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Host communities and aid agencies in Uganda are struggling to feed and shelter new refugees who have been displaced following a spike in violence in parts of neighbouring South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria province, the United Nations refugee agency said today.

According to estimates, some 6,000 newly displaced have arrived in Lamwo district (northern Uganda) since Monday, after an attack on the town of Pajok, some 15 kilometres (about 9.5 miles) across the border, and there are fears that number could rise as fighting is reported in the bordering towns of Magwi and Oboo.

Describing the incident in Pajok as [a 'horrible attack'](#), Babar Baloch, a spokesperson for the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told journalists at a regular media briefing in Geneva that refugees claimed that the town came under an indiscriminate attack by the South Sudan armed forces.

[They] reported witnessing their loved ones shot dead at a close range, with many arrested or slaughtered, including children. Families fled in different directions; the elderly and disabled who could not run were shot dead, he added.

Furthermore, there are reports that many people are still hiding in the bush trying to find their way to safety and that their homes and properties were looted and burned.

Main roads out of the town are also reportedly blocked by armed groups, noted the UNHCR spokesperson.

UNHCR staff in northern Uganda are working to help women, children, elderly, and the disabled who are in dire need of immediate humanitarian assistance and trying to provide them with food, shelter, water and medical care but are reporting severe shortage of resources.

SEE RELATED: [UN agency revises funding requirements to tackle Africa's worst displacement crisis](#)

This January, in light of the worsening crisis in the world's youngest nation, the funding appeal for the 'South Sudan Situation' that includes support for Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan, Kenya, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic as well as South Sudan was revised to nearly \$782 million, up nearly \$298 million (61 per cent) from the

original appeal.

However, it is only 11 per cent funded.

Uganda currently hosts more than 832,000 refugees from South Sudan and its approach in dealing with refugees has been hailed as the most progressive, promoting self-reliance of refugees and their hosts, but the chronic under funding is putting such relief activities at risk.

[Children in east Ukraine need urgent care to overcome trauma of conflict – UNICEF](#)

7 April 2017 – More than 200,000 children, or one in four, in the two regions most severely affected by the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine require urgent and sustained psychosocial support to address their traumatic experiences, the United Nations Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) said today.

“The world has forgotten about this invisible crisis in eastern Ukraine, but hundreds of thousands of children are paying a heavy price, one that could last a lifetime without adequate support,” [said](#) UNICEF Ukraine Representative Giovanna Barberis in a news release, stressing the urgent need for funding to reach these traumatized children.

These children live in Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts, within 15 kilometres of each side of the ‘contact-line’ that divides government and non-government-controlled areas and where fighting is most intense.

They are in chronic fear and uncertainty due to sporadic shelling, unpredictable fighting and dangers from landmines and other unexploded ordnance.

Many risk their safety to get an education. Seven schools were damaged during the most recent escalation of violence in February and March, and more than 740 schools, or one in five, in eastern Ukraine have been damaged or destroyed since the conflict began in 2014.

Parents, teachers, school directors and psychologists continue to report striking behaviour changes in children as young as three years old. Symptoms include severe anxiety, bed-wetting, nightmares, aggressive behaviour and withdrawing from families and communities.

Dedicated social workers, psychologists and specially trained teachers are working around the clock. However, as the conflict drags on, additional investments are required to meet these children’s needs.

UNICEF is appealing for \$31.2 million to support these children and their families.

Children should not have to live with the emotional scars from a conflict they had no part in creating. Additional support is needed now so that young people in Donetsk and Luhansk can grow into healthy adults and rebuild their communities,” said Ms. Barberis, calling on all sides of the conflict to recommit to the ceasefire signed in Minsk and end this senseless violence.

VIDEO: Ukraine: When a bomb shelter becomes a part of daily life | UNICEF

[200,000 children in east Ukraine need urgent care to overcome trauma of conflict – UNICEF](#)

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'Learn the lessons of Rwanda,' UN chief said, calling for a future of tolerance, human rights for all

7 April 2017 – Marking the twenty-third anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, during which Hutu and others who opposed the genocide were also killed, United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres today said the only way to honour the memory of the victims is to ensure such events never happen again.

The [1994 genocide](#) in the East African country saw the systematic murder of more than 800,000 people. The vast majority were Tutsi, but moderate Hutu, Twa and other groups also suffered during the 100 days of violence.

In his [message](#) to commemorate the [International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda](#), Mr. Guterres said: “Preventing genocide and other monstrous crimes is a shared responsibility and a core duty of the United Nations. The world must always be alert to the warning signs of genocide, and act quickly and early against the threat.”

“History is filled with tragic chapters of hatred, inaction and indifference – a cycle that has led to violence, incarceration and death camps,” he added.

However, he warned that “the poison of intolerance” still existed around the world. “Even today, minorities and other groups suffer attacks and exploitation based on who they are.”

The Secretary-General noted that survivors of the genocide continue to face struggles, but praised their resilience and capacity for reconciliation.

He also called on society to learn the lessons of Rwanda and work together to build a future of dignity, tolerance and human rights for all.

A candle lighting ceremony and a minute of silence will be observed at UN Headquarters in New York today to mark the Day of Reflection. The annual memorial ceremony will be moderated Maher Nasser, Acting Under-Secretary-General for Global Communications and feature a poetry performance by Malaika Uwamahoro, Artist and Rwandan student at Fordham University, as well as remarks by Carl Wilkens, Co-Founder and Director of World Outside My Shoes, Linda Melvern, journalist and author, and Valentine Rugwabiza, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Rwanda to the United Nations.

[Adapting UN peace operations to changing world a 'shared responsibility,' Guterres tells Security Council](#)

6 April 2017 – United Nations peacekeepers face a raft of challenges – terrorism, hostile host governments, floods of illicit weapons, and sometimes being deployed to places where peace itself is at stake – Secretary-General António Guterres said today, underscoring that all parts of the UN have a role to play in making sure ‘blue helmets’ can deliver on the mandates assigned to them.

Peace operations are at a crossroads. Our task is to keep them relevant with clear and achievable mandates, and the right strategies and support, the Secretary-General said, opening remarks to the Security Council’s [peacekeeping operations review](#).

He underscored that UN peace operations are diverse, and their operating environments are highly complex [and] we share a responsibility to adapt them to our changing world.

In his remarks, he called on the 193-member General Assembly for political support and in on the troop- and police-contributing countries for professional and committed personnel. He also urged the countries that border conflict zones for their support and underlined that having the backing of the host countries themselves is vital.

And above all, we look to the [Security] Council for unity, and for

clear, achievable mandates," added the UN chief, noting the need for a strategy that can support the diverse range of peace missions and takes into account the entire peace continuum: from prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping to peacebuilding and long-term development.

SEE RELATED: [UN chief announces steps towards reforming Organization's peace and security architecture](#)

In terms of initiatives to enhance the Organization's peace and security architecture, Mr. Guterres highlighted that the number of troop- and police-contributing countries have been increased and modern technologies are being used to improve situational awareness and analysis.

Also, key functions have been decentralized and performance management and accountability are being strengthened. Such efforts have reduced the cost per capita of uniformed peacekeepers by 18 per cent since 2008.

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Secretary-General António Guterres

In the longer term, Mr. Guterres outlined specific areas of improvement, including the need for clear, realistic and up-to-date mandates for peace operations from the Security Council; greater and more active role for women in peace operations; and stepping up troop contributions.

He said that 54 missions have completed their mandates and closed; two more will do so in the months ahead. "That is our objective for every peacekeeping mission: to do the job entrusted to it. To save lives. To prevent mass atrocities. To set the stage for stability and sustainable peace. And to close. And, from start to finish, to be cost-effective."

EXPLAINER VIDEO: A guide on why UN peacekeeping is an investment in global peace, security and prosperity. *Credit: UN News*

In particular, he emphasized the need for solid and predictable funding so that missions that are backed by a Security Council resolution are supported either with [assessed contributions](#), or by other predictable financing mechanisms.

"Today's peacekeeping budget is less than one half of one percent of global military spending," said the Secretary-General.

Concluding his remarks, Mr. Guterres noted that peace operations were currently at a crossroads: and that they have to be kept relevant with clear and achievable mandates, and the right strategies and support.

"Success depends on our collective efforts. You can count on my full commitment," he said, "But I also count on the unity and support of [the Security] Council, to fulfil its primary responsibility for maintaining

international peace and security in this changing world.”