

Media Update

18 July 2017

United Nations

Press Release

United Nations, diplomats and civil society commemorate Nelson Mandela Day with underprivileged children

Islamabad, 18 July 2017: Staff members of the United Nations in Pakistan, diplomats and civil society representatives celebrated Nelson Mandela Day with unprivileged children at the Society for the Protection of the Rights of Child in Islamabad.

Volunteers distributed gift bags to the children and engaged with them in fun and recreational activities like face painting, drawing and colouring. Children had also the opportunity to listen to the stories about the life and work of the Nelson Mandela, narrated in Urdu by the volunteers. After the story telling session, they participated in a food fair.

H.E Mpendulo Jele, the High Commissioner of South Africa, acknowledged the role of the UN Information Centre for celebrating Nelson Mandela Day in Pakistan, and said: "Today is Nelson Mandela's birthday and, in his memory, Madiba as we lovingly refer to him in South Africa, has asked the World to give up 67 minutes of their time on Nelson Mandela International Day doing something good for humanity and making a difference in the communities in which we live." He added: "In 2008, on his 90th birthday he called on leaders of all nations to change the world to a better place. He used the famous words "It's in your hands now". Today, as we celebrate Nelson Mandela Day we remain mindful of his words and of the great responsibility that he has left for us."

Vittorio Cammarota, Director, United Nations Information Centre said: "Nelson Mandela's lifelong engagement for children's right is an inspiration for all of us and for the generations to come. We are happy to pay tribute to



Mandela's legacy by sharing our time with unprivileged children.”

Sadia Hussain, Executive Director of SPARC, said: “There are an estimated 13,000 street children in Islamabad alone, whereas an estimated 1.2 to 1.5 million children are on the streets of Pakistan's major cities and urban locations. These children constitute the most vulnerable section of the society and are denied basic rights such as access to shelter, education and healthcare; all that, while being at risk of exploitation and trafficking”.

The event was organized by the UN Information Centre in partnership with the South African High Commission, the Society for the Protection of the Rights of Child and Loafology Baker and Café.

The theme for this year's Nelson Mandela Day is “Action Against Poverty”. the day commemorates the lifetime of service Nelson Mandela gave to South Africa and the world. It was launched on his birthday, 18 July, in 2009 via a unanimous decision by the UN General Assembly. It is more than a celebration of Mandela's life and legacy; it is a global movement to honor his life's work and to change the world for the better.

Background:

Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, politician and philanthropist, who served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999. He was a country's first black head of state and the first elected in a fully representative democratic election.

Nelson Mandela was awarded the World's Children's Prize 2005, and elected the WCP Decade Child Rights Hero 2009, for his lifelong struggle to free the children of South Africa from apartheid.

After 27 years in prison he became the first democratically elected president of South Africa. A country, where children of all the skin colours gained equal rights for the first time. Nelson continued to help South Africa's children and demands respect for their rights. He started his own children's foundation, the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (NMCF), which helps children whose parents have died of AIDS, street children, disabled children, and poor children. (#)

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Nelson Mandela International Day

Message of the Secretary-General

18 July 2017

Nelson Mandela continues to inspire the world through his example of courage and compassion, and his commitment to social justice and a culture of freedom and peace.

I had the honour of meeting Nelson Mandela several times, including during South Africa's transition. Each time, I was struck by his wisdom, his compassion, and above all, his humility.

One of the most important lessons we can learn from Nelson Mandela is that to make progress, we must look forward, however difficult that may be.

Nelson Mandela was known as prisoner 46664 for 18 years. But he never became a prisoner of his past. Sentenced to hard labour and solitary confinement on Robben Island, he rose above suffering and indignity to lead his country, and our world, to a brighter day.

He did not succumb to bitterness or personal animosity, but poured his formidable energy into realizing his vision of a peaceful, multi-ethnic, democratic South Africa.

Nelson Mandela once said a saint could be defined as a sinner who keeps on trying. That is a powerful message of hope, in a world riven with fear and cynicism. It is never too late to face the future, and try again.

Today, as we commemorate Nelson Mandela's lifetime of service, the best tribute we can pay this great man is not words or in ceremonies, but actions that improve our world.

Each of us can make a difference in promoting peace, human rights, sustainable development, and lives of dignity for all. Each of us can be inspired by Nelson Mandela's example, and by his famous words: It always seems impossible until it's done.

Let us all build on the legacy of Nelson Mandela.



UNODC

Media Advisory

Launch of GLO.ACT and public awareness campaign against 'trafficking in persons' and the 'smuggling of migrants'

When: 19 July 2017 at 10:30 hrs

Where: Crystal Ball Room, Marriott Hotel Islamabad

What: UNODC Pakistan will launch a Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT) on Wednesday, 19 July, at the Marriott Hotel in Islamabad. GLO.ACT is a four-year joint initiative by the European Union (EU) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The project, implemented in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), reaffirms that combatting human trafficking and migrant smuggling is of the highest importance for the EU and the United Nations as a whole and UNODC as custodian of relevant convention of transnational organised crime which incorporates protocols of human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Who: The launching ceremony will take place in the presence of His Excellency Mr. Jean-François Cautain, Ambassador of the European Union to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Her Excellency Ms. Margaret Adamson, High Commissioner Australian High Commission, His Excellency Mr. David Hale, Ambassador of the United States of America as well as senior government representatives from provincial line departments, provincial police, academia, media and civil society.

We cordially invite you/or your correspondents to attend the launch of GLO.ACT and Public Awareness Campaign against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants on Wednesday 19th July 2017, at Crystal Ball Room, Marriott Hotel Islamabad, at 10:30 hrs.

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UNICEF

Press Releases

Mediterranean rescue vessels must not be prevented from saving refugee and migrant children at sea - UNICEF

Italy needs more regional and global support for its efforts to help growing number of refugees and migrants

NEW YORK/GENEVA, 17 July 2017 – With thousands of refugees and migrants being pulled from the Mediterranean Sea each week, UNICEF is warning that a proposed code of conduct for NGOs carrying out search and rescue missions could put many lives at risk – especially those of children.

The new code being proposed by Italian authorities to crack down on trafficking and smuggling prioritizes law enforcement, while limiting the movement and operations of NGO rescue vessels in the Central Mediterranean – changes which could inadvertently hinder rescues and cause deaths.

“Since the start of the migration crisis, Italy has made incredible efforts to save refugees and migrants stranded at sea and provide support to those who have reached its shores,” said UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Justin Forsyth.

“Italy should be applauded for this. At the same time, law enforcement and security objectives – no matter how justifiable – must not inadvertently prevent lifesaving work to save children from drowning.”

Under the proposed code, NGO vessels would be prevented from entering Libyan waters to conduct rescues and barred from making phone calls or firing flares to signal their location to migrant boats in distress. The code would also allow for police and security officials to board NGO vessels, potentially compromising NGO independence, and includes a plan whereby children are at greater risk of being returned to Libya without any protection



measures in place, exposing them to the very deprivations, harm and grave violations that caused them to flee in the first place.

Nearly 90,000 refugees and migrants – 15 per cent of whom are children – have arrived in Italy by sea so far this year. This is 70,000 more arrivals than for all the other EU countries in the Mediterranean combined. Between January and June 2017 UNICEF-supported teams on rescue boats identified 2,343 children at risk and provided nearly 1,000 women and children with hygiene items and other basic supplies on the boats.

“Italy continues to shoulder a disproportionate share of the burden for the care and support of refugees and migrants across the EU,” said Forsyth. “But restrictions on sea rescues or sending refugee children back to Libya are not solutions. The rest of the EU and international community more broadly must step up to help Italy, by supporting rescue missions, allowing boats to disembark and doing the right thing for children uprooted.”

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Note to editors:

Between January and June 2017, UNICEF-supported teams on rescue boats identified 2,343 children at risk and provided nearly 1,000 women and children with hygiene items and other basic supplies on the boats.

At the recent G20 and G7 summits, UNICEF urged governments to take action to protect child refugees and migrant as part of its six-point plan of Action for Children Uprooted which calls for the protection of every child uprooted by war, violence and poverty. The plan calls on governments to:

1. Protect child refugees and migrants, particularly unaccompanied children, from exploitation and violence;
2. End the detention of children seeking refugee status or migrating, by introducing a range of practical alternatives;
3. Keep families together as the best way to protect children and give children legal status;
4. Keep all refugee and migrant children learning and give them access to health and other quality services;
5. Press for action on the underlying causes of large scale movements of refugees and migrants;
6. Promote measures to combat xenophobia, discrimination and marginalization in countries of transit and destination.

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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. Follow UNICEF on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)

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Children increasingly targeted in Central African Republic violence

Growing reports of child rights violations amid renewed fighting: UNICEF

BANGUI/DAKAR/NEW YORK/GENEVA, 18 July 2017 – Months of renewed fighting in the Central African Republic (CAR) have led to an increasing number of violent acts committed against children, including murders, abductions, rape and recruitment into armed groups – UNICEF warned today.

The UN children’s agency said that the true number of atrocities suffered by children over the past three months in CAR is almost certain to be much higher than officially reported figures because humanitarian access in many areas has been severely limited by insecurity. These conditions have greatly reduced the ability of aid workers to report incidents and assist victims. Nevertheless, information gathered by UNICEF since May indicates that armed groups are frequently targeting children during attacks on villages or towns.

“Children in CAR have suffered disproportionately from the waves of violence that have swept the country over the past three years,” said Christine Muhigana, UNICEF Representative in the Central African Republic. “Armed groups and parties to the conflict must cease these flagrant violations of children’s rights and make every effort to keep children safe.”

In several incidents in Bria (Eastern CAR), 14 girls aged 9 to 16 were raped by members of armed groups during the recent outbreaks of violence in May and June. These assaults occurred when the girls left IDP sites to travel home for personal belongings.

Many crimes of sexual violence continue to go unreported.

In another incident in Bangassou (South East CAR) five children aged 2 to 16 were brutally killed in May while attempting to cross the river to seek refuge in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. During the same month, in a village near Berberati, eight boys aged 13 to 17 were abducted – one has since been killed, while the kidnappers demanded ransom to free the others.

In addition to these brutal crimes, the intensification of violent conflict and related operations by armed groups has resulted in thousands of children being denied their most basic rights to education and health. It is estimated that a total of 94,000 primary school children could not take their end of year examinations because of school closures due to insecurity. Meanwhile, looting by armed groups has caused many health centres to close, stopping essential care and routine immunization for children.

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