

Suspected cholera cases in crisis-torn Yemen near 900,000 – UN

2 November 2017 – Already struggling to cope with a dire humanitarian crisis, war-torn Yemen is now facing the fastest-growing cholera epidemic ever recorded, with some 895,000 suspected cases as of 1 November, the United Nations relief wing reported Thursday.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) said that nearly half the suspected cases are children. Overall, there have been nearly 2,200 associated deaths since 27 April.

The [outbreak is affecting over 90 per cent of districts](#) across 21 of the country's 22 governorates. Despite the enormous challenges, humanitarian partners have established 234 Diarrhoea Treatment Centres and 1,084 Oral Rehydration Corners in 225 affected districts in 20 governorates, according to OCHA.

Some 3.6 million people have been connected to disinfected water supply networks in 12 governorates. Over 17 million people in all governorates were reached with cholera prevention messages.

OCHA warned today that Yemen is also facing the world's largest food emergency and widespread population displacement. After more than [two years of war](#), nearly 21 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance, seven million of whom are severely food insecure, staving off the threat of famine.

Despite challenging conditions and limited funding, the UN and its humanitarian partners provided direct assistance to more than seven million people this year.

"The humanitarian response to the world's worst hunger crisis and its worst cholera outbreak must be fully resourced", said UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock during his recent mission to Yemen. "With only two months left in the year, the UN [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is only 56 per cent funded. I know that we can do more."

Against that background, he called on donors to step up their support to the Response Plan to ensure the most effective and coordinated response across the country.

"Across the country, and on both sides of the frontline, Yemenis are being kept alive by brave humanitarian aid workers, working under extremely difficult conditions," said Mr. Lowcock, who is also the UN Under-Secretary-General for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, stressing that while relief workers "are able to be effective because we remain impartial, neutral and independent [...] we need to do more – and we need more support."

[Diarrhoea-related diseases claim lives of 26 children each day in Afghanistan – UNICEF](#)

2 November 2017 – Although the number of children under five years dying from diarrhoea each year in Afghanistan has dropped below 10,000 for the first time, the disease still claims the lives of 9,500 children, or 26 each day, the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) said Thursday.

“[Deaths from diarrhoea](#) are particularly tragic because in most cases, they can be easily avoided,” said Adele Khodr, UNICEF Afghanistan Representative. “Using a toilet and washing your hands is literally a matter of life or death.”

Diarrhoea-related deaths account for around 12 per cent of the 80,000 deaths of children under the age of five that occur annually in Afghanistan.

The risks associated with diarrhoeal infections are exacerbated in the country, where some 1.2 million children are already malnourished and 41 per cent of children are stunted. Poor sanitation and hygiene compound malnutrition, leaving children more susceptible to infections that cause diarrhoea, which in turn worsens malnutrition.

Providing access to safe water and improved sanitation facilities in villages and towns across the country is critical, said Ms. Khodr, adding that community-led efforts to improve hygiene practices are the simple and most effective way to save lives.

While insecurity continues to affect humanitarian access to parts of the country and slows development, there is still progress. The district of Nili, in Daykundi province, central Afghanistan, was declared as the country’s first ‘open defecation free district’ at a ceremony on 1 November.

Towns and villages across Nili took on the community-led approach in which families identify areas around their homes that are used as toilets. Through a combination of shock, shame, pride and disgust, families without a toilet decide to build their latrine.

Community-wide commitment and some peer pressure does the rest and typically after three to six months an entire community has given up defecating in the open, contributing to a healthier environment for everyone.

In 2017, UNICEF in Afghanistan has already supported more than 500 Afghan communities to be declared and certified as open-defecation-free.

[UN report concludes ISIL committed 'international crimes' during Mosul battle](#)

2 November 2017 – The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh) perpetrated serious and systematic violations in Iraq that amount to “international crimes” during the nine-month battle for Mosul between the terrorist group and Iraqi Government forces, a United Nations report has concluded.

“Those responsible must answer for their [heinous crimes](#),” said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, citing the execution-style killing of civilians, the suffering inflicted on families, and the wanton destruction of property, largely during the period from November 2016 to July 2017.

The [report](#), issued on Thursday by the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq ([UNAMI](#)) and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), documents mass abductions of civilians, the use of thousands as human shields, the intentional shelling of civilian residences, and indiscriminate targeting of civilians trying to flee the city.

In July 2017, Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and affiliated armed groups retook the city which had fallen under the control of ISIL in June 2014.

The report finds at least 2,521 civilians were killed during the nine-month military operation, mostly as a result of ISIL attacks, including 741 people who were executed. The report notes that since 2014, at least 74 mass graves had been discovered in areas previously held by ISIL in Iraq. Additionally, as of 26 October 2017, the Civil Defence Corps reported that they had recovered the remains of 1,642 civilians from underneath rubble in Mosul.

The report recounts that early in November 2016, in areas of Mosul under ISIL control, members of the group used loud speakers to announce that residents of areas retaken by the ISF were considered as “legitimate targets” because of their ‘failure’ to fight against Government forces.

The UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Iraq, Ján Kubiš, said evidence shows that ISIL committed mass atrocities against civilians and Mosul itself, a city they claimed as their capital, but for which, in reality, they sought its ultimate and deliberate destruction.

“Da'esh's reign of terror has spared no one, inflicting untold suffering on unarmed residents whose only guilt is that they lived in the areas under ISIL's control,” he said.

“Their evil acts did not stop at killing and terrorizing residents, as they wantonly destroyed cultural and religious monuments, including the city’s iconic leaning minaret Al-Hadba, in total disregard of history and Islam, the religion this terrorist organization falsely claimed to represent,” Mr. Kubiš added.

The report calls on the international community, including the UN Security Council and the Human Rights Council, to take action to ensure that those responsible for international crimes such as genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes are held accountable.

The report also urges Iraqi authorities to investigate alleged violations and human rights abuses by ISF and associated forces during the military operation. It recorded 461 civilian deaths as a result of airstrikes during the most intensive phase of the ISF-led offensive from 19 February.

[UN forum closes in Bahrain with the spotlight on entrepreneurs for sustainable development](#)

2 November 2017 – A United Nations forum on sustainable development concluded today in Bahrain with a strong call for the integration of entrepreneurship and innovation in all economic and social dimensions as key strategies to implement the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

In particular, the World Entrepreneurs Investment Forum (WEIF) 2017 – having over 60 per cent of participants women – underscored the importance of the role of female entrepreneurs.

We recommend for the active involvement of women in all sectors related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through entrepreneurship and innovation, read the World Forum’s outcome declaration / communique.

The World Forum also called upon governments, the private sector, academia, civil society, media and international organizations to facilitate the work of entrepreneurs and innovators to ensure sustainable development.

Speaking at a press conference where the outcome – Manama Declaration – was unveiled, Miroslav Lajčák, the President of the General Assembly, also highlighted the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation for the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

We must offer better incentives to induce entrepreneurs and innovators to invest in [SDGs](#) [to] unleash and foster a dynamic private sector and ensure competitiveness, he said, noting, in particular, the role of small and

medium sized-enterprises, which often account for the majority of business activities at the national level.

Helping businesses get off the ground and sustaining them through their initial phases helps generate employment, income and economic growth
President of General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák

“Supporting [these enterprises] is a proven strategy to build a robust economy from the ground up [and] helping businesses get off the ground and sustaining them through their initial phases helps generate employment, income and economic growth,” added Mr. Lajčák.

Further in his remarks, the President of the General Assembly highlighted the importance of the means of implementation for sustainable development, and called innovative partnerships between all sectors.

In that context, Mr. Lajčák noted that, in mid-2018, he will be convening a high-level event on sustainable development financing to foster discussions among UN Member States and other stakeholders on the important subject.

Organized under the overarching theme of [achieving the SDGs through promoting entrepreneurship and innovation](#), the World Forum saw participation of more than 1,000 government officials, entrepreneurs, representatives of international organizations, civil society and the academia from over 90 countries.



Miroslav Lajčák, the President of the General Assembly, speaks at the Press Conference. Photo: UN News/Vibhu Mishra



Hashim Hussein, the head of the UNIDO ITPO-Bahrain, briefs on the outcomes of WEIF 2017. Photo: UN News/Vibhu Mishra



Miroslav Lajčák, the President of the General Assembly, receives a commemorative plaque from the organizers of WEIF. Photo: UN News/Vibhu Mishra



A participant at the press conference broadcasts the event live on Facebook. Photo: UN News/Vibhu Mishra



Participants at the Press Conference, held at UN House, Manama, Bahrain. Photo: UNIC-Manama

Briefing on the World Forum's discussions and outcomes, Hashim Hussein, the Executive Secretary of WEIF 2017 and the head of the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Investment and Technology Promotion Office (ITPO) in Bahrain, noted that participants stressed the need to build and strengthen partnerships between entrepreneurs – both women and men alike.

“[The World Forum] urged stakeholders to foster the private sector as the main engine behind economic growth, structural change and innovation [and] identified the pressing need to promote competitive micro, small and medium-sized enterprises as the main driving force for empowerment of women and youth,” said Mr. Hussein.

In his remarks, the head of UNIDO ITPO-Bahrain also underscored the importance of sound economic policies, legislation and programmes – as key elements of sustainable development – to ensure the empowerment of women at the national, regional and global levels.

Also at the press conference, Samir Aldarabi, the Director of the [UN Information Centre in Manama](#), [recalled](#) the message of UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres to the Forum, in which the Secretary-General said that “inclusive and sustainable industrial development will continue to be a key driver of progress as [the United Nations] supports Member States in this essential work.”

Looking ahead, Mr. Aldarabi informed that the World Forum will be held every two years in Manama, the capital of Bahrain, and that in 2020 [it will be organized](#) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Also speaking at the occasion were the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative for Bahrain, Amin El Sharkawi; and the Under Secretary for International Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bahrain, Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa.

Organized by UNIDO in partnership with the Government of Bahrain, the World Entrepreneurs and Investment Forum 2017, held from 31 October to 2 November, saw key events on the [Maritime-Continental Silk Road](#); [addressing challenges faced by women in industry](#); global impact investing; [recognition](#) of men and women business leaders for their contributions to sustainable development; the [Bahrain Entrepreneurs Exhibition](#); and a side event on implementation of SDGs in Bahrain.

UN News was in Manama, Bahrain, covering the Forum and its associated events. Follow [@UN_News_Centre](#) and [@UNNewsArabic](#) for up to date news and highlights from the UN.

'Injustice against journalists costly for society,' says UNESCO chief on International Day

2 November 2017 – Justice must be done for the murder of journalists, who perform important functions in taking forward fundamental freedoms and bolstering the strength of societies, a senior United Nations official said Thursday, marking the International Day to end impunity for crimes against them.

Justice is a [cornerstone](#) of a free society. It dissuades those who threaten freedom of expression and emboldens those who stand to defend it,” said Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO](#)), in her message for the [International Day](#), observed annually on 2 November.

The date was chosen in commemoration of the assassination of two French journalists in Mali on 2 November 2013.

This is why injustice against journalists is so costly for all societies,” she added.

From 2006 to 2016, at least 930 journalists were killed. In 2016 alone, some 102 journalists were killed in the line of duty. Worryingly, more than nine out of 10 cases, the perpetrators are never brought to justice.

We must ensure justice is done for every journalist killed,” she declared.

Journalists must be defended through concerted action by Governments, supported by the UN, working with all relevant actors, from international regional organizations, judiciaries and media to private companies, academia and civil society.

This partnership for action was embodied UNESCO's recent Multi-Stakeholder Consultation, held in Geneva to strengthen implementation of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

On Wednesday in Geneva, two UN experts warned that the world is witnessing a “downward spiral of attacks” on journalists, spurred on by hate speech even from senior politicians.

Speaking on the eve of International Day, the Special Rapporteurs on arbitrary, summary and extrajudicial executions, Agnes Callamard, and on freedom of expression, David Kaye, said that when authorities [fail to follow up such attacks](#) with independent and impartial investigations, the killers and their allies achieve their objectives.

The attacks need to stop, so too does the public demonization of reporting

and specific media outlets and reporters by political leaders at the highest levels, they added.