

International solidarity key to address global challenges, urges Nigerian President Buhari

19 September 2017 – Highlighting the importance of international cooperation to address many pressing challenges around the globe, Muhammadu Buhari, the President of Nigeria, urged world leaders to sustain such collaboration, particularly in instances where their resources are insufficient and capacity weak at the national level.

Noting, in particular, the “exemplary show of solidarity” by the international community in confronting threats posed by the Boko Haram and Al Qaida terrorist groups in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region, he urged greater cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in conflict prevention and management.

“The UN should continue to take primary leadership of the maintenance of international peace and Security by providing, in a predictable and sustainable manner, adequate funding and other enablers to regional initiatives and peacekeeping operations authorized by the Security Council,” said President Buhari, [addressing](#) the general debate at the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

The President of Nigeria also noted that widening inequalities between societies and gaps between rich and poor nations contribute to increasing instability and called for a continued focus on addressing these challenges.

Further in his remarks, he also urged greater efforts for a peaceful solution to the nuclear weapons development programme of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) and noted that his country proposed a Security-Council led UN delegation, which should include members from all regions, to urgently engage with the country’s leadership.

He also called on all UN Member States to ratify, without delay, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which will open for signature tomorrow.

In conclusion, President Buhari reiterated his country’s commitment to continue to support the UN in all its efforts, including the implementation of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development.

[Full statement available here](#)

'We need more diplomacy, more negotiating' Brazilian President tells UN Assembly

19 September 2017 – The President of Brazil, the first Head of State traditionally to address the annual United Nations General Assembly's general debate, pledged today that his country will sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons – reiterating that the nuclear powers undertake additional disarmament.

“Brazil was among the drafters of the Treaty. It will be a historical moment,” President Michel Temer said. “We must acknowledge that there are still issues in the agenda of peace and security that give rise to serious apprehension,” he added, noting the recent nuclear and missile tests on the Korean Peninsula, which Brazil condemns “with the utmost vehemence.”

In an address that covered a wide range of issues, including trade, development, conflicts and the refugee crisis, Mr. Temer told the Assembly that while Organization's aspirations have not been entirely fulfilled, the UN has represented the prospect for a more just world – one of peace and prosperity, saying “We need more diplomacy, more negotiating, [...] we need the UN more than before.”

Maintaining the importance of multilateralism, the Brazilian President advocated for an expanded Security Council aligned with the reality of the twenty-first century, “to listen to the will of the overwhelming majority of the Assembly.”

Turning to the [2030 Agenda](#), Mr. Temer said: “Brazil's commitment to sustainable development is a deep-rooted one. It permeates our public policies and our actions abroad.” He pointed to the country's contributions, including its commitment to the [Paris Agreement](#), and highlighted that Brazil is at the forefront of a low carbon economy in which clean and renewable energy accounts for more than 40 per cent of its energy matrix – three times more of the world's average. “We are leaders in hydropower and bioenergy,” he stressed.

Noting that Brazil has the largest tropical forest on the planet, he announced that the country's efforts in combatting deforestation have resulted in a more than 20 per cent reduction in the Amazonian region, saying “We are back on the right track and on this track we shall remain.”

Also in South America, Mr. Temer pointed to the deteriorating human rights situation in Venezuela, saying that Brazil stands with the Venezuela people and “have welcomed thousands of migrants and refugees” from that country.

[Full statement available here](#)

[DR Congo: UN agency urges Government to protect refugees after tragic killings](#)

19 September 2017 – The United Nations refugee agency is urging the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to ensure protection for refugees and asylum-seekers following last week's shooting incident in Kamanyola in which at least 39 people were killed and 94 injured.

"This is a devastating tragedy. It should never have happened," said UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.

According to a [press release](#) from the Office of the High Commissioner ([UNHCR](#)), Mr. Grandi welcomed the announcement from Congolese officials to launch an inquiry into the incident and called for it to be detailed.

The incident took place on 15 September after Congolese soldiers fired live rounds at Burundian protestors in the eastern part of the country, many of whom UNHCR believes were refugees and asylum-seekers. The protest, reported to be initially peaceful, allegedly started after a small group of Burundians were detained by Congolese authorities, creating fears they were going to be deported to Burundi.

The dead included Burundian men, women and one child. The incident also resulted in the death of one Congolese soldier, with six others wounded.

"We need to establish facts and determine responsibility and make sure that such an incident never happens again," Mr. Grandi said.

UNHCR immediately deployed a team to the area on Saturday where it is working with the medical staff of a partner organization in the local hospital to provide life-saving medical assistance to the injured.

The UNHCR team on the ground reports a tense situation with over 2,400 Burundians seeking protection next to the UN peacekeeping mission's small base in Kamanyola.

DRC hosts more than 43,700 refugees who have arrived from Burundi since 2015.

UN scaling up assistance as number of Rohingya refugees grows to over 400,000

19 September 2017 – As the number of Rohingya who have fled to Bangladesh surpasses 400,000, United Nations agencies are scaling up their efforts to assist the displaced and [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres renewed his call on the authorities in Myanmar to take steps to address the crisis.

“We are all shocked by the dramatic escalation of sectarian tensions in Myanmar’s Rakhine state,” Mr. Guterres remarked today in his [address](#) to the opening of the General Assembly’s high-level debate. “A vicious cycle of persecution, discrimination, radicalization and violent repression has led more than 400,000 desperate people to flee, putting regional stability at risk.”

He stressed that the authorities in Myanmar must end the military operations, allow unhindered humanitarian access and recognize the right of refugees to return in safety and dignity. They must also address the grievances of the Rohingya, whose status has been left unresolved for far too long, he added.

Marzuki Darusman, the Chairperson of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, [told](#) the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva that it is clear that there is “a grave humanitarian crisis” underway that requires urgent attention.

In addition to the over 400,000 people who have sought refuge in Bangladesh since 25 August, Mr. Darusman noted that there are reports that nearly 200 Rohingya villages in the affected area have been emptied.

“It is important for us to see with our own eyes the sites of these alleged violations and abuses and to speak directly with the affected people and with the authorities,” he stated, noting that the Commission has requested the Government of Myanmar for unfettered access to the country.

UN aid agencies scaling up assistance

As the number of those crossing the border into Bangladesh increases, the UN refugee agency ([UNHCR](#)) is ramping up its operations, including moving new arrivals into family tents and temporary communal shelters at a new extension site next to the Kutupalong camp near Cox’s Bazar.

Spokesperson Duniya Aslam Khan [told](#) a news conference in Geneva that refugees have told UNHCR staff that they suffered from cold and rain during their treks from Myanmar.

“Many had fallen ill, particularly small children. There is urgent need for more latrines, not least to reduce risks of a spread of disease with so many

people living in close quarters. Many also complained of hunger and said they had eaten little on their journeys, which took up to 10 days on foot," she stated.

With an estimated 415,000 refugees having arrived since late August the humanitarian challenges have become immense, according to UNHCR, which noted the "remarkable generosity" by many individual Bangladeshis, with people trucking food and clothes to the refugees in the camps and others camping along the single main road.

However, the Government needs more support, and UNHCR will be issuing an appeal this week for the emergency humanitarian response in Bangladesh till the end of year.

Meanwhile, the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) is providing critical support to step-up health services delivery in Cox's Bazar.

"Vulnerable populations require access to health services, including emergency and basic health care. Access for women to reproductive health services is especially important," noted Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director for WHO South-East Asia.

The agency added in a [news release](#) that poor nutrition, communicable diseases (including vaccine-preventable and water-borne diseases), injuries and other concerns such as mental health provide immense public health challenges that the Bangladeshi Ministry of Health, WHO and other health partners are working to address.

[Over 40 million people caught in modern slavery, 152 million in child labour – UN](#)

19 September 2017 – More than 40 million people around the world were victims of modern slavery – forced labour and forced marriage – in 2016, a United Nations study has found, revealing the true scale of such practices that disproportionately affect women and girls.

Global estimates of modern slavery: Forced labour and forced marriage [show](#) that among the victims, about 25 million were in forced labour, and 15 million were in forced marriage.

Of the total, almost 29 million – or 71 per cent – are women and girls. Women represent 99 per cent of victims of forced labour in the commercial sex industry and 84 per cent of people in forced marriage.

The study was prepared jointly by the UN International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) and Walk Free Foundation, in partnership with the UN International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)).

A separate ILO study, Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012-2016, confirmed that about 152 million children, aged between 5 and 17, were subject to child labour.

Child labour remains concentrated primarily in agriculture, at 70.9 per cent. Almost one in five child labourers, or 17.1 per cent, work in the services sector while 11.9 per cent of child labourers work in industry.

“The world won’t be in a position to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals unless we dramatically increase our efforts to fight these scourges,” said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder.

“These new global estimates can help shape and develop interventions to prevent both forced labour and child labour,” he added.