

## How are the EU and Turkish border fences and walls going?

Last year I drew attention to the big work programme highlighted on the EU website to strengthen Turkey's borders as part of its Visa Liberalisation programme with the EU. The officials wrote that they needed "ditch excavation, lighting, wire entanglement, trellis fence, road maintenance and construction and modular wall construction" along the extended Turkish border with Syria and Iraq. It would be good to have an update on how far they have got with their 900 km Syria/Turkey wall.

I raise it again because many in the EU are hostile to Mrs Trump's proposal to extend the already substantial USA/Mexico wall. I wonder why they apply different standards to this wall than to the ones the EU is helping finance and design closer to home. I invite proponents of the EU to tell us why they think these two walls are different, and why they support the Turkish one which is part of the EU/Turkey Agreement.

The EU approved border controls including ones along EU borders can incorporate watch towers, constant camera surveillance and plenty of "guards" to deal with any problems at crossing points. The 10th action point in the 72 point "Visa Liberalisation Roadmap" is to ensure sufficient well trained guards and surveillance equipment at crossing points. The 33rd point in the 72 point "Visa Liberalisation roadmap" agreed with Turkey by the EU is to "ensure effective expulsion of illegally residing 3rd country nationals."

If it is moral to oppose border walls and barriers in Mexico, surely it is similarly necessary to oppose them in Europe and Middle East?

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## UNICEF launches \$3.3 billion appeal to assist millions of children affected by conflict, disasters

31 January 2017 – Against the backdrop of ever increasing number of children driven from their homes due to conflict, disasters and climate change, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) today launched a \$3.3 billion appeal to provide emergency assistance in 48 countries around the globe.

"From Syria to Yemen and Iraq, from South Sudan to Nigeria, children are under direct attack, their homes, schools and communities in ruins, their hopes and futures hanging in the balance," noted the UN agency in a news release today.

“In total, almost one in four of the world’s children lives in a country affected by conflict or disaster,” it added.

UNICEF’s Humanitarian Action for Children sets out the agency’s 2017 appeal and its goals to provide children with access to safe water, nutrition, education, health and protection in some of the world’s worst conflicts and humanitarian emergencies.

The largest single component of the appeal (\$1.4 billion) is for children and families caught up in the conflict in Syria, which will soon enter its seventh year. This also includes Syrian refugees in neighbouring countries, such as Jordan where, according to estimates, almost half of all refugee families have a child who is a breadwinner.

With enough funding, UNICEF hopes to reach 81 million people, including 48 million children with access to safe water, nutrition, education, health and protection.



A 28-month-old child, who has been receiving treatment for malnutrition, having her mid-upper-arm circumference measured by a health worker at a health post in Ethiopia. (file) Photo: UNICEF/Ayene

#### ***‘Silent threat’ of malnutrition***

UNICEF is particularly concerned about another slow-burning threat – malnutrition.

“Malnutrition is a silent threat to millions of children,” said the agency’s Director of Emergency Programmes, Manuel Fontaine, adding:

“The damage it does can be irreversible, robbing children of their mental and physical potential. In its worst form, severe malnutrition can be deadly.”

The UN agency fears that an estimated 7.5 million children will face severe acute malnutrition across the majority of appeal countries, including almost half a million each in north east Nigeria and Yemen.

The situation is further complicated due to unavailability of accurate information in parts of the Lake Chad basin due to lack of access because of continuing activities of Boko Haram militants.

In Yemen, the worst affected areas include the capital, Sana’a, where 78 per cent of children are chronically malnourished. Furthermore, many other areas have also seen growing deprivation, from Hodeida in the west to Taiz and now Aden to the south.

UNICEF’s Yemen Representative, Meritzell Relano termed the situation for children in Yemen “catastrophic”, with at least 10 million in need of some form of humanitarian assistance.

“Children are dying of malnutrition, that is for sure [...] under-five mortality rate has increased to the point that we estimate that at least in 2016, 10,000 more children died of preventable diseases,” she said.



Children attend a class at a primary school at an IDP camp in Maiduguri, Borno State, north east Nigeria. There are nearly 2,000 children enrolled at the UNICEF supported school in the camp. Photo: UNICEF/Naftalin

### *Challenges great but not insurmountable*

The UN agency believes that as great as these challenges are, they're not insurmountable.

Thanks to donors, UNICEF saved lives every day in 2016, providing water to 13.6 million people, protection from measles to more than nine million children, education to over six million, and treatment for severe acute malnutrition to 2.2 million, in the first ten months of the year.

**AUDIO:** UNICEF seeks \$3.3 billion in emergency aid

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## [Clashes in north-eastern South Sudan halt UN migration agency's humanitarian work](#)

31 January 2017 – Thousands of people in need of aid in South Sudan's Upper Nile area will have to wait indefinitely, after fighting forced the United Nations migration agency to suspend humanitarian activities in the area.

“Violence in Upper Nile has once again hindered the ability of IOM and other relief agencies to provide assistance to populations seriously in need,” said the International Organization for Migration's (IOM) South Sudan Chief of Mission, William Barriga. “Civilians will undoubtedly suffer as sporadic fighting makes it more difficult for aid workers to deliver services.”

In addition to aid, the agency was in the process of registering people to receive supplies, when clashes between the Government and opposition forces forced everyone to evacuate. An estimated 2,000 to 3,000 people remained in line when the team was forced to flee.

According to IOM, clashes reached Wau Shilluk on 27 January, just as a 14-person team from the UN agency was about to resume registration. A partner

organization, which provides aid, was with UN agency at the time.

Wau Shilluk is located north-eastern South Sudan, across the White Nile River from Malakal town. Malakal was one of South Sudan's largest urban areas before the current crisis and home to more than 33,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) who are sheltering at the protection of civilians (PoC) site, said IOM.

The UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) yesterday condemned the latest fighting and urged all parties to protect civilians.

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## **National Entrepreneurship Awards 2016 Presented By Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh**

Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh presented the First National Entrepreneurship awards 2016 in New Delhi yesterday.

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## **New ship to serve in Sansha**



A new ship is seen at a dock in Sansha of south China's Hainan province, Jan. 30, 2017. The ship completed its maiden voyage on Monday from east China's Shanghai to Sansha where it will serve. The 32-meter vessel weighs 498 tonnes. It has endurance of 45 days and is able to resist gales with speed of more than 60 kilometers per hour, according to its captain Yin Minzeng. It was designed to help extinguish fires on the sea, tow vessels that lose power and assist law-enforcement vessels. In addition, it will provide supplies for islands of Sansha. (Xinhua/Dai Chao)

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Sansha City was established in 2012 to administer islets and reefs in the Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha islet groups as well as waters in this area.