

[UN condemns attack on evacuees in Syria; underscores need to ensure safety of those trying to evacuate](#)

15 April 2017 – Condemning today’s attack in Rasheedin, western Aleppo, Syria, on some 5,000 evacuees traveling from the besieged towns of Foah and Kefraya to Government-controlled areas, the United Nations has underlined the need to bring those responsible for the violent act to justice.

According to reports, at least 43 persons, including children, have been killed and many more injured.

“We call on the parties to ensure the safety and security of those waiting to be evacuated,” Stephane Dujarric, the Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General, said in a [statement](#).

Mr. Dujarric added that the evacuations were being conducted in accordance with the agreement reached pursuant to the “Four Towns” Agreement, covering Foah, Kefraya, Madaya and Zabadani.

These four locations were referred to specifically in the Agreement to facilitate humanitarian access to the people in need.

In the statement, Mr. Dujarric also expressed condolences to the families of the victims of the incident and wished a speedy recovery to those injured.

[UN Mission calls for restraint as violence erupts in a number of places across South Sudan](#)

15 April 2017 – A senior United Nations official in South Sudan has called for restraint and underlined the need to ensure the protection of civilians as fresh fighting has erupted between Government and opposition forces in a number of locations across the country.

According to a [news release](#) issued by the UN Mission in South Sudan ([UNMISS](#)), clashes between the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) and opposition groups have taken place in Raga (western South Sudan), Waat (Jonglei state, eastern South Sudan), and in Wunkur and Tonga towns (northern, Upper Nile state).

[The warring parties] must once and for all silence the guns, return to dialogue, reconcile their differences and bring the peace the South Sudanese people want and deserve,” said Moustapha Soumaré, the acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the country.

During this holy celebration of Easter, which for many symbolises reconciliation and the rebirth of hope, I call on all parties to prove their commitment to peace,” he added.

The escalation of violence follows recent fighting in Pajok (near the border with Uganda) that [caused some 6,000](#) to flee across the border as well as in Wau that displaced many civilians and also [claimed the lives](#) of three workers contracted by the UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)).

According to UNMISS, the Protection of Civilians site adjacent to its base in Wau has received some 13,500 newly displaced persons, taking the total number of the displaced sheltering there to 38,746. Around 3,000 others are also reportedly seeking refuge at other non-UN compounds.

SEE ALSO: [‘Horrible attack’ in South Sudan town sends thousands fleeing across border – UN refugee agency](#)

The Mission also noted that it continues to push for access to areas affected by the conflict and that, despite challenges in reaching some parts of the country, it has successfully deployed a number of peacekeeping patrols to deter violence and protect civilians.

It also continues to monitor the human rights situation in line with its mandate.

[UN food relief agency ‘outraged and heartbroken’ by killing of three workers in South Sudan city](#)

14 April 2017 – Expressing “horror” at the killing of three workers contracted by its office in Wau, South Sudan, during violence that wracked the city earlier this week, the United Nations emergency food relief agency has called on the authorities to bring those responsible for the “unspeakable violence” to justice.

In a [news release](#) today, the UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) said that the three men – Daniel James, Ecsa Tearp and Ali Elario, all citizens of South Sudan – appeared to have been killed on Monday as they tried to make their way to the UN agency’s warehouse, where they worked as porters.

Two died of machete wounds and the third was shot.

"We are outraged and heartbroken by the deaths of our colleagues, who worked every day to help provide life-saving food to millions of their fellow countrymen," said Joyce Luma, the WFP Country Director for South Sudan.

"Our sympathies and condolences are with their families. Their dedication will not be forgotten," she added.

The UN agency said that it received the information on the deaths yesterday from the company that employed them. The company is contracted by WFP to provide loading and unloading services at its Wau warehouse.

Also in the news release, the WFP Country Director underlined that those responsible for the killings must be brought to justice.

"We call on the South Sudanese authorities to hold those responsible for this unspeakable violence accountable for their actions," stressed Ms. Luma.

[UN Member States urged to 'dig deep' into reserves of common humanity to aid 20 million people now facing famine](#)

13 April 2017 – Senior United Nations officials today refocused the spotlight on [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres mid-February 'call to action' on behalf of some 20 million people across four countries that now face famine of the risk of famine.

"The crises in these four countries are protracted and complex – and the impacts will be felt for years," said Stephen O'Brien, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, warning that [the numbers are staggering](#) as millions in South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen and north-east Nigeria are slipping deeper into crisis.

"Some 1.4 million children are severely malnourished. Over 21 million people lack sufficient access to health care, at a time when three out of the four countries are experiencing cholera outbreaks. And more than 20 million people lack clean water and sanitation," said Mr. O'Brien in a statement delivered by Reena Ghelani, Deputy Director, of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) Coordination and Response Division.

"Around eighty per cent of affected populations live in rural areas and a

combination of hunger and conflict is forcing people to be displaced, both internally and as refugees. Those who were forced from their homes in past years by conflict are being hit particularly hard as a consequence of this current crisis," added the humanitarian coordinator.

He pointed out that the impacts of the protracted and complex crises in these four countries would be felt for years, citing broken communities, families torn apart and preventable deaths from disease.

"Famine," Mr. O'Brien explained "is about much more than food insecurity. It is about compounding vulnerabilities that leave millions of people without basic human dignity, without hope for the future. It leaves children stunted and out of school. Development gains are stalled or reversed. People abandon their homes, and are robbed of their livelihoods, exacerbating instability across entire regions."



A young child suffering from malnutrition clings to her mother as she and other mothers queue to receive therapeutic milk to help treat their children's malnutrition in Al Sabbah Children's Hospital in Juba, South Sudan. Photo: UNICEF/Mackenzie Knowles-Coursin

He pointed out that while all four countries have unique contexts, they share the common component of protracted conflicts. Likewise, all four countries are marked by severe access constraints due to insecurity and some have costly bureaucratic impediments that impede the reach of life saving aid, and exacerbate the suffering of civilians.

He said that humanitarian operations in these four countries require more than \$5.6 billion this year.

Underscoring the urgency, he added, "we need this funding now – especially for the priority sectors to respond and prevent famine in the four critical sectors of food security, nutrition, water and sanitation, and health."

While humanitarians continue to deliver and scale-up where they are able, Mr. O'Brien listed four requirements to effectively reverse these crises: more political will to end the conflicts that have caused these crises; unhindered and sustained humanitarian access to assist those in need; further funding to back a robust humanitarian response; and a more comprehensive approach.

The President of the General Assembly, Peter Thomson, who convened the meeting, [briefed](#) on his recent visit to Senegal, Ethiopia and Egypt, underscoring how the respective leaders expressed grave concern over the humanitarian situation affecting some African countries, particularly in North-East Nigeria, South Sudan and Somalia, as well as neighbouring Yemen.

"They implored me on my return to United Nations Headquarters to help raise international awareness of the gravity of the situation, and to seek your assistance in helping the affected people and nations during their hour of greatest need," he said.

“It is disturbing to note that children, women and the elderly are being disproportionately affected by the crisis,” continued Mr. Thomson, adding that “1.4 million children are estimated to be at imminent risk of death from severe acute malnutrition.”

In February, the Secretary-General launched a [call to action](#). To date, this has resulted in donors providing around 21 per cent of the \$4.4 billion required, he said.

“Today I wish to follow up that appeal to the international community. I urge Member States to dig deep into reserves of our empathy and common humanity,” he said, seizing the opportunity to call on Member States to scale-up their efforts to implement the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, as part of the international community’s longer-term efforts to prevent the conflict, extreme weather and inequality which is at the root of so much of the despair we are witnessing.

“To effectively respond to the crisis, all partners – across the peace, humanitarian and development pillars – will need to coordinate closely on the ground to save lives and build the resilience required to avoid such shocks in the future,” Mr. Thomson said.

[Cameroon: UN envoy encourages authorities to restore the Internet in country’s English-speaking regions](#)

13 April 2017 – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, François Louncény Fall, urged today Cameroonian authorities to examine with diligence the difficulties of the populations and entrepreneurs of the English-speaking regions of the north-west and south-west, which have been deprived of Internet since mid-January 2017.

“This is a deplorable situation. But I am convinced that this important tool for development, communication and collective development will be gradually re-established throughout Cameroon,” he said before leaving Cameroon on 13 April after a visit four-day official visit.

During the visit, Mr. Fall, who also heads the UN Regional Office for Central Africa ([UNOCA](#)), reviewed the state of affairs and assessed the impact of recent measures taken by the Government to address the concerns of English-speaking lawyers and teachers, UNOCA said in a press release.

“I had fruitful and hopeful exchanges with all the stakeholders,” the Special Representative said at a press conference in Yaoundé on 12 April. He met with Government officials, members of civil society, opposition leaders, members

of the diplomatic corps and the UN system.

He also met with people arrested and detained in connection with the situation in the north-west and south-west, including Felix Nkongho Agbor Balla and radio broadcaster Mancho Bibixy.

“I encourage the Cameroonian Government to take all the measures it deems appropriate, as soon as possible and within the framework of the law, in order to create conditions conducive to building the confidence needed to end the crisis,” noted Mr. Fall.

With this in mind, he stressed that “the pursuit of a sincere and constructive dialogue taking into account the achievements is paramount.” He added that, where appropriate, the UN remains ready to continue “to accompany this dynamic in order to contribute to the efforts of the authorities and their partners in the search for consensual and lasting solutions to this situation.”

Mr. Fall reiterated the UN’s call to all parties to address the current situation through peaceful and legal means. He welcomed the Government’s announced intention to restore Internet services in Bamenda for hospitals, universities and banks, as part of a package of measures announced on 30 March by the Minister of Justice.

He encouraged the Government to consider additional confidence-building measures to appease tensions, including the release of the Anglophone leaders, and the full restoration of internet services in the two regions.

Mr. Fall also called on the leaders of the Anglophone movement to engage with the Government in a constructive manner to find a consensual and lasting solution to the situation in the south-west and north-west regions. He reaffirmed the willingness of the UN to continue to accompany the two parties in their dialogue efforts.

Mr. Fall will return to Cameroon on the occasion of the 44th ministerial meeting of the UN Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa and that’s at the end of May, beginning of June of this year.