

## More than \$350 million pledged for refugees in Uganda; 'A good start, we cannot stop,' says UN chief

23 June 2017 – A 'Solidarity Summit' for refugees hosted by Uganda has raised some \$358 million in pledges, the United Nations announced today.

UN [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres told reporters in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, that it was a 'good starting point' although the international conference was looking to raise \$2 billion.

In just the past year, the overall refugee population in Uganda has more than doubled, largely due to an influx of desperate people fleeing violence and instability in South Sudan from 500,000 to more than 1.25 million making the East African country host to the world's fastest growing refugee emergency.

Convened by President Yoweri Museveni and the UN Secretary-General, the Summit sought to rally international support for refugees and host communities in the form of donations, investments and relevant programmes, over the next four years.

Mr. Guterres noted that the World Bank and the African Development Bank had promised 'innovative funding' for projects involving both refugees and the local communities.

'We cannot stop,' he underscored, recalling that several of the countries agreed to put forward their pledges in the weeks to come.

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## Security 'number one concern' of displaced Iraqis seeking to return home – UN study

23 June 2017 – With three million Iraqis remaining internally displaced across the country, the United Nations migration agency today published findings of a study showing that the decision to return or remain displaced depends largely on how close their home is to the frontline of conflict.

The study, titled [Obstacles to Return in Retaken Areas of Iraq](#), commissioned

by the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)), has surveyed more than 1.7 million Iraqis who opted to return, posing questions as to the factors that motivate, or inhibit, Iraqis from returning to their areas of origin.

The qualitative and quantitative data collection was carried out in eight sub-districts the Government has recently retaken from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da'esh).

Security in the areas of origin topped all other factors in influencing the decision to return home or remain displaced, with proximity to the frontline and perceived instability in the place of origin remaining the most relevant obstacle for return, according to the study.

Speaking to reporters at the regular bi-weekly news briefing in Geneva, IOM spokesperson Joel Millman said security is the number one concern. If they feel fighting is still going on or that the people who had destroyed their homes are still at large in the community that is a major deterrent.

Feelings of trust towards the security actors in control of the areas of origin promotes a higher number of returns, while fear of security actors in the place of origin is a strong drawback and reinforces the perceived advantage of staying in displacement, the study finds.

Fear of reprisal back home is a concern for more than 30 per cent of all internally displaced persons (IDPs) interviewed. However, that perception is much lower among interviewed returnees, at 10 per cent.

The data suggest that damage to housing does not constitute an obstacle to return, although the presence of actors whom IDPs hold responsible for the damage inflicted in a given location is, noted IOM.

Livelihood options and previous or current employment status also play an important role in influencing the decision to return. IDPs who have jobs in the location of displacement are less inclined to return home. By contrast, those who are unemployed appear to be more likely to return to seek new opportunities.

The study shows that almost a quarter of interviewed IDPs who decided to return were prevented from doing so, mostly by delays in processing their documentation, or by being stopped at checkpoints on the way back to their place of origin.

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[\*\*UN chief welcomes deployment of\*\*](#)

## regional force to combat terrorism in the Sahel

23 June 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres has welcomed the deployment by the so-called Group of Five (G5) – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger – of a joint force to tackle the threat of terrorism and organized crime in the Sahel region.

In a statement issued late last night by his spokesman, the Secretary-General welcomed the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 2359 (2017), which created the joint task force.

Mr. Guterres reiterated the UN's commitment, working closely with the African Union (AU) and other partners, to do its utmost [to help mobilise adequate resources](#) for the attainment of the objectives of the Force as agreed by the leaders of the G5 and endorsed by the AU Peace and Security Council.

The unanimous adoption of the resolution on Wednesday coincided with the second anniversary of the 2015 Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali. The agreement, signed on 20 June following Algeria-led mediation, included political and institutional reforms, and those relating to defence and security. It also encompasses humanitarian, economic and legal aspects.

In his statement, Mr. Guterres welcomed the important progress made by the Government and the groups, and stressed the need for expeditious progress on the remaining aspects of the agreement for sustaining peace in Mali and the region.

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## UN opens international probe into alleged abuses in DR Congo's Kasai provinces

23 June 2017 – The United Nations today opened an international investigation into alleged killings, mutilations and destruction of entire villages in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's restive Kasai provinces.

The UN Human Rights Council, comprised of 47 countries, adopted the resolution by consensus during a meeting earlier today in Geneva.

The victims – those who have been killed, maimed, subjected to terrible violence and forced from their homes – deserve justice,

said UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, who has been called on to appoint a team of international experts to carry out the investigation.

In a statement, Mr. Zeid, who has repeatedly called for a probe, said the creation of the investigation is [a step forward in identifying the perpetrators of gross violations and bringing them to justice](#).

His office said it expects and counts on [the full cooperation of the authorities](#) including [unfettered access to all sites, files, people and places](#).

He added that the team will conduct investigations [in a fully independent manner, in accordance with international standards](#).

Addressing the Council on Tuesday, Mr. Zeid recounted chilling details of apparent ethnic violence that included mutilated babies and fetuses.

Violence flared up in the DRC's Kasai regions in August 2016, when a customary chief was killed by Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC), as DRC's armed forces are known. The Kamuina Nsapu militia (named after the chief) then set about avenging the killing, committing widespread atrocities as well as recruiting children into its ranks.

The gravity of the situation was further underscored by the discovery in April of forty-two mass graves by Mr. Zeid's office ([OHCHR](#)) and the UN mission in the country, known by its French acronym, MONUSCO.

Since the start of the violence, more than 1.3 million people have since been displaced within the country as well as thousands forced to flee across its borders.

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## [In Uganda, UN chief meets with South Sudanese refugees, urges world to show solidarity](#)

22 June 2017 – With Uganda hosting almost one million South Sudanese refugees [as sisters and brothers and sharing with them their land and everything they have](#), [United Nations Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today urged the international community to show solidarity with those that had fled their homes, as well as with the Ugandan Government and people.

[In a world where so many people are selfishly closing their doors, closing their borders, not allowing refugees to come, this example deserves praise \[and\] admiration from the whole international community](#), Mr.

Guterres told reporters at the Imvepi Refugee Reception Centre in the Arua district of northern Uganda.

Imvepi is the first stop for many South Sudanese refugees once they cross the border into Uganda. The camp, which opened in February this year, is already filling up; hosting some 120,000 refugees, mostly women and children, fleeing violence and instability in the neighbouring country.

In just the past year, the overall refugee population in Uganda has more than doubled – from 500,000 to more than 1.25 million – making the East African country host to the world’s fastest growing refugee emergency.

The UN chief pointed out that tomorrow, the international community would have the opportunity to express its solidarity, – responding to our appeal for massive financial support, both for humanitarian aid for the refugees, but also for the investments necessary for the education system, the health system, the infrastructure, the [local] environment, to be able to cope with this enormous challenge.

Mr. Guterres was referring to the ‘Solidarity Summit,’ which opened today in the Ugandan capital, Kampala, and is expected to wrap up tomorrow. Co-hosted by Uganda and the UN, the event aims to rally international support for refugees and host communities in the form of donations, investments and innovative programmes.



Secretary-General António Guterres speaks to media in the Imvepi refugee camp in Uganda. UN Photo/Mark Garten



UN chief meets South Sudan refugees in the camp who are awaiting relocation. UN Photo/Mark Garten



Mr. Guterres and David Beasley, Executive Director of the World Food Programme, serve food at the Imvepi Camp reception area for the newly arrived refugees. UN Photo/Mark Garten



Secretary-General António Guterres and Ruhakana Rugunda, Prime Minister of Uganda, speak with host community representatives on issues relating to the refugee situation. UN Photo/Mark Garten



The 'Solidarity Summit,' in the Ugandan capital of Kampala aims to rally international support for refugees and host communities in the form of donations, investments and innovative programmes. UN Photo/Mark Garten



“Peace in South Sudan is a must for these people to be able to have a future,” said the Secretary-General. UN Photo/Mark Garten

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“At the same time, I cannot forget that twelve years ago I was here, in June, in this same place. I was [marking] World Refugee Day with South Sudanese refugees that were singing with joy because they were going back home soon,” said Mr. Guterres, who is the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees. He said he had later accompanied many of them across the border with the hope that the their new country would live in peace.

Unfortunately, that had not been the case. South Sudan’s leaders “do not deserve the people of their country,” said the Secretary-General, stressing that the South Sudanese people have been suffering enormously [in an] endless war.

“It is time for the war to end. It is time for all the leaders of South Sudan to understand that they need to stop this war,” he said, expressing gratitude for the efforts made by the Heads of State of the region, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and by the UN to help create the conditions for peace to be re-established.

“Peace in South Sudan is a must for these people to be able to have a future,” said the Secretary-General.