

UN Chief says ending poverty ‘a question of justice’ on International Day

Highlighting that for the United Nations, eliminating poverty in all its forms remains one of the greatest global challenges and priorities, UN [Secretary-General Antonio Guterres](#) stressed the fundamental connection between eradicating poverty and upholding equal rights for all.

“Let us remember that ending poverty is not a matter of charity but a question of justice,” the UN Chief said in his message commemorating the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty.

He said that since the day was first marked 25 years ago, “nearly one billion people have escaped poverty, thanks to political leadership, inclusive economic development and international cooperation.”

He cited that 700 million people are still being left behind and are unable to meet their basic daily needs.

On this International day for the Eradication of Poverty,” the UN Chief added, “let us commit to uphold the core pledge of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind—*UN Chief Antonio Guterres*

This year’s theme, [Coming together with those furthest behind to build an inclusive world of universal respect for human rights and dignity](#) underscores the connection between extreme poverty and human rights. Specifically, emphasizing that people living in poverty are disproportionately affected by many human rights violations.

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is embodied in [Goal 1](#) of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which aims to foster social protection systems for all.

The UN will host the 25th [Commemoration](#) of the International Day at the headquarters in New York on Wednesday.

“On this International day for the Eradication of Poverty,” the UN Chief added, “let us commit to uphold the core pledge of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind.”

Nigeria: UN chief 'appalled' by killing of aid worker; calls for release of remaining hostages

The United Nations Secretary-General strongly condemned on Tuesday the killing of an aid worker from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in north-east Nigeria. He said he was "appalled" by her death on Monday.

The aid worker, Hauwa Mohammed Liman, a 24-year-old midwife and nurse had been working in the town of Rann, near the border with Cameroon. She was abducted on 1 March, along with two other nurses, Saifura Hussaini Ahmed Khorsa and Alice Loksha, following an attack on the town by armed extremists, in which dozens were killed.

The Secretary-General expressed his deepest condolences to the family, friends and colleagues of Ms. Liman and his solidarity with ICRC staff. "Those responsible for this killing must be brought to justice," he stated.

Aerial view of the town of Rann, Borno State, Nigeria. 23 March 2018.
Credit: OCHA/Yasmina Guerda

Among the casualties of the 1 March attack in Rann, were [three UN aid workers](#): Emmanuel Yawe Sonter and Ibrahim Lawan who worked with the [International Organization for Migration](#) (IOM) and Dr. Izuogu Onyedikachi who worked with the [UN Children's Fund](#) (UNICEF).

Saifura Hussaini Ahmed Khorsa, one of the other two abducted nurses, who also worked with ICRC, was killed a month ago after spending six and a half months in captivity, in what the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria [called](#) a "cowardly, heinous and despicable act".

According to news reports, Alice Loksha, who worked with UNICEF in Rann, remains in the hands of the armed group who seems to have announced its intention to keep her "as a slave".

Expressing "concern for the safety and well-being of the remaining hostages", Mr. Guterres called "for their immediate release" and emphasized that "all parties to the conflict must protect aid workers who provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to the millions of people in need in north-east Nigeria".

According to the UN humanitarian affairs office ([OCHA](#)) the international response in Rann is providing life-saving assistance – including food, safe water, shelter and medical care – to over 60,000 internally displaced persons, and millions in the rest of the north-east of the country. Close to

3,000 aid workers are present in the north-east, the majority of whom are Nigerian nationals.

The humanitarian crisis in Nigeria's north-east is one of the most severe in the world today, with 7.7 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, 6.1 million of whom targeted for humanitarian assistance in 2018.

UN 'stands in solidarity' with cyclone-hit India – Secretary-General Guterres

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres has expressed sadness at the loss of lives and devastation caused by Cyclone Titli in India and said that the Organization is ready to provide assistance.

In a [statement](#) issued by his office, Mr. Guterres said that the UN “stands in solidarity with the Government of India and is ready to support the response.”

The deadly storm made landfall in India's eastern Andhra Pradesh state, on 11 October, and continued north into the state of Odisha, disrupting road, telecommunications and power networks.

The damage was particularly extensive in Odisha's districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, and Rayagada, where millions have been affected. Thousands of homes are also reported to have been damaged in Andhra Pradesh.

According to media reports, at least 25 people have been killed, many more injured, and over 300,000 people evacuated to safer places.

In the statement, the UN chief also extended his condolences to the families of the victims and wished a speedy recovery to the injured.

World Food Day: here's what the UN is doing to fix 'intolerable' wrong of

extreme hunger

“In our world of plenty, one person in nine does not have enough to eat”, [said](#) United Nations chief [António Guterres](#) on Tuesday, marking [World Food Day](#). With this year’s theme, “our actions are our future”, the UN and its partners, held events and launched information campaigns worldwide, to amplify one message: achieving zero hunger by 2030 is possible, provided we “join forces”.

Currently, more than 815 million people do not have enough to eat. Some 155 million children under the age of five – 23 per cent – are chronically malnourished and stunted and may endure the effects of it for the rest of their lives. One in two infant deaths worldwide are caused by hunger.

“This is intolerable,” said the Secretary-General. “Zero hunger is about joining forces,” he stated, as he called for “stronger political will and more financial support... until everyone has enough and quality food”.

Speakers at the [global World Food Day ceremony in Rome](#) echoed the UN chief’s call to action to governments, companies, institutions and individuals.

“People frequently ask me if I really believe that it is possible to eradicate hunger by 2030. My answer is yes, I do,” said José Graziano da Silva, the Director-General of the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) (FAO), noting that his own country, Brazil, had been able to almost eliminate hunger in less than 10 years, from 11 per cent of the population in 2001, to about 2 per cent in 2010.

“The struggle against hunger urgently demands generous financing, the abolition of trade barriers and, above all, greater resilience in the face of climate change, economic crises and warfare,” said Pope Francis in a [message](#) read on his behalf.

Since its very early years of existence, the UN has made tackling hunger and malnutrition one of its key priorities. Here are some of the ways the organization is contributing today to achieving zero hunger tomorrow:

1. Help small farmers produce more with less

Eighty per cent of the farmland in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia is managed by smallholders (up to 10 hectares). For years, FAO has been providing them with training, improved seed supplies, agricultural tools and fertilizer to ensure higher yields.

One key project has been the roll-out of the [farm business school](#) (FBS), formerly called farm field school – a hands-on learning programme on the basics of farm business management, product commercialization, market awareness, and adaptation to climate change to increase resilience.

2. Provide emergency food rations in humanitarian crises

Following natural disasters, or in humanitarian crises created by conflict or health emergencies, the [World Food Programme](#) (WFP) delivers relief food items, often overcoming tremendous logistical challenges. [In 2017](#), 91 people received food assistance across 83 countries, and 18 million children received school meals across 60 countries.

One way people can support directly this effort is through the [Share The Meal](#) smartphone application, which has already enabled over 27.3 million meals to be “shared” with just one click in the Middle East, Bangladesh, Haiti, South Sudan and the Lake Chad region. As smartphone users outnumber hungry children by 20 to 1, the UN believes this has the potential to make a real difference.

3. End malnutrition

In parallel, to tackle nutrition deficiencies worldwide, the [UN Children’s Fund](#) (UNICEF) and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) work hand-in-hand by: providing emergency care and therapeutic food to children and pregnant or lactating women in need; opening community-based treatment centres (CMAM); carrying out capacity building efforts in medical centres worldwide; and training mothers on best feeding practices.

4. Focus on local economic systems

In delivering assistance, the UN is careful to ensure that local economies are supported and fueled whenever possible. WFP has pledged to source 10 per cent of its food purchases from small farms. In humanitarian crises, assistance in the form of electronic cash transfers and food vouchers is essential to kickstart local economies. In addition, by easily recording and tracking transactions, this improves transparency and eliminates food distribution and storage costs.

In addition, WFP’s [Purchase For Progress](#) (P4P) initiative encourages national governments and the private sector to buy food in ways that benefit smallholders. Covering 35 countries, P4P has changed how more than 1 million small farmers interact with markets.

5. Develop vulnerability projections and analysis

WFP’s [Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping](#) (VAM) enables the UN to monitor food security situations and market fluctuations in countries across the world. This supports decision-making for programmes world-wide.

In addition, launched at the climate change conference in Paris in 2015, the [UN’s food insecurity and climate change vulnerability map](#) examines how climate change could increase hunger across the globe.

6. Empower rural women and girls

Women comprise an average of 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force of developing countries, and nearly 50 per cent in Eastern and Southeastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

If women farmers had the same access to productive resources as men, they could increase yields on their farms by 20-30 percent, lifting 100-150 million people out of hunger. That is why the UN, across its various initiatives, places a [particular emphasis](#) on empowering rural women and girls, and providing skills training.

7. Raise awareness and galvanize change

Achieving Zero Hunger is the second of the ambitious 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by 193 Member States in 2015. To meet the various targets by 2030, the UN is [raising awareness](#) with governments, the private sector, individuals and farmers.

“We know what needs to be done,” said FAO’s Graziano da Silva. “And we have to act now.”

You can listen to the entire speech of José Graziano da Silva, FAO’s Director-General, at the global World Food Day ceremony in Rome on Tuesday [here](#):

[Conflict diamonds and climate change: Cooperate, don’t compete over natural resources urges Guterres](#)

The struggle over natural resources often lies at the heart of violent conflicts, fuelling strife in many parts of the world, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres said on Tuesday, urging governments and everyone with a stake in valuable resources, to think hard about how they are managed and exploited.

The risks associated with preventing and resolving such conflicts are “only going to grow” with the increasing impacts of climate change, warned Mr. Guterres, briefing the Security Council.

Citing the example of Africa – where 75 per cent of civil wars since 1990 have been partially funded by resources such as diamonds and valuable minerals – the UN chief highlighted the need for greater cooperation between

civil society, governments and international organizations in regulating and controlling such assets.

With the increasing impacts of climate change evident in all regions, the risks are only going to grow – *UN chief Guterres*

“Through certified extraction, production and fair-trade practices, and with a focus on aiding local communities, lawlessness can be countered, and tangible benefits brought to conflict-affected populations,” he said, noting the positive impact of what is known as the Kimberley process certification scheme, on curbing trade in conflict diamonds.

Resources also ‘catalysts’ for cooperation

In his briefing, the UN chief also emphasized that the wealth generated by shared natural resources, provides an incentive for cooperation and dialogue, such as in the Senegal River and Lake Chad basins in Africa; Lake Titicaca, in South America; or trans-boundary water management in Central Asia.

“And, from my own experience, the Albufeira Convention, agreed during my time as Prime Minister of Portugal, continues to promote good relations and cooperation on water management between Portugal and Spain,” he added.

Mr. Guterres also informed the 15-member Security Council of the Organization’s efforts to mitigate the fallout from competition, highlighting the UN’s work to address climate-related security risks, use of mediation over natural resources as a tool for conflict prevention, and partnerships at all levels.

“We are [also] seeking to strengthen the capacity of women’s networks and organizations to effectively engage in mediation processes around natural resources and the environment, including in the context of climate change,” he continued, noting support schemes for Afro-Colombian women in Colombia on natural resource use, ownership, governance and benefit-sharing.

In addition, a new UN system-wide guidance note to streamline the best approach to resolve conflicts over land use, has been recently finalized, said the Secretary-General.

The guidance note follows [a study on land and conflict](#), published by the UN Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat.