

## Human rights violations indicate 'repressive policy' of Venezuelan authorities – UN report

30 August 2017 – Extensive human rights violations and abuses have been committed in the wake of anti-Government protests in Venezuela and point to the existence of a policy to repress political dissent and instill fear in the population to curb demonstrations, a report by the United Nations human rights office has found.

The [policies pursued by the authorities](#) in their response to the protests have been at the cost of Venezuelans' rights and freedoms, said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein in a news release issued today.

The [report](#) notes that the generalized and systematic use of excessive force during demonstrations and the arbitrary detention of protestors and perceived political opponents indicate that these were not the acts of isolated officials.

The report calls on the UN Human Rights Council to consider taking measures to prevent the human rights situation in Venezuela from worsening. Venezuela is currently a Council member.

Mass street demonstrations began in the country in April. Tensions between the Government and the opposition reached a new high about a month ago, when President Nicolás Maduro convened elections for the so-called Constituent Assembly, which could replace the current legislative body, the National Assembly.

The report indicates that of the 124 deaths linked to the protests being investigated by the Attorney General's Office as of 31 July, the security forces were reportedly responsible for 46 and pro-Government armed groups, known as armed colectivos, for 27. Responsibility for the remaining 51 deaths has not yet been determined.

According to reliable estimates from a local NGO, more than 5,000 people were detained since 1 April, with more than 1,000 reportedly still held as of 31 July. At least 609 civilians arrested in the context of protests were presented before military tribunals. The report calls on the Government to halt arbitrary detention and the use of military courts to try civilians.

The report documents attacks against journalists and media workers by security forces that were apparently aimed at preventing them from covering demonstrations.

Demonstrators and journalists were labelled by high-level authorities as 'enemies' and 'terrorists' words that did little to counter, and

may even have contributed to, the climate of violence and polarization,&#8221 the High Commissioner said.

Warning that amid continuing economic and social crises and rising political tensions, there is a grave risk the situation in Venezuela will deteriorate further, Mr. Zeid encouraged the Government to follow up on the recommendations made in the report and to use its findings as guidelines to seek truth and justice for the victims of human rights violations and abuses.

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## [In conflict-affected Nigeria, UN agency teams with health workers to help the displaced](#)

30 August 2017 – Skilled health personnel are desperately needed in north-eastern Nigeria, the United Nations population agency today said, after training hundreds of health providers in Borno State on the basics of reproductive health needs.

&#8220I have been working in the field of maternal health in this country for more than 35 years,&#8221 Hauwa Lassa, a retired nurse and midwife [told](#) the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)) in Maiduguri, where she works at a health facility in one of the displacement camps. &#8220It is now with this crisis going on that the women need support. So I decided to come back to the health centre and help.&#8221

Ms. Lassa was one of 300 women trained by UNFPA in a so-called Minimum Initial Service Package, which includes how to coordinate with humanitarian staff, provide clinical care for survivors of sexual violence, prevent HIV through condom distribution, and helping get access to emergency obstetric care.

&#8220This, together with equipping the health facilities and hospitals with supplies for safe deliveries, access to family planning, and equipment to respond to sexual and gender-based violence is one of the cornerstones of UNFPA's work here,&#8221 said Ada Pouye, UNFPA's humanitarian coordinator in Nigeria.

The violence in north-eastern Nigeria destroyed more than 40 per cent of health facilities, and forced doctors and nurses to flee.

The UN agency said it is trying to provide urgently needed care in a country where one woman died of pregnancy-related causes every nine minutes, and where some 276,000 women are likely to become pregnant this year.

In addition to helping safely deliver babies and teach about family planning,

UNFPA is also working with women and girls to immunize newborns.

“We have a special way of making women come back for the second immunization shot for their baby after 40 days,” said Mdapilawa Yatzubu, who also participated in the UNFPA training, and then returned to a health centre in the town of Biu.

“We give them a small gift, mostly soap. They all come back to collect the soap and have their health checked and the baby immunized with the second dose. This is how we follow up on them.”

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## [UN strongly condemns latest ballistic missile launch by DPRK](#)

29 August 2017 – The United Nations Security Council has strongly condemned the latest ballistic missile launch by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), which flew over Japan, as well as the series of launches that took place on 25 August.

Convening a formal meeting this evening immediately following urgent, closed-door consultations, the Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement through which it condemned the DPRK for its “outrageous actions” and demanded that the North-East Asia country “immediately cease all such actions.”

“The Security Council stresses that these DPRK actions are not just a threat to the region, but to all UN Member States,” the statement continued, expressing the 15-member body’s grave concern that the DPRK is, by conducting such a launch over Japan, “as well as its recent actions and public statements,” deliberately undermining regional peace and stability and have caused grave security concerns around the world.

Moreover, the Council demanded that the DPRK abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes “in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and immediately cease all related activities” and not conduct any further tests or provocations.

Earlier today, [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres also condemned the latest ballistic missile launch, in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

“The launch undermines regional security and stability and efforts to create space for dialogue,” said a [statement](#) issued by UN spokesperson Eri Kaneko.

According to press reports, early Tuesday morning, the DPRK launched a

ballistic missile that travelled some 2,700 kilometers, flying over Japan before crashing into the Pacific Ocean.

The Secretary-General calls on the Government of the DPRK to fully comply with its international obligations and to work to re-open channels of communication, the statement said, adding that Mr. Guterres remains in close contact with all parties concerned.

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## [‘Sustaining peace’ strategy must cover entire peace continuum – UN deputy chief](#)

29 August 2017 – Addressing how best United Nations peacekeeping operations can augment global efforts to sustain peace, Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed has said that the nature of today’s challenges requires seamless work across peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

Peacekeeping operations need clear, [realistic and up-to-date mandates](#), with well-identified priorities, adequate sequencing and flexibility to evolve over time, Ms. Mohammed told the Security Council during an [open debate](#) on ‘peacekeeping operations and sustaining peace.’

Coherence, complementarity and collaboration between UN peace and security efforts and its development and humanitarian work are also essential for preventing conflict and mitigating risks, fostering more sustainable outcomes and ensuring that no one is left behind, she added.

‘Sustaining peace’ is a term that emerged from the 2015 review of the UN peacebuilding architecture. In their resolutions on the review, the Security Council and the General Assembly defined sustaining peace as a goal and a process to build a common vision of a society [...] which encompasses activities aimed at preventing, the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of conflict.

Implementing the Sustaining Peace Agenda requires an inclusive strategy that supports the diverse range of our missions and takes account of the entire peace continuum, from prevention, conflict resolution and peacekeeping to peacebuilding and long-term development, Ms. Mohammed said, underscoring the vital role the Security Council plays.



Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed addresses the Security Council open debate on “United Nations peacekeeping operations: their potential contribution to the overarching goal of sustaining peace”. UN Photo/Evan

Schneider

In this regard, she added, the reform of the UN system has been designed to reinforce the links between the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development and the Sustaining Peace Agenda.

"We must work together across silos and address the humanitarian-development-peace nexus as well as the root causes of violence and conflict," she said.

The debate also explored how peacekeeping operations can adapt to changing political and operational challenges through the various stages of UN missions' engagement and how they can be designed around support for building inclusive and effective national institutions and strengthening national capacities.

Sustaining peace can only be achieved through a broader vision of prevention, she stressed, adding that prevention measures and peace processes must be driven by national leadership and inclusive ownership that recognize the needs and contributions of all segments of society, including women and youth as agents of development and peace.

The complexity of current conflicts requires a multi-dimensional approach that prioritizes a range of initiatives, including providing crucial protection for civilians under threat and strengthening institutions, as well as the rule of law to enable respect for human rights to be strengthened at all levels.

Sustaining peace can only be achieved through a broader vision of prevention UN deputy chief Amina Mohammed

They require disarmament, demobilization and the reintegration of armed groups, and a focus on justice and reconciliation, credible elections and the extension of legitimate and accountable State authority.

In many ways, one of peacekeeping's most important contributions to peace is the preparation for a smooth and effective peacekeeping drawdown and handover to the UN Country Team, as seen recently in successful examples of this in Cote d'Ivoire and soon in Liberia.

"To ensure that we are on the right peacebuilding track, we must get the politics right," the Deputy Secretary-General said.

Peacekeeping operations are political instruments that ideally accompany a locally-owned peace process. To this end, missions provide good offices and work closely with different parties and communities to achieve and implement peace agreements.

In considering all these areas, a broader and more sustained level of engagement by the members of a united and strong Security Council

individually or collectively is essential to ensure that Member States, the UN system, and all our partners are aligned behind a common purpose and a common vision for action that integrates all pillars of the UN and bring all its activities together in a truly integrated fashion, Ms. Mohammed concluded.

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## [UN aid chief allocates \\$45 million to tackle neglected emergencies in four countries](#)

29 August 2017 – The United Nations aid chief released today \$45 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund ([CERF](#)) to four countries struggling in crises away from the headlines – Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Chad and Sudan where more than 21 million people need urgent humanitarian assistance.

The allocation for these [neglected emergencies](#) will sustain and scale up critical aid operations by humanitarian partners in these countries, where life-saving needs are alarmingly high but funding is critically low, according to a press statement from the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)).

This funding is a lifeline for millions of people who struggle in crises away from the headlines. Focusing largely on longstanding conflict-related crises, this allocation will address the most urgent needs of affected people, said UN Emergency Relief Coordinator Mr. Stephen O'Brien.

Thanking all donors to the CERF, he added that such funding allows their contributions to go further, reaching those who need our help the most.

The spotlight on underfunded emergencies is unique to the mandate of CERF, enabling urgent response to where the needs are greatest and not to where the noise is loudest. A bigger CERF is critical to address our common goal to leave no one behind. I urge your continuous support, said Mr. O'Brien.

A large portion of these funds will reach people affected by displacement – one of the most pressing humanitarian challenges in today's world, OCHA explained. The funds will enable humanitarian partners to provide critical health care, food assistance, access to clean water and sanitation and other types of humanitarian aid. However, it addresses only a small portion of the urgent humanitarian needs in the countries.