

Amid rising violence in Jerusalem, UN and diplomatic partners urge maximum restraint on all sides

23 July 2017 – Expressing deep concern about the escalating tensions and violent clashes taking place in and around the Old City of Jerusalem, the United Nations and its diplomatic partners in the Middle East peace process have called on all to demonstrate maximum restraint and work towards de-escalating the situation.

In a statement issued late yesterday, the envoys of the so-called Middle East Quartet – comprising the UN, Russia, the United States and the European Union – strongly condemned acts of terror, and expressed regret for all loss of innocent life caused by the violence, and hope for a speedy recovery to the wounded.

The statement comes in the wake of a series of deadly stabbings, other violent incidents and rising tensions in and around Jerusalem's Old City since mid-June, particularly near the holy site known as the Temple Mount and as Haram al-Sharif.

Noting the particular sensitivities surrounding the holy sites in Jerusalem, and the need to ensure security, the Quartet envoys called on all to demonstrate maximum restraint, refrain from provocative actions and work towards de-escalating the situation.

Through their statement, the envoys welcomed the assurances by the Prime Minister of Israel that the status quo at the holy sites in Jerusalem will be upheld and respected. Further, the Quartet encouraged Israel and Jordan to work together to uphold the status quo, noting Jordan's special role as recognized in its peace treaty with Israel.

The Quartet envoys reiterated that violence deepens mistrust and is fundamentally incompatible with achieving a peaceful resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the statement concluded.

'The time to act is now;' end children's suffering in Iraq and across the Middle East – UNICEF

22 July 2017 – Calling for immediate care and protection for

children caught up in violence in Iraq's war torn Mosul and other Middle East conflicts, the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) today warned that the lives and futures of some 27 million across the region and parts of Africa are at risk.

The worst of the violence in Mosul may be over but for too many children in Mosul and in the region, [extreme suffering continues](#), said, Geert Cappelaere, UNICEF Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa.

As for recently-liberated Mosul, he said that children in shock continue to be found, some reportedly among the debris or hidden in tunnels. Some have lost their families while fleeing to safety. According to reports, families have been forced to abandon their children or give them away – they are now living in fear, alone.

Many children have been forced to fight and some to carry out acts of extreme violence, he said, emphasizing: "These are horrific times for far too many children in Iraq and other conflict-affected countries in the region."

UNICEF says that violence and conflicts are putting the lives and futures of nearly 27 million children at risk, impacted by violence in Yemen, inside Syria and refugee hosting countries, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Libya and Sudan, as well as Iraq.

In the north-eastern city of Ar-Raqqa in Syria, violence has further intensified over the past weeks, with children repeatedly coming under attack. Between 30,000 and 50,000 civilians continue to be trapped in the city as heavy violence continues around them, Mr. Cappelaere explained.

Moreover, families have described horrific conditions and journeys fraught with danger, sniper fire, landmines and unexploded remnants of war, he added.

Such horrors are not over even if children escape from immediate danger. They are being detained, abused and stigmatized for perceived affiliations, while tensions are high between and within communities, said Mr. Cappelaere.

Those children who are alone need our support to help them find their families, be reunited and surrounded with care, protection and services, regardless of their family's origin or affiliation, he underscored.

As with any other child in the world, they have the right to be safeguarded, including through legal documentation. Children are children!

The time to act is now, Mr. Cappelaere said, and asked: "How can we build a more stable and prosperous future for all while children are exposed to such horrors and treated this way?"

[Guterres 'strongly condemns' stabbing attack that left three Israelis dead in West Bank](#)



Halamish, an Israeli settlement, stands in the northern West Bank, near the Palestinian village of Nabih Saleh. Photo: UNICEF/Mouhssine Ennaimi

22 July 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres has strongly condemned yesterday evening's stabbing attack by a Palestinian perpetrator, which resulted in the death of three members of an Israeli family in the Halamish settlement in the occupied West Bank.

“He conveys his condolences to the bereaved and wishes a speedy recovery to those injured,” according to a [statement](#) issued by the UN chief's Deputy Spokesman, Farhan Haq.

Further to the statement, Mr. Guterres again called on all to refrain from any actions or words that could further escalate an already volatile situation.

[UN chief concerned about unfolding violence in Jerusalem's Old City](#)

21 July 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today expressed concern about the situation in the Old City of Jerusalem, which has been the scene of escalating violence in recent days.

In a statement, his spokesperson said that the Secretary-General “[deeply deplores](#) the death of three Palestinians in clashes today with the Israeli security forces and calls for these incidents to be fully investigated.”

He urged the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to refrain from actions that could further escalate the situation.

In today's statement, Mr. Guterres also called all political, religious and community leaders to help reduce tension.

“The Secretary-General reiterates that the sanctity of religious sites should be respected as places for reflection, not violence,” the

spokesperson said.

The Old City is a walled area within the city of Jerusalem.

[In DR Congo, UN aid chief says world must 'not let down' millions of people in need](#)

21 July 2017 – Wrapping up a four-day mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the United Nations humanitarian chief today urged the world not to forget the DRC and called for scaled-up relief funding to help millions of people suffering from violence, diseases, and malnutrition.

I urge and encourage the international community not to let down the millions of people in need in the DRC. How many more lives do we need to step up? said UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien in a press release on the visit.

Some 3.8 million people are now displaced within the DRC. An appeal for \$748 million launched earlier this year has so far received less than 25 per cent of funding, the lowest level in the past 10 years.

Separately, a \$64.5 million emergency appeal was made for the Kasai crisis. To date it has only received 11 per cent.

This is not just insufficient it is unacceptable for the global community to leave this very real suffering of the Congolese people unaddressed just because of a shortage of money, stressed Mr. O'Brien, who is also the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

During two days of travel outside of the capital, Kinshasa, Mr. O'Brien visited some of the communities most affected by the massive crisis, including Tshikapa in the Kasai region, where a year of conflict has led to serious human rights abuses and displaced some 1.4 million people.



Stephen O'Brien, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, visits Moni, once a site for internally displaced people in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It used to host 12,000 people, but after fighting broke out on July 4th 2017, shelters were burned down and people fled. Photo: OCHA

The violence in the five provinces that make up the Kasai region has also pushed thousands of children out of school. Some 600 cases of sexual-based violence have been reported since last year, while several schools and health

clinics have been commandeered into temporary shelter for the displaced.

“In the Komba IDP site, I met young Mangasa Kalone who told me how she was almost burned alive when her village was attacked,” Mr. O’Brien highlighted.

He also visited a school compound where NGOs are providing protection and recreational activities to some 1,000 unaccompanied minors. “I am deeply concerned for the health of these children, many have been stunted by malnutrition,” he said.

He also held talks with a wide range of actors in North Kivu and South Kivu, two of the traditional hotbeds of humanitarian needs.

In Kinshasa, he met with the Congolese Prime Minister, Bruno Tshibala, the ministers for interior and humanitarian affairs, representatives of donor countries, and senior officials of UN agencies and of the peacekeeping mission, known for its French acronym MONUSCO.

In addition to the 3.8 million IDPs, the country is dealing with a steady flow of refugees from neighboring Burundi, the Central African Republic and South Sudan.

“All we need now is the funding,” Mr. O’Brien concluded.