

[UN envoy strongly condemns attack on popular restaurant and hotel in Somali capital](#)

15 June 2017 – The United Nations envoy for Somalia today strongly condemned last night's attack on a pizza restaurant and an adjacent hotel in Mogadishu that reportedly killed at least 19 people.

“Last night's attack was clearly aimed at civilians who were breaking the fast,” said the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Somalia, Michael Keating, in a statement to the press.

“There can be no justification for such acts of wanton bloodshed. The holy month of Ramadan is a time of peace and compassion; the attackers have shown cynical contempt for this, and set back the prospect for a peaceful solution to Somalia's problems,” he added.

Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility for the attack, which was triggered by a suicide car bomber and targeted customers who frequent the Pizza House restaurant and adjacent Posh Hotel. Five militants who seized control of the restaurant were subsequently killed by Somali security forces.

On behalf of the United Nations and the broader international community, he extended heartfelt condolences to the families and victims of the deceased and wished a full and speedy recovery to those who sustained injuries.

[Closing gender gap at work can open doors to incredible benefits, UN report shows](#)

14 June 2017 – Reducing gender disparities at workplaces by 25 per cent by 2025 could inject nearly \$5.8 trillion into the global economy and boost tax revenues, a new report released today by the United Nations International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) has revealed.

According to the UN agency, even though women are significantly less likely to participate in the labour market than men, once they manage to enter the labour market, finding work remains even more difficult for them their male counterparts.

“[Helping women access the labour market is nevertheless an important](#)

[first step](#),” said ILO in a news release, noting that in 2017, the global labour force participation rate for women – at just over 49 per cent – is nearly 27 percentage points lower than for men.

This figure is forecast to remain unchanged in 2018.

Further recalling the commitment expressed by G20 leaders, in 2014, to reduce the gap in participation rates between men and women by 25 per cent by the year 2025, the ILO report [World Employment and Social Outlook Trends for Women 2017](#), estimates that some \$5.8 trillion could be added to the world economy.

This could also unlock large potential tax revenues, in particular in countries in the North Africa, Arab and Southern Asia regions.

In addition to the significant economic benefits, engaging more women in the world of work would have a positive impact on their well-being since most women would like to work.

“The fact that half of women worldwide are out of the labour force when 58 per cent of them would prefer to work at paid jobs is a strong indication that there are significant challenges restricting their capabilities and freedom to participate,” said Deborah Greenfield, the ILO Deputy Director-General for Policy.

“The most immediate concern for policy makers, therefore, should be to alleviate the constraints that women face in choosing to enter the labour market and address the barriers they are confronted with once they are in the workplace,” she added.

Attitudes on women and men 'roles' have to change

Furthermore, the ILO report also highlighted the need to “redefine the roles” of men and women at the workplace.

“We need to start by changing our attitudes towards the role of women in the world of work and in society. Far too often some members of society still fall back on the excuse that it is 'unacceptable' for a woman to have a paid job,” said Steven Tobin, the lead author of the report.

The report also emphasized the need to promote equal pay for work of equal value; tackle root causes of occupational and sectoral segregation; recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work; as well as transforming institutions to prevent and eliminate discrimination, violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work.

“Policies should also address the socio-economic factors that influence participation by introducing policies that improve work-family balance, create and protect quality jobs in the care economy and target the macroeconomic environment and informal economy,” added Mr. Tobin.

Political will, financial support needed to bolster new approach to cholera in Haiti – UN deputy chief

14 June 2017 – The United Nations deputy chief today called on Member States to fund the Organization’s new strategy to counter cholera in Haiti, stressing that the initiative is facing a critical shortage of resources.

“Without additional resources, the intensified [cholera response and control](#) efforts cannot be sustained through 2017 and 2018,” [said](#) Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed during an informal briefing to the General Assembly on the Organization’s latest report on the strategy. “Without your political will and financial support, we have only good intentions and words.”

Last December, then-Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put forward a [New Approach to Cholera in Haiti](#) to demonstrate the Organization’s commitment to the elimination of the disease. He also [apologized](#) to the Haitian people on behalf of the United Nations stating that the Organization simply had not done enough with regard to the cholera outbreak and its spread in Haiti and that it was profoundly sorry for its role.

The new approach has two tracks:

- Track 1 involves intensifying the Organization’s efforts in order to reduce and ultimately end the transmission of cholera, improve access to care and treatment and address the longer-term issues of water, sanitation and health systems in Haiti.
- Track 2 is a package that will provide material assistance and support to those Haitians most directly affected by cholera.

“[Secretary-General](#) António Guterres is strongly committed to taking forward the New Approach,” she said.



UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina J. Mohammed (left) briefs member states on the United Nations’ New Approach to Cholera in Haiti. General Assembly President Peter Thomson is seated right. UN Photo/Evan Schneider

In the weeks following Hurricane Matthew last October, the number of suspected cholera cases increased. However, the number of suspected cases has since declined significantly. As of 27 May of this year, the Haiti Ministry of Health had reported 6,762 suspected cases, compared to 16,822 at the same time last year, she said.

The vaccination campaign being carried out by the Pan American Health Organization and World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO) is well advanced, and is expected to reach 85 per cent of the 700,000 target by the end of this month. The next campaign, scheduled for the last quarter of 2017, aims to vaccinate 2.6 million people in the country's most vulnerable areas.

As of 20 April, voluntary contributions to the UN Cholera Response Multi-Partner Trust Fund totalled about \$2.7 million from seven Member States, namely Chile, France, India, Liechtenstein, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and the United Kingdom, against the envisaged expenditure of \$400 million over two years. Outside of the Trust Fund, Canada and Japan, committed nearly \$7 million. The Fund has also received approximately \$17,000 from UN staff members and private donors.

However, three projects, which together cost \$2.5 million, have nearly depleted the Trust Fund, which now has just \$183,000. No new contributions have been received.

The Secretary-General proposes to address the need for resources in several ways, including the soon-be-announced appointment of a high-level envoy to develop a comprehensive fundraising strategy to seek additional voluntary contributions from Member States and other sources.

The Secretary-General and she will continue to use their own interactions with world leaders to urge them to provide further voluntary financial and other appropriate support.

The Secretary-General has asked Member States to consider voluntarily waiving the return of the 2015-2016 unencumbered balances and credits from miscellaneous income and adjustments from the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti, a peacekeeping mission known as MINUSTAH, and instead direct them to the Trust Fund.

Those balances total \$40.5 million, she said.

In his [remarks](#), General Assembly President Peter Thomson said "much remains to be done to eliminate cholera in Haiti, and help move the country from fragility to sustainable development and economic growth."

"If we are to live together as good neighbours and employ our international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, here is a prime opportunity for good action," he said.

[Security Council briefed on proposal](#)

to reduce number of AU-UN troops in Darfur

14 June 2017 – The African Union (AU) and the United Nations are proposing 44 per cent and 30 per cent reductions in their troop and police presence in Sudan's Darfur region as a step towards an eventual exit, a senior UN peacekeeping official told the Security Council.

The reconfiguration of UNAMID is an important milestone towards the completion of its mandate, said Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations El Ghassim Wane as he updated the 15-nation Council on the recommended changes to the Mission.

The AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur, referred to by its acronym UNAMID, was formally established by the Security Council on 31 July 2007 through the adoption of resolution 1769.

He stated that the level of armed hostilities remained significantly lower than in previous years, noting that a successful military campaign by the Government has reduced the rebellion to a small presence in Western Jebel Marra and that the number of inter-communal security incidents has decreased. Progress has been made also on the political front, he added.

Yet, given that 2.7 million people remain internally displaced, a number of crucial grievances at the origin of the conflict and key issues related to its aftermath still needed to be addressed, he said.

These circumstances require UNAMID to adjust to new realities, Mr. Wane said, explaining the proposal features a two-pronged approach combining peacebuilding and peacekeeping tasks. Most parts of Darfur require a more peacebuilding-oriented approach, while in and around the Jebel Marra, the Mission would focus on traditional peacekeeping tasks.

The reconfiguration would bring the troop ceiling down to 8 battalions from the current 16, or to 8,736 troops, and the police ceiling down to 2,360 from 3,403. It would also include the closure of 11 team sites, the opening of one temporary operating base in the Jebel Marra and the withdrawal of the military from another seven team sites.

RELATED: [Exit strategy for AU-UN mission being considered](#)

Mr. Wane that the political process should have a strong focus on the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, which is now incorporated in the Constitution and contains useful provisions to address the underlying causes of conflict and to create peace dividends for the population in Darfur.

Protection of civilians activities in the greater Jebel Marra area would revolve around physical protection and emergency relief, whereas in the rest of the Darfur states it will focus on livelihood issues and rule of law

capacities.

On the issue of inter-communal conflict, the Mission should prioritize those that have the potential to cause the highest number of casualties and derail national political processes.

Mr. Wane said that the successful reconfiguration of the Mission requires the full support and cooperation of the Government of Sudan and its institutions, including to ensure that there is no security vacuum in areas vacated by UNAMID.

[Children hardest hit as cholera spreads in war-torn Yemen – UNICEF](#)

14 June 2017 – As the outbreak of cholera in Yemen continues to spread at an alarming rate with terrible impact on children the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) has called for immediate support to enable the country’s health workers respond or risk even more deaths from the deadly disease.

In a statement yesterday, Meritxell Relaño, the UNICEF Representative in Yemen, said that despite massive challenges, health workers have spared no effort in responding to the emergency even when their salaries have not been paid for nearly nine months.

Without an [urgent solution](#) to pay health workers, more children will die no matter how much humanitarian aid is delivered to the country, she added.

According to the UN agency, more than 124,000 cholera cases have been recorded over the past month more than half of them children, and many who were already suffering from malnutrition.

Children, also account for nearly a quarter of the 923 deaths due to the disease, which is overwhelming what remains of a health system and sanitation system already at the verge of collapse due to the conflict, now into its third year.

Now, this outbreak has left hospitals and treatment centres are struggling to cope with the large number of patients coming in from across the country and medical supplies, including vital medicines and intravenous fluids also running out.

UN and humanitarian partners are trying to [respond and have airlifted some 67 tons medicinal supplies](#). However, the need far outpaces the supply, underscoring the need to ensure relief and health workers have safe and

unrestricted access as well as resumption of imports of critical commodities, including urgently needed medicines.

With no end in sight to the conflict, the cholera outbreak and potentially other disease will continue to stalk the lives of children, warned Ms. Relaño.