

Parties to 'brutal conflict' in Yemen must act in line with international humanitarian law – UN official

6 November 2017 – Expressing horror at continued violence perpetrated by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, the top United Nations humanitarian official in the country has called on the conflicting sides to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law.

In particular, I ask [the parties] to adhere to the principles of distinction between civilians and combatants and proportionality in the conduct of hostilities and refrain from directing attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure,” said Jamie McGoldrick, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, in a [statement](#) Sunday.

I also reiterate my calls on States who have influence over the parties to step up their engagement to bring about a political solution to the crisis,” he added.

Last week alone, at least thirteen children were among those killed in the war-torn country, including six among 31 people who were killed in an air strike that struck a busy night market in Sahar district in Sa'ada governorate. At least 26 other people were injured.

On 2 November, shelling in a residential area in Al Onsowa neighbourhood in Taizz city killed five children and injured two others. All the children killed or injured were between seven and 15 years old.

There are also reports that on 3 November house in Baqim district in Sa'ada governorate was hit in an air strike, killing a whole family of seven people, including two children and two women.

These latest events are unfortunately part of the tragic pattern of the disregard that the parties to the conflict continue to show for the laws of war and their obligations and responsibilities to protect civilians' lives,” noted Mr. McGoldrick.

All parties to this brutal conflict must act in the interest of the people of Yemen and in line with international humanitarian law,” he underscored.

The conflict in the country, now into its third year, has killed thousands and driven millions from their homes. Hostilities have also left over 17 million Yemenis food insecure, over a third of the country's district in severe danger of famine, destroyed infrastructure and resulted in the breakdown of public services, especially water and sanitation systems.

Lack of water and sanitation systems has also resulted in a devastating cholera outbreak, which has already killed more than 2,100 individuals and

continues to infect thousands each week.

“We must all do whatever we can to bring the horrendous suffering of the people of Yemen to an end as soon as possible,” said Mr. McGoldrick.

[Lebanon: Amid news of Prime Minister's resignation, UN chief hopes all sides focus on support for State institutions](#)

5 November 2017 – Concerned by the news that Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri has offered to resign, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres on Sunday expressed the hope that all sides will focus on supporting the continuity of Lebanon's State institutions.

A [statement](#) from Mr. Guterres' spokesman said the UN chief hopes that such broad support for State institutions would adhere to the constitution, and aim to safeguard the country's security and stability.

“The United Nations remains committed to supporting the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon,” the statement concludes.

News reports suggest that Mr. Hariri unexpectedly offered his resignation during a televised speech Saturday, saying his life was in danger.

The UN works on multiple fronts to assist Lebanon in forging a peaceful, stable and democratic future. The world body's efforts there include the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon ([UNSCOL](#)) – the Special Coordinator serves as the Secretary-General's representative to the Lebanese Government, all political parties and the diplomatic community based in the country and carries out good offices work on behalf of the UN chief to assist Lebanese parties to reach peaceful and consensus-based solutions to contentious issues.

[UN climate conference to maintain](#)

ambition one year after Paris accord's entry into force

3 November 2017 – One year after the entry into force of the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change, the Bonn Conference, which opens on 6 November in Germany, will be an opportunity for nations around the world to show their ambition for climate action and their determination to keep their promises.

“While Paris represented one of those moments where the best of humanity achieved an agreement so important to our collective futures, Bonn represents how we will move forward to fulfill its promise”, said the Executive Secretary of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)), Patricia Espinosa, on the margins of a ministerial meeting in Fiji on 17 October 2017 to prepare for the [Bonn Conference](#) of the Convention’s States Parties.

“We are running out of time to turn things around. To do so, we must significantly increase our efforts to reduce emissions and our carbon footprints,” she added.

The Paris Agreement, which was adopted by the 196 Parties to the UNFCCC in December 2015 in the French capital after which it is named, calls on countries to combat climate change by limiting the rise of global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius and strive not to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius.

A year ago, the [Marrakech Climate Conference](#) concluded with the *Marrakech Action Proclamation, for our climate and sustainable development*, in which the UNFCCC States Parties affirmed their “commitment” to the “full implementation” of the Paris Agreement. Today, 169 Parties have ratified the Agreement.

At the Bonn Conference, informally known as COP 23, countries will seek to move forward in completing the rule book for operationalizing the Paris Agreement. The Conference, which runs until 17 November, is chaired by Fiji, an island State particularly affected by the impacts of climate change.

“Never has our work been more necessary. We see this with respect to the extreme weather events affecting almost every continent throughout the world,” said Ms. Espinosa.

COP 23 President and Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama agrees. “We can no longer ignore this crisis. Whether it is fires in California, Portugal and Spain. Flooding in Nigeria, India and Bangladesh. The dramatic Arctic melt. Ice breaking off the continent of Antarctica. The recent hurricanes that devastated the Caribbean and the southern United States [...] It’s hard to find any part of the world that is unaffected by these events”, he said at the ministerial meeting in Fiji.

Bonn Conference an opportunity to boost climate risk management efforts

In an op-ed published in October 2017, Ms. Espinosa, alongside the Administrator of the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), Achim Steiner, and the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Robert Glasser, said the Bonn Conference "provides an opportunity to not only accelerate emission reductions but also boost the serious work of ensuring that the management of climate risk is integrated into disaster risk management as a whole." A week before the opening of the Bonn Conference, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced that the levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) surged at "record-breaking speed" to new highs in 2016.

The Bonn Conference will feature a series of meetings and events, including the high-level segment, on 15 November and 16 November, attended by Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres.

Mr. Guterres has invited leaders to consider championing six high-impact areas at a special Climate Summit in 2019. These areas are investment in clean technology, maturing carbon pricing, enabling the energy transition, risk mitigation and building resilience, augmenting the contribution of sub-national actors and business and mobilizing climate finance.

"Increasing ambition is the only way to keep the global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius this century, and as close to 1.5 degree as possible. By focusing on these sectors, we can substantially reduce the gap between where we are and where we need to be," said UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, at the pre-COP meeting in Fiji.

Among the side events scheduled at COP 23, several will be organized under the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action to show how cities, regions, private sector companies and investors are trying to implement the Paris Agreement in the areas of energy, water, agriculture, oceans and coastal areas, human settlements, transportation, industry, and forests.

People without nationality face 'stark realities' of discrimination and persecution – UN report

3 November 2017 – Discrimination, exclusion and persecution are stark realities for many of the world's stateless minorities, the United Nations refugee agency warned in a new report, calling for immediate action to secure equal nationality rights for all.

"Stateless people are just seeking the same basic rights that all citizens enjoy. But stateless minorities, like the Rohingya, often suffer from

[entrenched discrimination](#) and a systematic denial of their rights,” UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said Friday on the launch of the report, [This Is Our Home: Stateless minorities and their search for citizenship](#).

The report notes that more than 75 per cent of the world’s known stateless populations belong to minority groups. Left unaddressed, their protracted marginalization can build resentment, increase fear and, in the most extreme cases, lead to instability, insecurity and displacement.

A press release said that although the report is based on research prior to late August when hundreds of thousands of Rohingya – the world’s biggest stateless minority – began fleeing Myanmar to Bangladesh, their situation is nonetheless illustrative of the problems that years of discrimination, protracted exclusion and their impact on citizenship status can lead to.

“In recent years, important steps have been taken to address statelessness worldwide. However new challenges, like growing forced displacement and arbitrary deprivation of nationality, threaten this progress. States must act now and they must act decisively to end statelessness,” Mr. Grandi stressed.

The report shows that, for many minority groups, the cause of statelessness is difference itself: their histories, their looks, their language, their faith. At the same time, statelessness often exacerbates the exclusion that minority groups face, profoundly affecting all aspects of their life – from freedom of movement to development opportunities, and from access to services to the right to vote.

The report is based on consultations conducted in May and June 2017 with members of stateless, formerly stateless or at risk minority groups in Madagascar, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kenya, which were selected as examples to highlight the issues faced by stateless minorities worldwide.

The report is released on the third anniversary of UNHCR’s #Ibelong Campaign, which urges all States to implement measures, such as facilitating the naturalization or confirmation of nationality for stateless minority groups, allowing children to gain the nationality of the country in which they were born; and ensure universal birth registration.

[UN concerned over ‘unfolding humanitarian emergency’ at Australia’s offshore processing centre](#)

3 November 2017 – The United Nations human rights office on Friday expressed

its concern over an unfolding humanitarian emergency at Australia's offshore detention centre, where refugees and asylum seekers are holding out after the Australian Government's decision to close the facility and pull out its support staff.

We [share the concerns](#) of other UN agencies... about what is an unfolding humanitarian emergency," said Rupert Colville, a spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) at a press briefing in Geneva, explaining that food, water and other basic services have been cut off since the Australian Government shuttered the Regional Processing Centre on Manus Island in Papua New Guinea on 31 October.

Repeating its overall concerns about Australia's offshore processing centres, which are unsustainable, inhumane and contrary to its human rights obligations, OHCHR urged Australia to transfer the 600 men to its mainland where their claims can be processed.

We have serious concerns about the welfare, safety and well-being of the roughly 600 men who remain in the accommodation compound, who are too frightened to leave," the spokesperson said, noting that the men have said they fear violence at the hands of locals if they leave the compound, given there have been violent incidents in the past.

All migrants, including refugees and asylum-seekers, are human beings. Like all of us, they have a right to a safe and secure environment, a right to an adequate standard of living and to participate in the decision-making process that is affecting their future," Mr. Colville said.