

[Algeria tells Assembly reformed UN necessary for dealing with world's many crises](#)

22 September 2017 – Faced with the same backdrop year after year of unresolved old conflicts and new deadly outbreaks, climate change, impoverishment and under-development, the world has no alternative but to place its hopes in the United Nations, Algeria told the General Assembly today. “Who better to assume this role than our Organization which, even it needs to be improved in many respects, still remains more than ever this unique and irreplaceable instrument in the service of nations, Foreign Minister Abdelkader Messahel told the Assembly’s 72nd General Debate, calling for institutional reform.

The time has come, he said, for a radical reform starting with the 15-member Security Council, the only UN organ whose decisions have the force of international law, increasing its membership to take account of the vastly different situation existing today from that when the UN was founded seven decades ago.

At every session over the past decades developing countries have sought additional seats, both permanent and elected, to give a greater voice to their continents, especially Africa.

Mr. Messahel promised that Algeria would do what it could to help resolve the conflicts in its neighbours – Mali, Libya, Yemen and Syria.

While pledging Algeria continuing fight against terrorism in all its forms, he called on countries to oppose the advance of Islamophobia, both individually and collectively.

[Full statement \(in Arabic\) available here](#)

[International rules-based order in jeopardy Australia's Foreign Minister tells UN assembly](#)

22 September 2017 – Australia’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, told the General Assembly today that while the United Nations had been established to build an international rules-based order for peaceful dispute resolution, “we are now in a time when the challenges to that order are

increasing.”

“The most egregious example is North Korea,” continued Ms. Bishop, pointing out that the country is openly defying the UN Security Council, putting millions of people at risk. It is crucial for all UN Member States to strictly implement the Council’s sanctions to compel Pyongyang to abandon its “illegal programmes.”

Other threats highlighted by the Foreign Minister were the increasing activities of non-State actors, terrorism and violent extremism. “Global terrorism – and the extreme Islamist ideologies driving it – must be confronted and defeated,” she stressed. Ms. Bishop maintained that terrorism can be effectively battled, and beaten, if everyone worked together, sharing knowledge and resources.

Ms. Bishop drew a link between security and economic development, saying that one cannot be achieved without the other. She endorsed a UN development system more focused on sustainable economic development that provides opportunities and facilitates partnerships with the private sector.

Noting that economic resilience can be undermined by natural and man-made disasters, she cited the 2030 agenda, [Paris Agreement](#), Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the [World Humanitarian Summit](#)’s Grand Bargain as “a blueprint for global action on those problems which can only be addressed by working together on challenges that don’t respect national borders.”

[Full statement available here](#)

Facing a grim reality, we need more than ‘declarations’ to ensure better world, Albania tells UN

22 September 2017 – Tackling the numerous complex challenges society is confronted with today will require more than just “declaratory undertakings,” Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania told the United Nations, stressing that real progress demands responsibility and action.

Pointing to the links between the threats of terrorism, climate change, and inequality, and the ways in which they have merge in unprecedented fashion to undercut safe, healthy and enjoyable livelihoods across the globe, Mr. Rama told delegations attending the UN General Assembly’s annual debate today that on one hand, “we live in inspiring times [...] but on the other, it seems like the world has lost its energy and vision.”

He said global terrorism and radicalization have become a peril that

continues to strike blindly and persistently. At the same time, some 65 million people, the highest number since World War II, have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to these acts and threats, among others. The ills are being exacerbated by climate change-driven extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent and more intense.

Citing the universal desire for safety, including freedom from oppression, persecution and violence, Mr. Rama said: "To achieve these goals, we need to go beyond declaratory undertakings. People rightly demand us to show responsibility and ability to act."

As such, he called for concerted action towards the [2030 Agenda](#) and its landmark Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), and went on to detail Albania's commitment to human rights, citing his pride in the number of women joining the country's Government leadership.

Turning to international relations, Mr. Rama described his country's mission to join the European Union as a main priority. "It is not just one objective in our foreign policy; it is not a contractual relation of sorts. For us, the European integration lies at the heart of our overall development since it touches every cell of our development architecture," he explained.

[Full statement available here](#)

UN scales up response as number of Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar nears 500,000

22 September 2017 – With the number of Rohingya refugees from Myanmar arriving in south-east Bangladesh edging towards half a million, United Nations agencies are [stepping up delivery of life-saving aid](#) to two official refugee camps, where the health concerns are quickly growing.

At the request of Bangladeshi authorities, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)) is speeding up the distribution of plastic sheeting to get as many people as possible under at least minimal protection from monsoon rains and winds.

"On Saturday, we plan to begin distribution of kitchen sets, sleeping mats, solar lamps and other essential relief items to an initial 3,500 families who have been selected by community leaders," UNHCR spokesperson Andrej Mahecic told a [press briefing](#) in Geneva.

Refugee volunteers and contractors are helping newly arriving refugees moving into emergency shelter, but it is vital that UNHCR site planners have the

opportunity to lay out the new Kutupalong extension in an orderly way to adequately provide for sanitation and to make sure structures are erected on higher ground not prone to flooding.

In total, more than 700,000 Rohingya refugees are now believed to be in Bangladesh; 420,000 of them have arrived in the past three and a half weeks.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi will be in Bangladesh this weekend to get a first-hand look at the scale of the crisis as well as UNHCR's response, and meet with refugees.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) said that camps are bursting at the seams and there is a huge risk of disease.

"WHO is very concerned about the health situation on the border between Myanmar and Bangladesh, given the very crowded settlements, most of them spontaneous," said Fadela Chaib, the agency's spokesperson in Geneva.

"It has been challenging to roll out the emergency response, not least because of the difficult terrain and the very heavy rains, and the fact that the population in question is dispersed, mobile and often injured," she added.

Ms. Chaib said the greatest risk is related to water and sanitation, with poor conditions increasing the risk of vector- and water-borne diseases. Cholera, which is endemic in Bangladesh, cannot be ruled out. WHO has provided some 20,000 people with water purification tablets.

"Immunization rates among children is very low," she said, explaining that when children are malnourished and exposed to the elements, the risk of childhood diseases such as measles are very high.

WHO, together with other agencies, recently launched an immunization campaign against polio and measles. Owing to the poor weather conditions and the continuous influx of people, the campaign has been extended.

Around 40 WHO staff have been dispatched to Bangladesh, and the agency will deploy a team of epidemiologists over the weekend to support risk assessment for infectious diseases.

For its part, the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) has now reached at least 385,000 people with food aid as of today. Together with its partners, WFP feeds more than 5,000 people daily in the area.

"The situation is dire and WFP is on the frontlines trying to reach people as quickly as possible," spokesperson Bettina Luescher told reporters in Geneva.

Funding shortfall jeopardizes humanitarian response in Yemen, UN aid chief warns

22 September 2017 – Efforts to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, currently the world's largest, are being hampered by insufficient funding and other challenges, the top United Nations relief official warned today.

“Despite the extraordinary scale of the suffering linked to the brutal conflict, including the threat of famine and the world's worst cholera outbreak, Yemen [does not receive the international attention it deserves](#),” Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock told a high-level event held in the margins of the General Assembly.

Mr. Lowcock, who is also UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, noted that nearly 21 million people are in need of emergency aid or protection, most of them children, and that this year's humanitarian response plan for Yemen is just 45 per cent funded, which means short-changing famine prevention efforts, and discontinuing programmes.

The World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) did reach 7 million people last month, helping to avert potential famine – but this came at the cost of cutting rations for about half of recipients to 60 per cent of the normal level.

“Yemen is an absolute catastrophe,” WFP Executive Director David Beasley said at a separate event today. “Of the less than 30 million people that live there, 20 million literally don't know what's going to happen from day to day; 17 million of them are on the brink of famine.”

He noted that WFP has received about half of the funds its needs, adding that the Gulf States, in particular, need to “step up and fill in the gap.”

Mr. Lowcock called on donors to provide full funding for the Humanitarian Response Plan, noting that the Yemen Humanitarian Fund is one of the quickest and most effective ways to support the most urgent priorities.

Although only negotiations and a political settlement can put an end to this appalling, man-made crisis, all parties to the fighting in Yemen must be repeatedly reminded to comply with international humanitarian law, taking constant care to spare civilians and civilian infrastructure, he said.

The coordinated effort by partners in all sectors is making an enormous difference, he added, but much more remains to be done.

Among the other challenges faced, Mr. Lowcock cited the delay or blockage of humanitarian assistance or the movements of humanitarian staff – including for the cholera response by de facto authorities in Sana'a; commercial imports restrictions; the closure of Sana'a airport to commercial traffic; and salary arrears for health workers, teachers and water and sanitation

staff that are accelerating the collapse of essential services.

“Overcoming each of these obstacles is within the reach of the international community,” said Mr. Lowcock.

In an interview with UN News, UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen Jamie McGoldrick said he met with Member States this week in New York and asked them to provide more funding.

Mr. McGoldrick also met with those involved in the conflict and reminded them of their obligations to abide by international humanitarian law.

“Enough is enough,” he said. “The suffering should not be the DNA of the people in that country.”