

Task of eradicating poverty must be met 'with a sense of urgency,' says deputy UN chief

8 May 2017 – Eradicating poverty remains the greatest global challenge, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed said today, calling for a collective and comprehensive approach that recognizes the multidimensional nature the issue and its interaction with other aspects.

Addressing poverty, inequality, climate change, food insecurity and a sluggish and unpredictable global economy requires integrated responses and engagement by all actors, Ms. Mohammed [said](#) at the opening of the [2017 Integration Segment](#) of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

It is [also] an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, she stressed.

In her remarks, the Deputy Secretary-General highlighted the importance of broad partnerships and building synergies across all dimensions of poverty eradication and sustainable development, including with the different sectors of economy at national levels to address the complex interlinkages.

Further, recalling that the first Sustainable Development Goal ([SDG1](#)) is to end poverty in all its forms, everywhere, she added that such efforts also provided an opportunity to gauge how national approaches and the recently adopted [SDG Indicator Framework](#) can support each other in advancing integrated implementation and reviewing progress.

We need options that will enable policy-makers at the global, regional and national level to foster coherent and integrated approaches to poverty eradication, said Ms. Mohammed, noting: Expectations are very high and now is the time. We have a collective responsibility to deliver results at the country level.

Also speaking at the opening, Nabeel Munir, the Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, underscored the importance of integrated policy frameworks given the interconnected nature of sustainable development (the economic, social and environmental dimensions).

The interlinkages between the different Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) we have defined to achieve our common vision are explicit, unveiling potential synergies and trade-offs. This underlines the importance of integrated policy frameworks for the realization of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, he said, adding:

It also underlines the significance of this Integration Segment and the discussions that will take place in the context of the 2017 session of the Economic and Social Council's work.

The 2017 Integration Segment of the Economic and Social Council brings together key stakeholders to discuss and identify opportunities and challenges in developing integrated approaches to tackle poverty in a sustained, inclusive and sustainable manner.

Among other matters it will discuss, the Integration Segment will include a particular focus on Least Developed Countries.

This year's meeting will also consider best practices, lessons learned and recommendations at the national, regional and international levels, with a view to extract policy recommendations to guide integrated policymaking for poverty eradication as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda.

Discussions and outcomes from the Integration Segment will feed into the High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council as well as into the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

[PODCAST: Saving 'the blue heart of the planet' with Sylvia Earle](#)

8 May 2017 – As a little girl, Sylvia Earle, today perhaps the world's best known woman marine scientist, literally fell head over heels in love with the ocean.

"I got knocked over by a wave on the New Jersey Shore when I was three-years-old and the ocean got my attention," says the veteran oceanographer, who after decades at the forefront of ocean exploration, has also earned the sobriquet 'Her Deepness.'

She will be one of the special guests attending [The Ocean Conference](#) in early June, but ahead of that major event to help repair and sustain what she refers to as the Earth's "blue heart," she stopped by UN Headquarters in New York to talk with *UN News* for our podcast series, The Lid Is On.

She knows the ocean better than most, having, for starters, walked on the ocean floor; led more than 100 deep-sea expeditions, and logged more than 7,000 hours underwater.

The former chief scientist of the United States National Oceanic Service, NOAA, the founder of "Deep Ocean Exploration and Research," she also has her own alliance to protect the ocean, "Mission Blue."

She is passionate about reversing the damage done in recent decades.

"Here's how it's going to be if we keep doing what we're doing: 90 per cent of the big fish – gone. How long before they'll all be gone? How long before

the last tuna will bring a high price?”

“How long before we see the disappearance of all the coral reefs, knowing that we’ve lost half, in less than half a century?”

Ms Earle describes the Ocean Conference, which will run from 5 to 9 June at UN Headquarters, as a “remarkable” and unprecedented event.

“The UN is getting behind the idea of celebrating the ocean, examining the issues. What are the problems that we now face and what can be done, as individual nations; as nations working together?”

That’s a sentiment shared by the President of the UN General Assembly, Peter Thomson, who is from Fiji; a Pacific island state that’s facing an existential crisis over the warming and rising ocean.

“I see it as the opportunity for us to address these major problems, these major woes that humanity has put upon the ocean,” said Mr Thomson, one of the driving forces behind the conference.

He added that 40 per cent of the cause of rising sea-levels which threaten to engulf whole countries, is down to ocean warming.

Ms. Earle is looking forward to being at the Conference, to stand up for her beloved ocean and repeat the warning she made more than two years ago here at the UN – that the “living ocean” is not too big to fail.

Yet despite the dire statistics, she says “there’s plenty of reason to hope,” adding “we are seeing a trend – we are seeing a revision of fishing policies to favour the fish.”

“The fish, like trees, help capture, hold, sequester carbon [...] the ocean is the biggest reservoir of carbon, the deep sea, the greatest place where carbon is already being sequestered. What we want to do is maintain that, so that Earth continues.”

[Nigeria: Welcoming release of 82 Chibok girls, UN urges support for their rehabilitation](#)

8 May 2017 – Welcoming Saturday’s release of 82 of the schoolgirls abducted from the Nigerian town of Chibok by the Boko Haram insurgent group three years ago, the United Nations has called for continued global support for the country’s efforts to release, rehabilitate and reintegrate all Boko Haram victims.

“We appeal to all Nigerians, including the families and local communities of the liberated girls, to fully embrace them and provide all necessary support to ensure their reintegration into society,” [said](#) a statement issued today by Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the UN Secretary-General.

“We remain deeply concerned about the safety and wellbeing of the schoolgirls and other victims still in captivity,” added the statement.

The newly-released girls will be put on a similar rehabilitation programme set up for the 21 Chibok girls who were released in October 2016, [according to](#) the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)).

The programme is tailored to meet each girl’s specific needs of counselling, to help overcome the trauma endured after being held under captivity for more than three years.

It includes, among others, access to quality education to bridge the learning gap created during the abduction, access to reproductive health care for their sexual well-being and rehabilitation support, and a skills-acquisition programme to ease their re-integration into their society.

UNFPA has deployed an emergency team of psychosocial counsellors and health professionals to assist with the profiling of the girls, so their critical needs can be met.

[More than one million children have fled escalating violence in South Sudan – UN](#)

8 May 2017 – The escalating conflict in South Sudan had driven more than one million children out of the country, the United Nations announced today, warning that the future of a generation is ‘on the brink.’

“The horrifying fact that nearly one in five children in South Sudan has been forced to flee their home illustrates how devastating this conflict has been for the country’s most vulnerable,” [said](#) Leila Pakkala, the Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa of the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), in a press release issued jointly with the UN refugee agency.

“Add this to the more than one million children who are also displaced within South Sudan, and the future of a generation is truly on the brink,” she warned.

Children make 62 per cent of more than 1.8 million refugees from South Sudan, according to the latest UN figures. More than 75,000 refugee children in

Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have crossed South Sudan's borders either unaccompanied or separated from their families.

"No refugee crisis today worries me more than South Sudan," said Valentin Tapsoba, the Africa Bureau Director of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)).

"That refugee children are becoming the defining face of this emergency is incredibly troubling," he added.

RELATED: [UN peacekeepers deployed to enable aid delivery to Upper Nile's Aburoc area](#)

South Sudan has the highest proportion of out-of-school children in the world at about 75 per cent.

The trauma, physical upheaval, fear and stress experienced by so many children account for just part of the toll the crisis is exacting. Children remain at risk of recruitment by armed forces and groups and, with traditional social structures damaged, they are also increasingly vulnerable to violence, sexual abuse and exploitation.

UNICEF's appeal of \$181 million for South Sudan and South Sudanese refugees in the region for the rest of the year is currently only 52 per cent funded while UNHCR's funding appeal of \$ 781.8 million for the country is only 11 per cent funded.

VIDEO: More than one million children have now fled South Sudan where escalating conflict is ravaging the country, UNICEF and UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, announced today.

[Unimpeded access, humanitarian funds urgently needed in Yemen – senior UN relief official](#)

8 May 2017 – Voicing concern over lack of humanitarian access particularly for medicine and medical supplies in war-torn Yemen, a senior United Nations relief official has called on all parties to the conflict to ensure urgent and unrestricted access to people in need across the country.

Giving the UN and humanitarian partners safe and unimpeded access to those in need would be a strong demonstration by the warring parties of their

concern for the Yemeni people,” said Jamie McGoldrick, the Humanitarian Coordinator in Yemen, in a [statement](#) yesterday.

“It is imperative that humanitarians reach people in need without obstacle, wherever they may be,” he underscored.

According to the statement, administrative delays at ports, checkpoints, and interference with aid delivery have hampered efforts to transport medicine and medical supplies to people in need in a timely manner.

The access is all the more important now given the current threat of famine and outbreaks of cholera in locations throughout the country. Some 17 million Yemenis are battling food insecurity, making it the largest [hunger crisis](#)” in the world.

“Recent information suggests that medicine supplies are being delayed from reaching Taizz City, where the need of the people is urgent. I call on the authorities in Sana'a [,the capital of Yemen,] to allow trucks carrying medicines into Taizz City without delay,” said the Humanitarian Coordinator.

Also in the statement, Mr. McGoldrick underscored the urgent need for additional resources and called on the international community to fund the Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan.

In February this year, UN together with humanitarian partners [launched an international appeal](#) for \$2.1 billion to provide life-saving assistance to millions in Yemen in 2017, the largest-ever humanitarian response plan for the country.

Last month, [commitments amounting to little under \\$1.1 billion were made](#) at a UN-led humanitarian pledging conference in Geneva.

“All commitments made during the pledging conference need to materialize at once,” stressed Mr. McGoldrick in the statement, adding: “While Yemen awaits for peace, humanitarian action is saving lives every day across the entire country.”