

Five years into South Sudan's independence, children denied childhoods – UNICEF

8 July 2017 – As South Sudan enters its sixth year of independence, the United Nations Children's Fund ([UNICEF](#)) is calling the situation in the country "a catastrophe for children" and cautioned that they are being denied a childhood in nearly all aspects of their lives.

"A country's independence day should be celebrated. [However, today in South Sudan, there will be no celebration for the millions of children caught up in this conflict](#)," said Mahimbo Mdoe, UNICEF's Representative in South Sudan, on the occasion of South Sudan's Independence Day on 9 July.

He noted that children in South Sudan are suffering "unthinkable hardships and setbacks" in their education, nutrition, health and other rights.

"In nearly all aspects of their lives children are being denied a childhood in South Sudan."

The country has been in conflict since December 2013, with at least 2,500 children killed or injured, and more than two million children displaced or seeking refuge in neighbouring countries. Hundreds have also been raped and sexually assaulted.

"The numbers are staggering and yet each represents the ongoing misery of a child," said Mr. Mdoe.

UNICEF noted that with 2.2 million children out of school, the country has the highest proportion of school children not in classrooms, with 70 per cent of children not receiving any education. In addition, one-third of all schools are believed to have been attacked by armed groups.

An estimated 1.1 million children in the country are acutely malnourished, according to UNICEF. In addition, children lack clean water, which has led to the ongoing outbreak of cholera – the longest and most widespread in the country's history – with 10,000 cases reported, the majority children.

UNICEF, along with other UN agencies and non-UN partners, are working to provide safe drinking water and food to children, as well as to reunite them with their families and to support some stability in their lives through schooling.

"While UNICEF continues to increase our emergency response to reach those most in need, we reiterate what we have said time and again: humanitarian actors need full and safe access; and the children of South Sudan need peace," Mr. Mdoe said.

[International cooperation crucial to safe flights, UN says at counter-terrorism meeting](#)

7 July 2017 – The global nature of aviation puts everyone at the same level of risk from potential terrorism, senior United Nations officials said today, calling for greater information sharing, resources and political will to keep flights safe.

“Terrorism is not someone else’s problem. States and industry must commit necessary resources and provide necessary governance,” the Secretary-General of the UN International Civil Aviation Organization ([ICAO](#)), Fang Liu, told the opening of a special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on “Terrorist threats to civil aviation.”

The concept note for the meeting cited recent attacks against airports in Belgium, Turkey and the United States, and the explosion of a terrorist bomb aboard Daallo Airlines flight 159, as “stark reminders that landside attacks, the threat posed by insiders and airport staff, and the use of increasingly sophisticated improvised explosive devices are all significant concerns.”

The meeting aimed to give government representatives an opportunity to discuss enhanced security measures – such as explosive detection and new cargo rules, as well as new challenges, such as cybercrime and “porous airport perimeters.”

In her speech, Ms. Liu called for greater access to current threat information between States and within the local and federal authorities, as well as political will to work together.

“Aviation security authorities must be provided adequate information by the State’s own law enforcement and intelligence organizations, in order to create a meaningful and effective threat assessment,” said Ms. Liu.

She noted one “pointed” example of information sharing, such as the recent laptop restrictions imposed by the United States, which were then transitions to more extensive screening measures of passengers.

In his address, Jean-Paul Laborde, Executive Director of the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate ([CTED](#)), said “more and more strict measures” are clearly needed “to address challenges of terrorism and to protect our lives.”

But effective work “can only happen through cohesiveness and cooperation, and this is what the Security Council does,” he said, urging governments to implement measures cited in recent resolutions related to aviation safety.

Last September, the Security Council unanimously adopted its first resolution to address terrorist threats to civil aviation. [Resolution 2309](#) (2016) urged governments to ensure that effective, risk-based measures are taken to protect airports, for example, to strengthen security screening procedures and utilize technology to detect explosives and other threats.

More recently, Security Council adopted [resolution 2341](#) (2017), which recognized the urgent need to ensure reliability and resistance of critical infrastructure.

Mr. Laborde stressed the importance of collecting and sharing advance passenger information (API) to detect the departure from, entry into, or transit through their territories of individuals on the Al-Qaida sanctions list.

He said only 57 countries are capable of implementing and sharing such information with INTERPOL, which has 68 million entries.

Reiterating the importance of sharing information and cooperation in his closing remarks, Mr. Laborde again spoke about the need to cut red tape and to implement the Security Council resolutions.

“Along with our hesitations and weaknesses, this is one area where multilateralism has its advantages,” he said.

[Human security approach ‘central’ to achieving sustainable development – UN officials](#)

7 July 2017 – United Nations officials today highlighted the benefits of a human security approach to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), as well as tackle a range of other issues, during a high-level event held at Headquarters.

“The human security approach is instrumental to sustainable development, inclusive peace, justice and the well-being and dignity of all people. It is in fact central to the [2030 Agenda](#),” [said](#) Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, addressing the event.

As outlined by the General Assembly, human security is a people-centred framework based on national ownership, which according to Ms. Mohammed, aims to support governments in responding to threats impeding their people from living free from fear, want and indignity, while recognizing the complexity and interconnected nature of today’s challenges.

“It really does compel us to find coherent, comprehensive and integrated solutions that combine the expertise and resources of the United Nations system with those of governments, regional and sub-regional organizations, the private sector, civil society and communities on the ground,” she explained.

Based on lessons learned from over 15 years of supported programming by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, the approach promotes greater coordination, advancing integrated actions for concrete results in improving the lives of peoples and communities.

At the UN, said Ms. Mohammed, the Secretary-General has embarked on a series of review processes and reforms, including management, development and the peace and security architecture, to fulfil his vision of a UN system that is less fragmented and much more efficient.

“Their underlying premise – and promise – is prevention,” she noted. “Human security is an essential part of these processes.”

By considering current and emerging risks and vulnerabilities, human security is an effective tool for prevention, she added. The human security approach can also help guide efforts to bridge the gap between humanitarian assistance and longer-term development aid.

She went on to say that programmes supported by the UN Trust Fund for Human Security have illustrated “the power of catalytic interventions that pool resources and establish strong partnerships and better coherence of results on the ground.”

“Let us work together to advance prevention and promote inclusive solutions that enhance people’s ability to live together in peace and well-being, with much stronger confidence in a sustainable future,” she stated.

General Assembly President Peter Thomson opened the event [saying](#), “human security provides us with a focussed, analytical lens and programming framework to aid the actions we are taking towards achieving the [SDGs](#).”

He added that with its direct focus on people, “the concept of human security finds in the SDGs an agenda that is ultimately about creating the conditions – social, economic and environmental – in which humanity can flourish.”

Today’s event was organised by the [UN Human Security Unit](#), in partnership with the Government of Japan and the Human Security Network (Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand and South Africa, as an observer).

Also addressing the event, Yukio Takasu, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Human Security, said that it is essential to identify and address the root causes of human insecurity, which are often interlinked and multifaceted.

“There is no simple, straightforward solution. Through the human security approach, we will be able to address deep-rooted insecurity and implement the

SDGs effectively,” he stated.

“We have to identify first who has been left out in equitable progress and are at the greatest risk of falling behind... and take action on what needs to be done.”

He added that there is a consensus on the need to adopt an integrated approach to achieve the SDGs, which no single government, entity or international organization can do alone.

“We must strengthen a multi-stakeholder framework of cooperation at the national, regional and global levels. Partnership of all stakeholders, civil society and the private sector is absolutely essential for success.”

[Reconsider charges against Palestinian human rights defender, UN experts urge Israel](#)

7 July 2017 – Voicing concern over the reactivation of charges – some of which date back a number of years – against a Palestinian human rights defender, two independent United Nations experts have called on Israel to strictly abide by international law in its dealings with rights defenders.

“On the information available to us, many of the charges against [Issa] Amro appear to be directed squarely at his lawful right to peacefully protest against the 50-year-old Israeli occupation,” said the Special Rapporteur [on the occupied Palestinian territories](#), Michael Lynk, and the Special Rapporteur [on human rights defenders](#), Michel Forst, in a [news release](#) today.

“If the Israeli military court convicts Mr. Amro on any of the charges against him, the convictions will be stained by reasonable doubts about the system’s ability to ensure justice,” they added.

According to the experts, the Israeli military court system – which all Palestinians in the West Bank are subject to – has a conviction rate above 99 per cent, which raises serious concerns about the system meeting many of the international standards of due process required under international human rights and humanitarian law. Further, stating that Palestinian human rights defenders, including Mr. Amro, have faced a long pattern of harassment, intimidation, discriminatory treatment and physical interference from Israeli military and settler groups, the two experts underscored that the non-violent work of human rights defenders must not be disrupted and attacked by the authorities, even under a military occupation.

“Their rights to freedom of expression and assembly must be respected and

protected,” they stressed.

According to the news release, Mr. Amro and Youth Against Settlements have campaigned against the Israeli military’s shutdown of the once-thriving Palestinian neighbourhood around Shuhada Street in Hebron, and against illegal Israeli settlements in and near the city.

Their activities have included running a community centre, organizing protest marches and opposing the many restrictions placed by the military on daily Palestinian life, it added.

Special Rapporteurs and independent experts are appointed by the Geneva-based UN [Human Rights Council](#) to examine and report back on a specific human rights theme or a country situation. The positions are honorary and the experts are not UN staff, nor are they paid for their work.

[Antibiotic resistance making gonorrhoea ‘sometimes impossible’ to treat – UN health agency](#)

7 July 2017 – Gonorrhoea is becoming harder to treat due to antibiotic resistance, the United Nations health agency today cautioned, adding that there is a need for better prevention and treatment of the disease that infects an estimated 78 million people each year.

“The bacteria that cause gonorrhoea are [particularly smart](#). Every time we use a new class of antibiotics to treat the infection, the bacteria evolve to resist them,” said Dr. Teodora Wi, Medical Officer, Human Reproduction, at the UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)).

Data from 77 countries show that “antibiotic resistance is making gonorrhoea – a common sexually-transmitted infection – much harder, and sometimes impossible, to treat,” according to the agency.

WHO noted that the current “last-resort treatment” in the form of extended-spectrum cephalosporins (ECS) has now shown resistance in more than 50 countries. As a result, the agency issued updated global treatment recommendations in 2016, advising doctors to give 2 antibiotics: ceftriaxone and azithromycin.

The development of a new antibiotic for gonorrhoea “is not attractive for commercial pharmaceutical companies,” WHO said, noting that only three candidate drugs are currently in the research-and-development pipeline.

The treatments are taken only for short periods of time, unlike medicines for

chronic diseases, and they become less effective as resistance develops, meaning that the supply of new drugs constantly needs to be replenished, according to the agency.

Gonorrhoea can be prevented through safer sexual behaviour, WHO stressed. It pointed to decreasing condom use, increased urbanization and travel, poor infection detection rates, and inadequate or failed treatment for the estimated 78 million people infected each year.

“These cases may just be the tip of the iceberg, since systems to diagnose and report untreatable infections are lacking in lower-income countries where gonorrhoea is actually more common,” said Dr. Wi.

Women are particularly at risk, potentially leading to pelvic inflammatory disease, ectopic pregnancy and infertility, as well as increased risk of HIV.

Earlier this year, WHO announced that it is classifying antibiotics into three categories – Access, Watch and Reserve – to preserve the effectiveness of “last resort” antibiotics.