

Wenzhou buildings collapse, many buried

An unknown number of people were buried in the debris after three residential buildings collapsed Thursday morning in Wenzhou, a rich industrial city in east China's Zhejiang Province.

The buildings were about five stories tall and were inhabited with people, sources with the local government said.

The accidents happened at around 8 a.m. in Baizhangji township of Wencheng county.

Rescue work is going on.

Why is the EU isolated?

Mr Tusk's cry of desperation portrays an EU surrounded by hostile forces, and in danger of subversion from within. He sees Russia as an enemy of the EU. He condemns Islamic terrorism and is clearly worried about several states to the south across the Mediterranean. He dislikes the policy of the new President of the USA. He makes no secret of his worries about China. In other words, he sees the EU as a lonely group of states in a largely hostile world, where the world's three largest military powers are not in sympathy with the EU or are hostile to it.

What is his remedy? He wants the EU to arm itself and undertake more common defence, with increased defence spending. There is no mention of NATO, Europe's principal security guarantor. He wants to accelerate European union, to create a more cohesive force in the world with a united foreign policy.

He should ask himself how has the EU got itself into such an impasse with the world's great powers?

The EU has helped create the rift with Russia. The EU claims cause against Russia for Russia's illegal military intervention in Crimea. Russia points out the EU helped destabilise the elected President of Ukraine who was just about keeping Ukraine together, to back a new President with a pro EU agenda that the Russian speakers in the country did not support. At the very least we in the west must concede that the EU helped create the conditions for an opportunistic move into Crimea by Russia. Since then the EU has wished to keep up a tough rhetoric against Russia, and has imposed sanctions. I am no supporter of Russian aggression, but I do want the EU to recognise the need to live alongside Russia and to be careful about the interventions it makes

in territories where Russia has influence. Working with Russia in the Middle East is now important given the position Russia has militarily and diplomatically in the region, as successive US Presidents have recognised.

The EU also needs to understand that the surest defence the EU has is from NATO, with the explicit military guarantee for all members.

The EU now seems to want to assert itself against China, though the cause and reason is less clear than with Russia. The EU regularly condemns Islamic terrorism, but is challenged when it comes to defining which rebels and forces on the ground in the complex Middle Eastern civil and religious wars qualify as terrorists and which can be defeated by EU action. In recent days the EU has been keen to indulge in a war of words against the new Trump Presidency, without listening to the concerns of the new Administration in Washington about trade, currencies and migration.

The overriding pessimism of Mr Tusk is sad to read. The lack of any positive forward looking agenda to engage with our ally the USA, or with the powers of China, Russia and the Middle East goes a long way to explaining the EU's loneliness. If all you offer is fear mixed with the odd threat it is not surprising the EU lacks friends. It was that combination which helped lose the EU one of its major financial contributors, the UK.

[Low and middle income countries bear disproportionate burden of cervical cancer – UN agency](#)

2 February 2017 – Noting that cervical cancer kills more than 250,000 women every year and that 85 per cent of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, the United Nations health agency underlined the importance of vaccinating girls against the cancer-causing virus and screening programmes to detect and treat precancerous lesions.

The agency also stressed the need to overcome cultural norms and dispel gender biases that are challenging the effectiveness of vaccination initiatives.

“In high-income countries, widespread screening has radically reversed the trends, and cervical cancer incidence and mortality have declined sharply [with] the impact of vaccination in reducing human papillomavirus (HPV)-related diseases is already being documented,” said the UN World Health Organization (WHO)'s International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in a news release.

“But in developing countries, where the burden of the disease is heaviest, cervical cancer control is often not seen as a priority within

tight health budgets, and women are not given life-saving access to adequate prevention and treatment,” it added.

While HPV vaccination has shown it can protect women from chronic infection caused by HPV16 and HPV18 (the two main types of the virus known to cause cervical cancer), vaccination programmes have not been implemented nationally in many low- and middle-income countries in Asia and Africa.

As a result, women are left vulnerable to the risk of developing cervical disease, which – given the inadequacy of screening and treatment services in many countries – is likely to go untreated.

“Unless we act rapidly, thousands of women will develop cervical cancer because they are not vaccinated,” says Rolando Herrero, head of Early Detection and Prevention Section at the IARC.

“In countries where early detection and screening are difficult to implement due to a lack of proper infrastructure, vaccination has a vital role to play in protecting women from cervical cancer,” he added, urging government commitment to implement HPV vaccination regimes.

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Head of IASC's Screening Group Dr. Sankaranarayanan

Also, in some regions, cultural norms and fear that “vaccination would promote sexual activity” is also a barrier in vaccinating young girls as are low schooling rates, which can limit the reach of immunization programmes, which often take place in schools.

On top of these hurdles, “gender bias” and perception that “women are a less important population to invest in” in many countries is making matters much worse.

“It is vital that governments address these barriers,” said Rengaswamy Sankaranarayanan, Special Advisor on Cancer Control and Head of IARC's Screening Group, stressing: “In many countries, women are often the only breadwinners, and therefore protecting them is of huge human and economic importance.”

Drawing attention to the need to make vaccines cheaper, particularly for the development world, to step up vaccination coverage, IARC Director Christopher Wild stressed: “Competition between potentially new and existing vaccine manufacturers is urgently needed in order to reduce costs and enable countries to better protect women against cervical cancer.”

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. It is responsible to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. It is also involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and dissemination of scientific

information on the disease.

[EU should seek common approach to address tragic loss of life on Mediterranean – UN agencies](#)

2 February 2017 – Ahead of a meeting of the European Council, the United Nations refugee and migration agencies have called on European leaders to take “decisive action” to save lives of migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea along its central route in hopes of a better future.

Ahead of a meeting of the European Council, the United Nations refugee and migration agencies have called on European leaders to take “decisive action” to save lives of migrants and refugees attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea along its central route in hopes of a better future.

“To better protect refugees and migrants, we need a strong European Union that is engaged beyond its borders to protect, assist and help find solutions for people in need,” said the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in a joint statement today.

Such efforts, they noted, should include building capacity to save lives at sea or on land, strengthening the rule of law and fighting against criminal networks.

The agencies also expressed hope that the meeting, to be held tomorrow, will also help move towards the adoption of a common approach to migration by the European Union.

They also appealed for addressing “deplorable conditions” for refugees and migrants in Libya and called for concerted efforts to ensure that sustainable migration and asylum systems are established in the country and in neighbouring countries.

“This should include a significant expansion of opportunities for safe pathways such as resettlement and humanitarian admission, among others, to avoid dangerous journeys,” the noted, urging to shift away from migration management based on “automatic detention of refugees and migrants.”

In this context, UNHCR and IOM underlined the need for creating proper reception services and building capacity to register new arrivals, support the voluntary return of migrants, process asylum claims and offer solutions

to refugees.

Further, stating that they, together with partners on the ground, have made tremendous effort to deliver basic protection not only to refugees and migrants but also to affected local populations, which in some places are also in dire need of assistance, the UN agencies, however, expressed worry that security constraints continued to hinder their efforts.

They also outlined that given the current context, it is not appropriate to consider Libya a safe third country nor to establish extraterritorial processing of asylum-seekers in North Africa.

Expressing hope that humane solutions can be found end the suffering of thousands of migrants and refugees in Libya and across the region, the agencies added: We stand ready to assist and enhance our engagement, conditions permitting.

Last year, 2016, was the worst year in terms of people perishing while attempting to cross the Mediterranean Sea. According to preliminary figures from UNHCR, of the 363,348 people who crossed the sea, 5,079 people almost 1 in 72 were lost (died or missing).

[Dangerous conditions in Ukraine after heavy fighting shuts down power, water – UNICEF](#)

2 February 2017 – More than 2,500 children in the Donetsk region of Ukraine are without heat, electricity or water, prompting the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to call for an end to fighting in the area so that the infrastructure can be repaired.

Intense fighting in the town of Avdiivka on 29 and 30 January disabled electricity and water, including the Donetsk Filtration Station and the backup reservoir.

With temperatures plummeting to 1 degree Fahrenheit (minus 17 degrees Celsius), the situation could have catastrophic consequences for the residents of Avdiivka, according to a statement from UNICEF.

The UN agency's representative in Ukraine also voiced concern about the fighting, which has also caused six schools and four kindergartens in the area to shut down.

Not only are the lives of thousands of children in Avdiivka, and on all sides of the conflict, at risk, but to make matters worse, the lack of water

and electricity means that homes are becoming dangerously cold and health conditions deteriorating as we speak,” said Giovanna Barberis.

In addition to the 17,000 residents in Avdiivka, the non-functional filtration station supplied some 400,000 people in area with water.

“Water is now rationed and there is a possibility that the piped household water supply will stop altogether,” UNICEF said.

The UN Security Council has also voiced concern about the fresh fighting. On 31 January, the Council issued a press statement saying its 15 members were gravely concerned about the situation in the country's eastern region and its severe impact on the local civilian population.