

Media Update

1 February 2017

United Nations

Secretary-General Statement

Statement by the UN Secretary-General on Refugees

On my way back from Ethiopia, the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa that for decades has been keeping its borders open to hundreds of thousands of refugees from its neighbours, many times in dramatic security situations, I want to state the following:

- Countries have the right, even the obligation, to responsibly manage their borders to avoid infiltration by members of terrorist organizations.
- This cannot be based on any form of discrimination related to religion, ethnicity or nationality because:
 - that is against the fundamental principles and values on which our societies are based;
 - that triggers widespread anxiety and anger that may facilitate the propaganda of the very terrorist organisations we all want to fight against;
 - blind measures, not based on solid intelligence, tend to be ineffective as they risk being bypassed by what are today sophisticated global terrorist movements.
- I am also particularly concerned by the decisions that around the world have been undermining the integrity of the international refugee protection regime. Refugees fleeing conflict and persecution are finding more and more borders closed and increasingly restricted access to the protection they need and are entitled to receive, according to international refugee law.

New York, 31 January 2017



OHCHR

Press Release

US travel ban: “New policy breaches Washington’s human rights obligations” – UN experts

GENEVA (1 February 2017) – A group of United Nations human rights experts today said that the Executive Order signed by US President Donald Trump on 27 January 2017 breaches the country’s international human rights obligations, which protect the principles of non-refoulement and non-discrimination based on race, nationality or religion.

The Presidential Executive Order bars all nationals from seven Muslim-majority countries -Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen- from entering the US for the next 90 days.

“Such an order is clearly discriminatory based on one’s nationality and leads to increased stigmatization of Muslim communities,” said the UN Special Rapporteurs on [migrants](#), François Crépeau; on [racism](#), Mutuma Ruteere; on [human rights and counter-terrorism](#), Ben Emmerson; on [torture](#), Nils Melzer; and on [freedom of religion](#), Ahmed Shaheed.

“The US recent policy on immigration also risks people being returned, without proper individual assessments and asylum procedures, to places in which they risk being subjected to torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, in direct contravention of international humanitarian and human rights laws which uphold the principle of non-refoulement,” they warned.

The Executive Order applies to those who come from these countries- whether or not they have valid visa documents or are in transit. It also affects those who have dual nationality, who either have a passport from one of those countries or are travelling from one of those countries. Those currently residing in the US may be able to fly to the US but entry is not guaranteed.

“This is deeply troubling, and we are additionally concerned that such persons travelling to the US will be subject to detention for an undefined



period of time and then ultimately deported,” the human rights experts said.

The Executive Order stops the entire US refugee programme for 120 days, indefinitely bans Syrian refugees, and halts the planned entry of more than 50,000 refugees in the US fiscal year 2017, which began in October 2016 and will end in September 2017.

“In the midst of the world’s greatest migration crisis since World War II, this is a significant setback for those who are obviously in need of international protection. The US must live up to its international obligations and provide protection for those fleeing persecution and conflicts,” the human rights experts stressed. “The US is also involved in conflicts such as those in Iraq and Syria and its responsibility must extend to offering refuge to those fleeing from the conflicts.”

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UNICEF

Press Release

UNICEF seeks \$3.3 billion in emergency assistance for 48 million children caught up in conflict and other crises

Malnutrition poses “silent threat” to children, agency’s 2017 appeal says

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 31 January 2017 – 48 million children living through some of the world’s worst conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies will benefit from UNICEF’s 2017 appeal, which was launched today.



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. In total, almost one in four of the world's children lives in a country affected by conflict or disaster.

“In country after country, war, natural disaster and climate change are driving ever more children from their homes, exposing them to violence, disease and exploitation,” said UNICEF Director of Emergency Programmes, Manuel Fontaine.

UNICEF's *Humanitarian Action for Children* sets out the agency's 2017 appeal totaling \$3.3 billion, and its goals in providing children with access to safe water, nutrition, education, health and protection in 48 countries across the globe.

An estimated 7.5 million children will face severe acute malnutrition across the majority of appeal countries, including almost half a million each in northeast Nigeria and Yemen.

“Malnutrition is a silent threat to millions of children,” said Fontaine. “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 largest single component of the appeal is for children and families caught up in the Syria conflict, soon to enter its seventh year. UNICEF is seeking a total of \$1.4 billion to support Syrian children inside Syria and those living as refugees in neighbouring countries.

In total, working alongside its partners, UNICEF's other priorities in 2017 are:

- Providing over 19 million people with access to safe water;
- Reaching 9.2 million children with formal or non-formal basic education;
- Immunizing 8.3 million children against measles;
- Providing psychosocial support to over two million children;
- Treating 3.1 million children with severe acute malnutrition.

In the first ten months of 2016, as a result of UNICEF's support:

- 13.6 million people had access to safe water;
- 9.4 million children were vaccinated against measles;
- 6.4 million children accessed some form of education;
- 2.2 million children were treated for severe acute malnutrition.



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Notes to Editors:

The Humanitarian Action for Children 2017 appeal can be found here:
www.unicef.org/HAC2017

Video and photos are available for download here:
<http://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AMZIF0Y3VA>

About UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children, everywhere.

For more information about UNICEF and its work for children, visit www.unicef.org.

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