

[Global hunger rising again, driven by conflict and climate change – UN report](#)

15 September 2017 – The number of people hungry around the world is up for the first time in more than a decade, says a new United Nations report issued today, pointing to violent conflicts and climate change as the major drivers.

“This has [set off alarm bells](#) we cannot afford to ignore: we will not end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 unless we address all the factors that undermine food security and nutrition. Securing peaceful and inclusive societies is a necessary condition to that end,” said the heads of five UN agencies in their joint foreword to the report.

The report, launched in Rome, is the first UN global assessment on food security and nutrition to be released following the adoption of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, which aims to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030 as a top priority.

Some 815 million people were hungry last year – an increase of 38 million from the previous year – affecting some 11 per cent of the world population, according to UN figures.

Some of the highest proportions of food-insecure and malnourished children in the world are now concentrated in conflict zones, according to [The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#).

Earlier this year, famine struck parts of South Sudan, and there is a threat of famine in conflict-affected countries such as Nigeria, Somalia and Yemen.

Even in regions that are more peaceful, droughts or floods linked in part to the El Niño weather phenomenon, as well as the global economic slowdown, have also seen food security and nutrition deteriorate, added the agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)), the International Fund for Agricultural Development ([IFAD](#)), the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) and the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).

Cindy Holleman, senior economist with FAO, said the report is one of the first to review malnutrition among children, as well as obesity among children and adults.

“This is a growing problem worldwide and also has significant implications for people’s health and living,” said Ms. Holleman, noting that some countries have problems of malnutrition, as well as obesity.

[UN Secretary-General condemns DPRK ballistic missile launch](#)

15 September 2017 – Condemning the launch of yet another ballistic missile by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres called on the country’s leadership to halt such activities and explore resumption of sincere dialogue on denuclearisation.

In a [statement attributable](#) to his spokesperson, the Secretary-General called on the DPRK leadership to cease further testing, comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions, and allow space to explore the resumption of sincere dialogue on denuclearisation.

The latest launch, which the statement referred to as a manifest violation of Security Council resolutions comes just days after the country conducted its sixth nuclear test.

The statement also noted that Mr. Guterres will be discussing the situation on the Korean Peninsula with all concerned parties in the margins of the upcoming high level week of the UN General Assembly.

[New UN global innovation forum to ‘creatively disrupt’ status quo for women and girls in tech](#)

14 September 2017 – The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women ([UN Women](#)) today launched the Global Innovation Coalition for Change with partners from the private sector, the academia and non-governmental organizations to encourage innovation and technology work better for young women and girls around the world.

[Innovation and technology provide unprecedented opportunities](#) to reach those who are the most likely to be left out of the benefits of progress. They can break women out of isolation and create a market for their innovative ideas and products,” said Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, the Executive Director of UN Women, in a news release announcing the launch.

“Through the Global Innovation Coalition for Change and similar partnerships we can bring together the best of academic brain power and research, industry practical know-how, and civil society’s drive and reach to creatively disrupt the status quo,” she added.

According to UN Women, the partnership will focus on building market awareness of the potential for innovations that meet the needs of women through research and advocacy and will also identify the key industry-specific barriers that obstruct women's and girls' advancement in innovation, technology and entrepreneurship.

It will also work collaboratively to identify key actions that can help overcome these barriers through actions including sharing of good practices, developing capacity and investing in specific innovations through targeted support.

Additionally, underscoring the importance of partnership with the private sector to advance gender equality and women's empowerment through innovation and technology UN Women noted that the Global Innovation Coalition for Change is an important step to bring about transformative change in the lives of women and girls.

[Put people before profits, UN urges in annual trade report](#)

14 September 2017 – Noting that the world economy in 2017 is picking up but not taking off, a new United Nations trade and development report has cautioned against fiscal austerity and harnessing finance to support job creation and infrastructure investment.

Put people before profits, UN urges in annual trade report

Noting that the world economy in 2017 is picking up but not taking off, a new United Nations trade and development report has cautioned against fiscal austerity and harnessing finance to support job creation and infrastructure investment.

A combination of [too much debt and too little demand](#) at the global level has hampered sustained expansion of the world economy, said Mukhisa Kituyi, the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), launching its [2017 Trade and Development Report](#).

According to the report's findings, growth this year is expected to reach 2.6 per cent, slightly higher than last year, but still well below the pre-financial crisis average of 3.2 per cent.

Most regions are expected to register small gains, with Latin America exiting recession and posting the biggest turnaround, even if only at 1.2 per cent growth. The Eurozone is expected to see a 1.8 per cent growth while the United States could witness 2.1 per cent.

However, with insufficient global demand, trade remains sluggish and only minor improvement is anticipated this year, primarily due to a recover in South-South trade (led by China).

Furthermore, in the absence of a coordinated expansion led by the advanced economies, sustaining the limited global economic acceleration hinges on lasting improvements in emerging economies, noted UNCTAD.



Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Photo: UNCTAD

An 'age of anxiety'

Further in the news release, UNCTAD reported that debt explosion and the rise of super-elites (loosely identified as the top 1 per cent) two of the largest socioeconomic trends in recent times could be linked through the deregulation of financial markets, to the widening ownership gap of financial assets and a fixation on short-term returns.

As such, inequality and instability are hard-wired into hyperglobalization [making] for a world with insufficient levels of productive investment, precarious jobs and weakening welfare provision, it noted, adding:

This has become self-perpetuating, with the run-up to a crisis driven by the 'great escape' of top incomes, while their aftermath is marked by austerity and stagnating incomes at the bottom.

The report also examined other factors leading to growing anxiety, pointing to increased automation through employment of robotics as well as gender dimensions, including discrimination based on gender in the job market, as factors causing much worry in economies.

It also warned that failure to correct the excesses of hyperglobalization could not only jeopardize social cohesion but also diminishing trust in both markets as well as in political actors.

A global new deal for the 21st century needed

Drawing lessons from 1947, when the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the UN joined forces to rebalance the post-war global economy, the UNCTAD report called for an equally ambitious and collaborative effort to tackle the inequities of hyperglobalization to build inclusive and sustainable economies.

The successes of the New Deal of the 1930s in the United States owed much to its emphasis on counterbalancing powers and giving a voice to weaker groups in society, including consumer groups, workers' organizations, farmers and the dispossessed poor, said UNCTAD, stressing that the lesson still

holds true today.

In today's integrated global economy, governments will need to act together for any one country to achieve success, it added, urging countries to seize the opportunity offered by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and put in place a global new deal for the twenty-first century.

UN anti-crime agency at 20; tackling terrorism, cybercrime vital for peaceful and sustainable future

14 September 2017 – Marking the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Secretary-General António Guterres underscored the importance of justice to prevent conflict, promote peace and security, and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

I am proud of the support UNODC provides to countries to tackle the interlinked problems of drugs, organized crime, terrorism and corruption, said Mr. Guterres in a [video message](#) at a special event to commemorate the agency's anniversary.

In his message, the UN chief also applauded the work and commitment of the agency's staff and reaffirmed his support the UN agency.

Headquartered in the Austrian capital, Vienna, UNODC is mandated with assisting UN Member States in their fight against illicit drugs, crime and terrorism. It was established in 1997 through a merger between the then UN Drug Control Programme and the Centre for International Crime Prevention. Its work is translated to the field-level in all regions of the world through an extensive network of field presences.

In a keynote address, UNODC Executive Director Yury Fedotov said that the anniversary was an opportunity to [reflect on the changes](#), acknowledge the challenges and renew UNODC's commitment to strengthen future cooperation.

We have come a long way in these past 20 years [...] now we have conventions and instruments that have been ratified by nearly every country in the world, he said, noting important progress in fighting heinous crimes.

In his remarks, Mr. Fedotov recounted benefits brought on by globalization but said that the world continues to grapple with persisting problems due to what he said was asymmetric globalization, leaving many behind,

undermining trust and creating instability.

In particular, he warned of a growing nexus between transnational organized crime and terrorism that encouraged cultural property trafficking and generated funds for terrorists.

“Cybercrime has emerged as a truly borderless threat [...] use of the dark net for drug trafficking is growing by leaps and bounds [and] cryptocurrencies are providing new avenues for moving and laundering criminal proceeds, straining the knowledge and capacities of law enforcement agencies to keep up,” he added.

In his remarks, the UNODC chief also spoke of the importance of the partnership between the UN agency and the private sector and civil society in the areas of drug prevention, anti-corruption initiatives, education and promoting fair play in sports.

“So on this twentieth anniversary of UNODC, in these transformative times, I urge Member States and all of our partners to [commit to working together](#) and providing the needed resources, to advance our efforts to address crises, achieve the [SDGs](#) and build safer, more secure societies,” said Mr. Fedotov.