

UN extends solidarity to flood-devastated Texas after record-shattering rainfall

29 August 2017 – The United Nations is reacting to the devastating images from Tropical Storm Harvey, which has affected an area the size of Spain in the southern United States, and which is likely to worsen in the coming hours as the rain continues.

Shocked at the images of Hurricane Harvey's devastation, Secretary-General António Guterres [said](#) in a Tweet.

The Secretary-General, who is currently in the Middle East on an official visit with Israeli and Palestinian authorities, added that his thoughts are with all the victims and the first responders.

The storm is presenting a "nightmare scenario" according to the UN World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and bringing "catastrophic and life-threatening" flooding.

Clare Nullis, a WMO spokesperson [told](#) journalists in Geneva that rivers are rising and the disaster is "far from over."

"Harvey has caused so much rainfall that the National Weather Service has had to update the colour charts on its graphics in order to effectively map it," Ms. Nullis said, "introducing a new colour category for rainfall totals above 30 inches or 76 centimetres."

Although the storm is no longer classified as a hurricane, it is moving slowly and generating heavy rainfall.

"The priority for now is to save people's lives and get them out of harm's way," said Ms. Nullis.

The UN disaster risk reduction office today [extended condolences](#) to the families and friends of the people killed, and said the destruction caused by Harvey is already in the millions of dollars.

"Hurricane Harvey has revealed how exposed even high-income countries are when building takes place on a grand scale along coastlines exposed to tropical storms. There is no doubt that along with failings in risk governance, climate change is intensifying the cocktail of man-made risk to an unprecedented degree," said UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Disaster Risk Reduction, Robert Glasser.

He noted the impact of displacement caused by flooding "the most common natural hazard" and stressed the importance of building outside of flood plains.