

UN chief 'strongly condemns' latest ballistic missile launch by DPR Korea

29 November 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres “strongly condemns” the launch of yet another ballistic missile by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), his Spokesman has said.

“This is a [clear violation](#) of Security Council resolutions and shows complete disregard for the united view of the international community,” said UN Spokesman Stéphane Dujarric in a statement issued overnight, following the DPRK’s launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on Tuesday, which according to news reports landed in the Sea of Japan.

“The Secretary-General urges the DPRK to desist from taking any further destabilising steps. The Secretary-General reaffirms his commitment to working with all parties to reduce tensions,” Mr. Dujarric said.

Meanwhile, the Security Council is scheduled to hold an emergency meeting later today to discuss responses to the latest DPRK’s missile launch.

Returning foreign terrorist fighters pose 'enormous challenge with no easy solution,' Security Council told

28 November 2017 – The head of the United Nations Office against Terrorism, Vladimir Voronkov, told the Security Council on Tuesday that the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters requires an urgent and concerted response and that UN Member States should strengthen their cooperation to tackle it.

Mr. Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the recently-created [UN Office of Counter-Terrorism](#) told the Council that at one time, more than 40,000 combatants from over 110 countries had joined terrorist groups fighting in Syria and Iraq.

“The threat stemming from foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) [affects all Member States, even those far away from the conflict zones,](#)” he said, [laying out the scale of the problem.](#)

Noting that while travel measures implemented by countries and military victories against the so-called the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or Daesh) have “significantly decreased” flows to the region, combatants have since tried to relocate to Libya, Yemen and Afghanistan –

fuelling existing conflicts in these countries.

Meanwhile, some 5,600 fighters from 33 nations have returned home, many equipped to carry attacks out on their native soil, or drum up new recruits.

“Returning foreign terrorist fighters pose an enormous challenge with no easy solution,” Mr. Voronkov continued.

“A tempting response, and certainly the easiest one, would be to throw all returnees into prison [...] But full compliance with international law is vital to combat the threat of foreign terrorist fighters,” he stressed.



Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Office, addresses the Security Council meeting on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts and foreign terrorist fighters. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe



Michèle Coninx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED). UN Photo/Evan Schneider

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Lone terrorists, an alarming trend

Speaking on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), Executive Director Michèle Coninx strongly condemned the recent “heinous and cowardly terrorist attack” in Egypt, and expressed her deepest condolences to the families of all victims of terror attacks.

“All acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation,” she told the Council.

Despite recent successes, Ms. Coninx acknowledged the significant challenges posed by the global terrorist threat. She noted the accelerated rate with which foreign terrorist fighters are returning to their original or a third State, along with an increase in the percentage of terrorist plots resulting in fatalities.

“Of particular concern is the increasing trend towards attacks carried out by lone terrorists, who are often guided by handlers located in other parts of the world,” she underscored.

“Many recent attacks that appear to have been inspired by ISIL, conducted in its name, or claimed by ISIL, were initially reported as ‘lone actor’ attacks. Subsequent investigations have shown however, that those individuals received support or resources from elsewhere, often via the Internet or social media,” Ms. Coninx added, pointing out that terrorists are also increasingly using new technologies to transfer funds to those individuals.

She cited a number of challenges in combatting foreign terrorist fighters, saying “International cooperation continues to be undermined by practical and political challenges, as well as by inconsistent compliance with human rights obligations.”

The Executive Director espoused the importance of strengthening partnerships between and among Member States, UN agencies and partner organizations, asserting: “It takes networks to beat networks.”

[UN chief reiterates support for two-state solution in Middle East; vows to denounce anti-Semitism](#)

28 November 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today reiterated that he would continue to work to help Israelis and Palestinians achieve a two-state solution, and vowed to denounce hate speech aimed at Israelis.

“I will continue to speak out against anti-Semitism, Holocaust denial, hate speech and the use of anti-Semitic appeals by violent extremist groups to recruit new followers,” Mr. Guterres said in [remarks](#) delivered by his Chef de Cabinet, Maria Luiza Ribeiro Viotti, at the Queens Museum in New York.

The event marked the 70th anniversary of General Assembly Resolution 181, which called for the division of the former British mandate for Palestine into Arab and Jewish states.

Adopted on 29 November 1947, [the resolution](#) led to the birth of the State of Israel on 14 May 1948.

“Resolution 181 was subsequently cited in the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel, marking the beginning of a relationship between Israel and the United Nations that has endured and deepened, even during challenging times,” Mr. Guterres said.

He noted that since becoming a UN Member State in 1949, the cooperation between the UN and Israel has grown in peacekeeping, sustainable development and disaster relief, among others.

Having visited Israel three months ago, Mr. Guterres said he saw “remarkable examples of innovation and solutions” that can help all countries fight climate change and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Easing of blockade enables UN aid to enter Yemen, but agencies say imports must also be allowed

28 November 2017 – The United Nations food relief agency said Tuesday that humanitarian air service into Yemen has resumed, and a ship waiting in international waters for three weeks has now docked in Saleef, stressing that unhindered access to all airports and ports is vital to end the dire situation in the conflict-ravaged southern Arabian country.

“The situation in Yemen is currently the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world and aid is urgently required in order to avoid famine,” said Bettina Luescher, spokesperson for the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)), at a press briefing in Geneva.

She said two daily flights to the Yemeni capital, Sana’a, from Jordan’s Amman and one from Djibouti will continue until the end of this month, and a WFP-chartered vessel carrying 25,000 metric tons of wheat grains, now docked at Saleef port, will be unloaded over the coming days.

Ms. Luescher stressed that it is essential that commercial imports, which accounts for 90 per cent of the country’s food requirements, also be allowed in to Yemen, as the UN can not feed the entire population, and that continued access to Hudaydah and Saleef is especially vital as those ports are equipped with unloading, storage and milling facilities.

WFP has more than doubled the number of people it reaches every month from 3.5 million people in January to a current average of seven million people. Due to the funding shortfall of \$362 million, however, some people are only receiving half-rations.

Alessandra Vellucci, spokesperson for the UN Information Service in Geneva, said fuel is urgently needed to operate generators for hospitals, water well pumps and sanitation units and to facilitate the trucking of drinking water and food to vulnerable people.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) is largely focusing its efforts on the diphtheria outbreak. There have been 194 clinically suspected cases of diphtheria and 20 deaths in 13 governorates, said spokesperson Christian Lindmeier.

He said that the outbreak is spreading faster than WHO anticipated. It can only be tackled if medicines, supplies and vaccinations are allowed to enter and move around the country.

Mr. Lindmeier noted that a WHO team left Sana’a on Sunday and travelled to

al-Sadah and Yarim districts in Ibb Governorate, where more than 80 per cent of the diphtheria cases have been reported, to collect samples and analyse them on the spot.

Between Tuesday and Friday, the team will provide training for the rapid response team on the case management of diphtheria at local health centres in Ibb city.

A diphtheria vaccination campaign targeting 300,000 children aged under 12 months began in remote areas on Saturday. Further vaccination rounds for priority districts for 940,000 children under 5 years of age and 2.3 million children and young adults are scheduled for December, he said.

The lifting of the blockade on the movement of humanitarian goods will enable the shipping of 361 tons of medicines and medical supplies that have been blocked in Djibouti. The supplies to be shipped over the coming days include enough antitoxin to treat 1,000 cases of diphtheria.

South Sudan: Senior UN official urges Security Council to support peace process revitalization

28 November 2017 – The arrival of the dry season in South Sudan could lead to more fighting that would undermine the political process and cause additional civilian casualties and displacement, a senior United Nations official cautioned the Security Council on Tuesday.

Briefing the Council on the security situation in the world's newest country, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Bintou Keita also raised concerns about the growing number of incidents targeting humanitarian actors and restrictions on movement of UN Mission in South Sudan ([UNMISS](#)) personnel.

“The humanitarian situation in South Sudan continues to be dire, compounded by widespread armed conflict, inter-communal violence, large displacements of the civilian population and access restrictions which prevents the delivery of humanitarian assistance,” Ms. Keita said.

Some four million South Sudanese have been forced to flee their homes in the conflict that erupted nearly four years ago following a political dispute between President Salva Kiir and his Vice-President, Riek Machar. Despite an August 2015 peace agreement, violence has continued.

According to UN figures, nearly half of the country's 12 million people are hungry, including about 1.7 million on the brink of famine.

The situation is likely to get worse with onset of the dry season, Ms. Keita said, and “the Government’s push to assert military dominance across the country, notably when faced with continued resistance by armed opposition groups.”

She stressed that the conflict in South Sudan can only have a political solution and urged the international community to provide “unified and unconditional” support for the peace process.

Ms. Keita encouraged the 15-member council to “unanimously express its support to the urgent revitalization of the peace process so that the suffering of all South Sudanese civilians can come to an end.”

Those efforts are being led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), with support from neighbouring countries, such as Uganda, to revitalize the implementation of the peace agreement and to bring stakeholders together.

An IGAD task force is now meeting informally in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire – where the fifth African Union and European Union summit will begin tomorrow – and will formally discuss the situation in South Sudan in mid-December.