

# Harvest season provides meagre respite to South Sudan's ongoing hunger crisis

6 November 2017 – The current harvest season has not brought enough food to end the hunger crisis in South Sudan, as conflict persists in most of the African country and hyperinflation puts food out of reach for many, the United Nations said Monday.

“The harvest season has not brought much relief to the millions of people in South Sudan who don't have enough food. The country's greenbelt has been ravaged by fighting, and finding a peaceful solution to [this man-made tragedy](#) should be the top priority or the situation will get even worse next year,” said Serge Tissot, South Sudan Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)), in a press release jointly issued by the UN Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) and the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)).

According to the updated Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) released Monday by the Government of South Sudan, UN agencies and other humanitarian partners, the number of people experiencing severe food insecurity across the country for the October-December period is likely to increase by 1.4 million from a year earlier to 4.8 million, although the number represents a drop from six million in June.

The report also projects the food security situation will deteriorate at the start of 2018, and the “hungry season” will arrive three months earlier than usual, when households will likely run out of food before the next harvest.

“A massive humanitarian response helped stop famine in parts of the country this year. But even in the current harvest period, millions of people need sustained assistance to survive,” said Adnan Khan, WFP Representative in South Sudan. “It is chilling to see that in a worst-case scenario, similar conditions could appear in multiple places in the lean season in 2018.”

## ***Critical levels of malnutrition***

Malnutrition has also worsened compared to the same period last year, with surveys showing malnutrition rates in most communities well above the WHO's emergency threshold of 15 per cent, and with more than 30 per cent of the population malnourished in several counties.

More than 1.1 million children under the age of five are forecast to be malnourished in 2018, including nearly 300,000 severely malnourished and at a heightened risk of death.

“Too many children are going hungry in South Sudan. More than one in five of those struggling to feed themselves is a child under five years of age,” said Mahimbo Mdoe, UNICEF's Representative in South Sudan. “This has created a malnutrition crisis that is putting many lives at risk.”

## *Soaring food prices*

Coupled with a failing economy, insecurity continues to hamper food production and disrupt markets, leading to extremely high food prices. Large sacks of staples such as sorghum, maize, and wheat flour have increased in price by up to 281 per cent compared to last year, and were as high as 560 per cent during May, the peak of the lean season.

In Juba, a 100kg bag of sorghum costs 11,285 South Sudanese Pounds (SSP), compared to 4 314 SSP a year ago, and is vastly beyond what most families can afford.

Despite enormous logistical and security challenges, FAO has provided fishing, crop- and vegetable-growing kits to more than 4.2 million people, many in difficult to reach or conflict-affected areas. FAO has also vaccinated more than 4.8 million livestock.

UNICEF, together with its partners, has treated more than 160,000 children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) so far this year. UNICEF has also provided over 750,000 people with safe drinking water and a further 230,000 people with access to sanitation facilities.

WFP and its partners have assisted 4.6 million people so far in 2017 with cash or food, including nutrition support for children under the age of five years. Emergency mobile teams usually travelling by helicopter on over 135 missions to areas isolated by conflict have supported 1.8 million people this year.

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## **Bonn: UN climate conference aims for greater ambition as 2017 set to be among top three hottest years**

6 November 2017 – The United Nations Climate Conference opened on Monday in Bonn, Germany, with the aim of a greater ambition for climate action, as the world body's weather agency issued a stark warning that 2017 is set to be among the three hottest years on record.

The [Bonn Conference](#) of the State Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), informally known as COP 23 and which runs until 17 November, is chaired by Fiji, an island State particularly affected by the impacts of our warming climate.

“The need for urgency is obvious. Our world is in distress from the extreme weather events caused by climate change – destructive hurricanes, fires, floods, droughts, melting ice, and changes to agriculture that threaten our

food security”, said COP 23 President and Prime Minister of Fiji Frank Bainimarama, at the opening of the conference.

“Our job as leaders is to respond to that suffering with all means available to us. [We] must not fail our people. That means using the next two weeks and the year ahead to do everything we can to make the [Paris Agreement](#) work and to advance ambition and support for climate action before 2020.”

The Paris Agreement, which was adopted by the 196 Parties to the UNFCCC in December 2015 in the French capital after which it is named, calls on countries to combat climate change by limiting the rise of global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius and strive not to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius.

A year ago, the [Marrakech Climate Conference](#) concluded with the *Marrakech Action Proclamation, for our climate and sustainable development*, in which the UNFCCC States Parties affirmed their “commitment” to the “full implementation” of the Paris Agreement. Today, 169 Parties have ratified the Agreement.

***UN weather agency warns 2017 to be among hottest years ever***

As this year’s Conference got under way, the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO), released its provisional statement on the State of the Climate. “It is very likely that 2017 will be [one of the three hottest years on record](#), with many high-impact events including catastrophic hurricanes and floods, debilitating heatwaves and drought,” said the agency.

For his part, WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas told delegates in Bonn that the past three years have all been in the top three years in terms of temperature records. “This is part of a long term warming trend,” pointing to recent “extraordinary weather,” including temperatures topping 50 degrees Celsius in Asia, record-breaking hurricanes in rapid succession in the Caribbean and Atlantic reaching as far as Ireland, devastating monsoon flooding affecting many millions of people and a relentless drought in East Africa.

“Wherever we live, we are all vulnerable and need to act,” Mr. Bainimarama told delegates, explaining that Fiji is helping build a Grand Coalition for decisive, coordinated action by governments at every level, by civil society, the private sector and all citizens on earth.

“That’s why we installed an ocean-going Fijian ‘drua’ canoe in the entrance here to remind everyone of the need to fill its sail with collective determination to make COP23 a success and confront the biggest challenge humanity has faced,” he said.

Patricia Espinosa, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, reminded the participants that: “We have some very specific goals we must achieve while we are here in Bonn. We expect these negotiations to be the next essential step that ensures that the Paris Agreement’s structure is completed, its impacts are strengthened, and its goals achieved. We also need to move forward to fulfil the commitments that are due in 2020. In this regard, finance and mitigation

pledges are essential.”

The Bonn Conference will feature a series of meetings and events, including the high-level segment, on 15 November and 16 November, attended by Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres.

Mr. Guterres has invited leaders to consider championing six high-impact areas at a special Climate Summit in 2019. These areas are investment in clean technology, maturing carbon pricing, enabling the energy transition, risk mitigation and building resilience, augmenting the contribution of sub-national actors and business and mobilizing climate finance.

Among the side events scheduled at COP 23, several will be organized under the [Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action](#), to show how cities, regions, private sector companies and investors are trying to implement the Paris Agreement in the areas of energy, water, agriculture, oceans and coastal areas, human settlements, transportation, industry, and forests.



In this photo, from left to right: Jochen Flasbarth, German State Secretary; Patricia Espinosa, UNFCCC Executive Secretary; Inia Seruiratu, Fijian Minister for Agriculture, Rural & Maritime Development & National Disaster Management & Meteorological Services, and Global Climate Action Champion participate in symbolic bike ride ahead of COP23. Photo: UNFCCC

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## [Parties to ‘brutal conflict’ in Yemen must act in line with international humanitarian law – UN official](#)

6 November 2017 – Expressing horror at continued violence perpetrated by all parties to the conflict in Yemen, the top United Nations humanitarian official in the country has called on the conflicting sides to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law.

“In particular, I ask [the parties] to adhere to the principles of distinction between civilians and combatants and proportionality in the conduct of hostilities and refrain from directing attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure,” said Jamie McGoldrick, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, in a [statement](#) Sunday.

“I also reiterate my calls on States who have influence over the parties to step up their engagement to bring about a political solution to the crisis,” he added.

Last week alone, at least thirteen children were among those killed in the war-torn country, including six among 31 people who were killed in an air strike that struck a busy night market in Sahar district in Sa'ada governorate. At least 26 other people were injured.

On 2 November, shelling in a residential area in Al Onsowa neighbourhood in Taizz city killed five children and injured two others. All the children killed or injured were between seven and 15 years old.

There are also reports that on 3 November house in Baqim district in Sa'ada governorate was hit in an air strike, killing a whole family of seven people, including two children and two women.

“These latest events are unfortunately part of the tragic pattern of the disregard that the parties to the conflict continue to show for the laws of war and their obligations and responsibilities to protect civilians’ lives,” noted Mr. McGoldrick.

“All parties to this brutal conflict must act in the interest of the people of Yemen and in line with international humanitarian law,” he underscored.

The conflict in the country, now into its third year, has killed thousands and driven millions from their homes. Hostilities have also left over 17 million Yemenis food insecure, over a third of the country’s district in severe danger of famine, destroyed infrastructure and resulted in the breakdown of public services, especially water and sanitation systems.

Lack of water and sanitation systems has also resulted in a devastating cholera outbreak, which has already killed more than 2,100 individuals and continues to infect thousands each week.

“We must all do whatever we can to bring the horrendous suffering of the people of Yemen to an end as soon as possible,” said Mr. McGoldrick.

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## [Lebanon: Amid news of Prime Minister’s resignation, UN chief hopes all sides focus on support for State institutions](#)

5 November 2017 – Concerned by the news that Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri has offered to resign, United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres on Sunday expressed the hope that all sides will focus on supporting the continuity of Lebanon’s State institutions.

A [statement](#) from Mr. Guterres' spokesman said the UN chief hopes that such broad support for State institutions would adhere to the constitution, and aim to safeguard the country's security and stability.

The United Nations remains committed to supporting the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, the statement concludes.

News reports suggest that Mr. Hariri unexpectedly offered his resignation during a televised speech Saturday, saying his life was in danger.

The UN works on multiple fronts to assist Lebanon in forging a peaceful, stable and democratic future. The world body's efforts there include the Office of the UN Special Coordinator for Lebanon ([UNSCOL](#)) the Special Coordinator serves as the Secretary-General's representative to the Lebanese Government, all political parties and the diplomatic community based in the country and carries out good offices work on behalf of the UN chief to assist Lebanese parties to reach peaceful and consensus-based solutions to contentious issues.

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## [UN climate conference to maintain ambition one year after Paris accord's entry into force](#)

3 November 2017 – One year after the entry into force of the [Paris Agreement](#) on climate change, the Bonn Conference, which opens on 6 November in Germany, will be an opportunity for nations around the world to show their ambition for climate action and their determination to keep their promises.

"While Paris represented one of those moments where the best of humanity achieved an agreement so important to our collective futures, Bonn represents how we will move forward to fulfill its promise", said the Executive Secretary of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)), Patricia Espinosa, on the margins of a ministerial meeting in Fiji on 17 October 2017 to prepare for the [Bonn Conference](#) of the Convention's States Parties.

"We are running out of time to turn things around. To do so, we must significantly increase our efforts to reduce emissions and our carbon footprints," she added.

The Paris Agreement, which was adopted by the 196 Parties to the UNFCCC in December 2015 in the French capital after which it is named, calls on countries to combat climate change by limiting the rise of global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius and strive not to exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius.

A year ago, the [Marrakech Climate Conference](#) concluded with the *Marrakech Action Proclamation, for our climate and sustainable development*, in which the UNFCCC States Parties affirmed their “commitment” to the “full implementation” of the Paris Agreement. Today, 169 Parties have ratified the Agreement.

At the Bonn Conference, informally known as COP 23, countries will seek to move forward in completing the rule book for operationalizing the Paris Agreement. The Conference, which runs until 17 November, is chaired by Fiji, an island State particularly affected by the impacts of climate change.

“Never has our work been more necessary. We see this with respect to the extreme weather events affecting almost every continent throughout the world,” said Ms. Espinosa.

COP 23 President and Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama agrees. “We can no longer ignore this crisis. Whether it is fires in California, Portugal and Spain. Flooding in Nigeria, India and Bangladesh. The dramatic Arctic melt. Ice breaking off the continent of Antarctica. The recent hurricanes that devastated the Caribbean and the southern United States [...] It’s hard to find any part of the world that is unaffected by these events”, he said at the ministerial meeting in Fiji.

#### ***Bonn Conference an opportunity to boost climate risk management efforts***

In an op-ed published in October 2017, Ms. Espinosa, alongside the Administrator of the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), Achim Steiner, and the UN Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Robert Glasser, said the Bonn Conference “provides an opportunity to not only accelerate emission reductions but also boost the serious work of ensuring that the management of climate risk is integrated into disaster risk management as a whole.” A week before the opening of the Bonn Conference, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) announced that the levels of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) surged at “record-breaking speed” to new highs in 2016.

The Bonn Conference will feature a series of meetings and events, including the high-level segment, on 15 November and 16 November, attended by Heads of State and Government, Ministers, and UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres.

Mr. Guterres has invited leaders to consider championing six high-impact areas at a special Climate Summit in 2019. These areas are investment in clean technology, maturing carbon pricing, enabling the energy transition, risk mitigation and building resilience, augmenting the contribution of sub-national actors and business and mobilizing climate finance.

“Increasing ambition is the only way to keep the global temperature rise well below 2 degrees Celsius this century, and as close to 1.5 degree as possible. By focusing on these sectors, we can substantially reduce the gap between where we are and where we need to be,” said UN Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, at the pre-COP meeting in Fiji.

Among the side events scheduled at COP 23, several will be organized under

the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action to show how cities, regions, private sector companies and investors are trying to implement the Paris Agreement in the areas of energy, water, agriculture, oceans and coastal areas, human settlements, transportation, industry, and forests.