

Honouring Second World War victims, UN chief calls neo-Nazism “a spreading cancer”

Paying tribute to all victims of the [Second World War](#) – on whose ashes the United Nations was founded – Secretary-General António Guterres described this year’s commemoration as more meaningful than any that has gone before.

“We see a world in which [conflict is proliferating](#), we see a world in which so many wars are taking place, and so I believe it is absolutely essential to remind us all of the lessons of the Second World War that, for the Soviet Union, was considered the Great Patriotic War,” he said on Wednesday, speaking at the Second World War exhibit at UN Headquarters in New York.

He also highlighted the fact that it was the Soviet Union which had made “by far” the greatest sacrifice in terms of military effort and losses sustained during the war against Nazi Germany, until its unconditional surrender on 8 May 1945.

This is a cancer that is starting to spread again, and I think it is our duty to do everything possible to make sure that this horrible disease is cured. [Secretary-General António Guterres](#)

Recalling the “unimaginable, devastating destruction,” the UN chief said: “We absolutely need to make sure that in the world, these kind of events do not take place anymore.”

Mr. Guterres pointed out that Neo-Nazi messages have recently been resurfacing. He pointed to political movements that either claim neo-Nazi affiliation, or make use of its symbols and hateful language.

“This is a cancer that is starting to spread again, and I think it is our duty to do everything possible to make sure that this horrible disease is cured,” he said.

He said that the memory of those who sacrificed their lives in the Second World War should help us “to defeat any form of neo-Nazism in today’s time.”

Stipulating that the worst crime of all perpetrated by the Nazis was the Holocaust, he warned that “anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred” were “again proliferating in the world.”

“I sincerely hope that the lessons of this May victory, will help us defeat this resurgence of ideas and convictions that I thought had been buried for ever,” said the Secretary-General.

“It is our duty to do it”, because we cannot accept the return of these ideologies, he concluded.

‘Uphold international humanitarian law’ UN chief tells parties to Yemen conflict

Civil conflict deepened across the country in 2015, when a Saudi-led coalition intensified military operations against Houthi rebels who control the capital Sana’a.

Coalition airstrikes hit a government building in the densely-populated Tahrir district of the capital on Monday, reportedly killing six people, and rebels fired several missiles in the days that followed towards different targets in Saudi Arabia.

“The Secretary-General reminds all parties to the conflict that they must uphold international humanitarian law, including taking steps to protect civilians,” said a statement issued on behalf of the Secretary-General, by his Spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric.

“All potential violations of international humanitarian law should be thoroughly investigated and those responsible for violations must be held accountable,” added the statement.

Mr. Dujarric emphasized the Secretary-General’s appeal not to escalate the fighting further “as this adversely impacts the chances for peace.”

Since political unrest first began in Yemen in early 2011, the UN has been engaged in helping Yemenis to find a peaceful solution. However, fighting continues and the ensuing humanitarian crisis has only deepened in a country that was already one of the region’s poorest.

“A negotiated political settlement through inclusive intra-Yemeni dialogue is the only way to end the conflict and address the ongoing humanitarian crisis,” said the statement.

Libyans deserve justice, as war crime

[suspects remain at large: Prosecutor](#)

Despite an International Criminal Court arrest warrant, a Libyan war crimes suspect remains at large and could have committed further murders, the ICC Prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, told the Security Council on Wednesday.

A warrant was issued by the Court last August for the arrest of Mahmoud Mustafa Busayf Al-Werfalli, a Major in the Libyan National Army, accused of murdering 33 of his fellow Libyans during the long-running conflict that has destabilized the country since the fall of former leader, Muammar Gaddafi, in 2011.

The executions he is alleged to have committed or ordered, were filmed and depicted in videos posted on social media.

“Since the issuance of the warrant, I have repeatedly called on the Libyan national authorities to comply with their obligation to arrest and surrender Mr. Al-Werfalli to the ICC,” Ms. Bensouda, told Council members.

“ICC suspects who are indicted with charges of grave crimes under the [Rome Statute](#) cannot be sheltered or given refuge. They must be apprehended and face justice before the Court so that their guilt or innocence can be established.”

The Libyan people deserve answers. The victims of atrocity crimes in Libya deserve to have justice done and see that it is genuinely done – *ICC Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda*

In January, new photographs and videos emerged on social media that appear to show Mr. Al-Werfalli brutally murdering ten people – who were blindfolded and had their hands tied behind their backs – in front of a mosque in Benghazi.

“The Libyan people deserve answers. The victims of atrocity crimes in Libya deserve to have justice done and see that it is genuinely done,” stressed the Prosecutor, reiterating her call for all States, as well as Libyan authorities, to act upon ICC warrants, authorizing the arrest and surrender of suspects.

Ms. Bensouda also informed the Council that warrants for the arrest of the former dictator’s son, Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi, and Al-Tuhamy Mohamed Khaled, the former head of the Libyan Internal Security Agency, also remain outstanding.

“Without arrests, both the cause of international criminal justice in Libya and the very *raison d’être* of UN [Security Council Resolution 1970 \(2011\)](#) will be undermined,” she said.

Alarming human rights situation

In her briefing, the ICC Prosecutor further told the Security Council that the volatile security situation in Libya is being exacerbated by the ongoing conflict between militias in many parts of the country.

Extra-judicial killings, civilian casualties and systematic use of arbitrary detention of individuals, who are often subjected to serious violations of human rights, continue to be reported at an alarming rate, the Council heard.

At the same time, there are reports of large numbers of migrants still being held in detention centres – run either by national authorities or militia – many of whom are being killed, abused and mistreated while in detention or in transit to and from centres.

Iran deal represents ‘significant verification gain’ – UN atomic energy chief

Speaking the day after the United States withdrew from an international agreement on Iran’s nuclear programme, the head of the United Nations atomic watchdog agency made it clear that Iran has consistently stuck to its commitments.

Yukiya Amano, who leads the International Atomic Energy Agency ([IAEA](#)), said Iran was “[subject to the world’s most robust nuclear verification regime](#)” under the terms of the 2015 deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA.

The JCPOA – reached by Iran, China, France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, the US and the European Union – sets out [rigorous mechanisms for monitoring](#) restrictions placed on Iran’s nuclear programme, while paving the way for the lifting UN sanctions against the country.

On Wednesday, President Donald Trump, announced at the White House that the US would be withdrawing from the deal, and unilaterally begin reinstating economic sanctions against Iran at “the highest level”.

“As of today, the IAEA can confirm that the nuclear-related commitments are being implemented by Iran.” *Yukiya Amano (IAEA)*

In a live televised address, he did not claim that Iran was in violation of the terms of the deal, but described its so-called “sunset provisions” –

which lift restrictions on the country's ability to enrich uranium within 10 to 15 years – as “totally unacceptable”.

UN [Secretary-General António Guterres](#) said [in a statement](#) shortly after the US announcement, that he was “deeply concerned” by the decision, and called on the remaining parties to preserve the deal.

The IAEA has said repeatedly that according to the Agency's inspectors on the ground in Iran, no violations of the agreement had taken place, and there has been no evidence of any activity relating to any “nuclear explosive device”, after 2009.

The IAEA Director General said the agency would be “closely following developments related to the JCPOA, as requested by the United Nations Security Council and authorized by the IAEA Board of Governors in 2015.”

He described the three-year-old agreement as “a significant verification gain” adding that “as of today, the IAEA can confirm that the nuclear-related commitments are being implemented by Iran”.

['Gender-sensitive' trade policies help empower East African women](#)

Trade policies which better benefit women across East Africa, can pave the way for more inclusive development and prosperity, according to a new report from the United Nations trade body.

Crediting improved education, employment and other key areas, the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) said on Wednesday that East African countries can put better policies in place to address gender inequalities and bring women further into the workforce.

In its new report, [East African Community Regional Integration: Trade and Gender Implications](#), UNCTAD analyses the impact of regional integration on women's employment and quality of life in the five East African Community (EAC) countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda – the sixth, South Sudan, joined in 2016.

“Gender equality is not a natural outcome of the development process and there is a need to proactively promote gender equality policies,” UNCTAD Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi said, adding: “The analytical work in this report is accompanied by practical ideas.”

One key recommendation is to close the education gender gap and improve skills training so women can compete more for higher-paying jobs. Another is

to create a regional credit mechanism to support women entrepreneurs.

Gender chapters could also be included in future free-trade agreements, along with uniform monitoring of how the important 2017 EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill is being put into practice.

“This new analysis is another UNCTAD contribution to the debate on how we, together, can make trade policy more gender-sensitive, and pave the way for more inclusive prosperity that leaves no one behind,” Mr. Kituyi explained.

Although the economy has already shifted away from farming towards services, and to a lesser extent, industry, 96 per cent of women in Burundi, 76 per cent in Kenya, 84 per cent in Rwanda, 71 per cent in Tanzania and 77 per cent in Uganda still work in agriculture.

Women also shoulder a higher share of unpaid care work, which, in turn, limits their availability and flexibility to do paid work.

And despite equal property rights, says the report, women’s land ownership remains low in many countries: just 35 per cent in Kenya and Uganda own their own land, and 46 per cent in Rwanda.

Based on the report’s findings, UNCTAD has also released a document designed to benefit women in the region, called [Advocating for gender-sensitive trade policymaking in the East African Community](#).

The research was funded by the Netherlands through TradeMark East Africa and conducted by [UNCTAD’s Trade, Gender and Development Programme](#).