

Yemen: UN report urges international probe into rights violations amid entirely man-made catastrophe

5 September 2017 – The United Nations human rights chief has called for an independent, international investigation into the allegations of serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law in Yemen, in a new report published today.

An international investigation would go a long way in putting on notice the parties to the conflict that the international community is watching and determined to [hold to account perpetrators of violations and abuses](#), said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein in a news release on the report.

I appeal to all the parties to the conflict, those supporting them and those with influence over them to have mercy on the people of Yemen, and to take immediate measures to ensure humanitarian relief for civilians and justice for the victims of violations, he added.

According to the report, which records violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law since September 2014, such acts continue unabated in Yemen, with civilians suffering deeply the consequences of an entirely man-made catastrophe.

Between March 2015, when the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) began reporting on civilian casualties, and 30 August, at least 5,144 civilians have been documented as killed and more than 8,749 injured.

Children accounted for 1,184 of those who were killed and 1,592 of those injured. Coalition airstrikes continued to be the leading cause of child casualties as well as overall civilian casualties. Some 3,233 of the civilians killed were reportedly killed by Coalition forces.

The report states that the past year witnessed airstrikes against funeral gatherings and small civilian boats, in addition to markets, hospitals, schools, residential areas, and other public and private infrastructure.

The Popular Committees affiliated with the Houthis and the army units loyal to former President Abdullah Saleh (the Houthi/Saleh forces) were responsible for some 67 per cent of the 1,702 cases of recruitment of children for use in hostilities.

The report stresses that the minimal efforts towards accountability in the past year are wholly insufficient to respond to the gravity of violations

and abuses continuing every day in Yemen, adding that the National Commission established to investigate human rights violations in Yemen is not perceived to be impartial.

The report also found that the governorates most affected by the conflict were Aden, Al-Hudaydah, Sana'a and Taizz.

The humanitarian crisis with nearly 18.8 million people in need of humanitarian aid and 7.3 million on the brink of famine is a direct result of the behaviour of parties to the conflict, including indiscriminate attacks, attacks against civilians and protected objects, sieges, blockades and restrictions on movement, the report states.

In many cases, information obtained suggested that civilians may have been directly targeted, or that operations were conducted heedless of their impact on civilians without regard to the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack. In some cases, information suggested that no actions were taken to mitigate the impact of operations on civilians, the report states.

[UN political chief urges Security Council to 'remain united, take appropriate action' on DPR Korea](#)

4 September 2017 – The top United Nations political official today urged the Security Council to remain united and take appropriate action against Sunday's nuclear explosive test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

The latest serious developments require a comprehensive response in order to break the cycle of provocations from the DPRK, said Jeffrey Feltman, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, in an emergency Council meeting, noting that such a response must include wise and bold diplomacy to be effective.

Mr. Feltman, however, stressed the importance of responding to humanitarian needs regardless of the political situation as the people of the DPRK rely on the international community to provide humanitarian assistance.

Today's meeting was the Council's second emergency meeting on the DPRK in less than a week and the tenth time the body has met to discuss the DPRK this year.

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On the details of Sunday's event, Mr. Feltman said that the DPRK characterized it as a "perfect success in the test of a hydrogen bomb for intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)" and as marking a very significant occasion in attaining the final goal of completing the state nuclear force.

He said that it is evident the yield of the device was larger than any of the DPRK's previous nuclear tests and experts have estimated a yield of between 50 and 100 kilotons, or on average more than five times more powerful than the weapon detonated over Hiroshima and at the low end of the yield of a modern thermonuclear weapon.

Citing a DPRK article that stated the hydrogen bomb was "a multi-functional thermonuclear nuke with great destructive power which can be detonated even at high altitudes for super-powerful EMP [electromagnetic pulse] attack," Mr. Feltman said that "this was a rare reference by the DPRK to the use of EMP, which, triggered by a nuclear weapon, would aim for widespread damage and disruption to electricity grids and sensitive electronics, including on satellites.

He also drew attention to reports today indicating that the DPRK may be preparing new ballistic missile tests.

"We are alarmed by this dangerous provocation," he said, noting that [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres reiterated his call on the DPRK leadership to cease such acts and to comply fully with its international obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions.

"We will continue to carefully follow the developments and remain in close coordination with the concerned international organizations, Members of the Council and other governments concerned," he concluded.

[UN atomic chief says DPR Korea's new nuclear test 'an extremely regrettable act'](#)

3 September 2017 – Following today's reported nuclear bomb test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the head of the United Nations atomic agency has spoken against "an extremely regrettable act" that completely disregarded the international community's repeated demands.

"Today's nuclear test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

(DPRK) is [an extremely regrettable act](#),” said Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency ([IAEA](#)), in a statement.

“This new test, which follows the two tests last year and is the sixth since 2006, is in complete disregard of the repeated demands of the international community,” he added.

In its resolutions, most recently in 2371, the Security Council has reaffirmed its decisions that the DPRK should not conduct any further nuclear tests and should abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

“Once again, I strongly urge the DPRK to fully implement all relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and the IAEA,” Mr. Amano said, noting that his agency continues to closely follow developments in the DPRK's nuclear programme and remains ready to contribute to its peaceful resolution.

[16 million children affected by massive flooding in South Asia – UNICEF](#)

2 September 2017 – The United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) said today that an estimated 16 million children are in urgent need of life-saving support in the wake of torrential monsoon rains and catastrophic flooding in Nepal, India, and Bangladesh.

“Millions of children have seen their lives swept away by these devastating floods,” said Jean Gough, UNICEF Regional Director for South Asia. “Children have lost their homes, schools and even friends and loved ones. There is a danger the worst could still be to come as rains continue and flood waters move south,” she added.

UNICEF is on the ground working in close coordination with respective governments and humanitarian partners in the South Asian countries to scale up its responses and respond to immediate needs of affected children and their families.

Since mid-August, there have been at least 1,288 reported deaths, with over 45 million people estimated to be affected.

Many areas remain inaccessible due to damage to roads, bridges, railways and airports. The most urgent needs for children are clean water, hygiene supplies to prevent the spread of disease, food supplies and safe places in evacuation centres for children to play.

Massive damage to school infrastructure and supplies also mean hundreds of thousands of children may miss weeks or months of school, said Gough. Getting children back into school is absolutely critical in establishing a sense of stability for children during times of crisis and provides a sense of normality when everything else is being turned upside down.

In Bangladesh alone, more than 8 million people have been affected by flooding, including around 3 million children. An estimated 696,169 houses have been damaged or destroyed and 2,292 primary and community schools have been damaged by high water. There have already been more than 13,035 cases of water-borne diseases in the country.

In Nepal, 1.7 million people, including 680,000 children, have been affected with 352,738 displaced from their homes. More than 185,126 homes have been damaged or destroyed in addition to 1,958 schools, affecting the education of 253,605 children.

In India, four states in northern India have been extensively affected by the flooding, affecting over 31 million people including 12.33 million children. Some 805,183 houses are either partially or fully damaged and 15,455 schools have been damaged, disrupting the education of nearly one million students. Further heavy rains in Mumbai resulted in at least five deaths by drowning and three people including two children died due to house collapse.

[Iraq: ISIL targeting civilians to 'avenge' loss of Tal Afar, UN envoy says](#)

1 September 2017 – Iraq: ISIL targeting civilians to 'avenge' loss of Tal Afar, UN envoy says

Fighters from the Islamic State (ISIL) are indiscriminately targeting civilians to avenge for their loss of Tal Afar, the top United Nations political representative in Iraqi today said, condemning the latest attack in Baghdad.

Da'esh terrorists have shown absolute disregard for human life, said Ján Kubiš, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, using the Arabic acronym for ISIL.

However, the patience and resilience of the Iraqi people have defeated the terrorists' aim in breaking their unity, he added.

At least 125 civilians were killed and another 188 injured in terrorist

related acts in Iraq during the month of August, according to the UN Assistance Mission in Iraq ([UNAMI](#)). The casualty figures show that Baghdad was the worst affected area, and do not include casualty figures from ongoing fighting in Anbar province.

The overall casualty figures are lower than in previous months, where violence spiked above 2,000 in October 2016.

In a separate statement, Mr. Kubiš [said](#) that "hopeful days lie ahead for Iraq," noting military victories against terrorists, including in the northern Iraqi city of Tal Afar which Iraqi forces yesterday declared liberated from ISIL.

Mr. Kubiš said this Eid al-Adha, thoughts and prayers go to all the martyrs and fighters in the liberating forces, and to those who provide support and are affected "including the millions of displaced Iraqis.

"On this Eid, the Feast of Sacrifice that Muslims celebrate worldwide, the Iraqi people who have sacrificed dearly deserve to live in peace, dignity and prosperity," he said.

The senior UN official added that sustainable peace in the country can only be secured through inclusive solutions, addressing grievances, needs and aspirations of the Iraqi people.