800 million, governments of endemic countries represented 31 per cent of the total funding.

Probing the numbers

The report shows that, in 2016, there were an estimated 216 million cases of [malaria](#) in 91 countries – up from 211 million cases in 2015 – with a global malaria death tally estimated at 445,000 compared to 446,000 the previous year.

While the rate of new cases of malaria has fallen overall, since 2014 the trend has levelled off and even reversed in some regions. Malaria mortality rates followed a similar pattern.

The African region continues to bear an estimated 90 per cent of all malaria cases and deaths worldwide, with 15 countries – all but one in sub-Saharan Africa – carrying 80 per cent of the global malaria burden.

“Clearly, if we are to get the global malaria response back on track, supporting the most heavily affected countries in the African region must be the primary focus,” said Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

In most malaria-affected countries, sleeping under an insecticide-treated bednet (ITN) is the most common and effective infection-prevention method. Spraying insecticide inside homes is also effective.

While the African region has seen a major increase in diagnostic testing in the public health sector – with 70 per cent of those treated having received artemisinin-based combination therapies (ACTs), the most effective antimalarial medicines – access to the public health system in many areas remains low. National-level surveys there show that only about 34 per cent of children with a fever see a public health medical provider.

The report also outlines additional challenges in the global malaria response, including the risks posed by conflict and crises in malaria endemic zones. WHO is currently supporting malaria responses in Nigeria, South Sudan, Venezuela and Yemen, where ongoing humanitarian crises pose serious health

risks.

“We are at a crossroads in the response to malaria,” said Dr. Pedro Alonso, Director of the WHO Global Malaria Programme.

“We hope this report serves as a wake-up call for the global health community. Meeting the global malaria targets will only be possible through greater investment and expanded coverage of core tools that prevent, diagnose and treat malaria. Robust financing for the research and development of new tools is equally critical,” he asserted.