

HK recalls frozen meat imported from Brazilian plants

China's Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) decided to recall all the frozen and chilled meat and poultry imported from the 21 Brazilian plants that are under investigation for a massive meat adulteration scheme, the food safety authority said Friday.

The Center for Food Safety (CFS) of Hong Kong's Food and Environmental Hygiene Department made the decision "in view of a notification from the Brazilian authorities today that the country will extend its scope of export ban to the 21 plants which are under investigation," it said.

According to information gathered by the CFS so far, among the 21 plants, six of them were involved in the import licenses issued by the CFS in the past six weeks. The CFS will liaise with local importers to follow up on the recall, it said.

The Brazilian police uncovered last week a massive meat adulteration scheme involving some of the country's largest meat producers. According to the police, the adulterated meat was sold in the domestic market as well as exported. The Brazilian authorities later imposed an export ban on 21 plants.

The CFS announce Tuesday an import ban on all the frozen and chilled meat and poultry from Brazil as a "precautionary measure."

It said Friday that the temporary import suspension will be maintained. Once the Brazilian authorities provide more detailed information, the CFS will conduct further risk assessment and suitably review its follow-up actions, including narrowing the scope of the import ban.

As for meat and poultry that has been shipped from Brazil prior to the import ban but has not yet arrived in Hong Kong, the CFS will also make special arrangements, marking and sealing the products upon their arrival for proper handling after the completion of the relevant investigation.

Ko Wing-man, secretary for food and health of the Hong Kong SAR government, said Friday that the recall is with an immediate effect, calling on meat importers and dealers in Hong Kong to cooperate with the CFS to reassure consumers.

"We are keeping in close contact with the Consulate General of Brazil in Hong Kong," Ko said, adding that once the Brazilian authorities confirm the scandal only involves the 21 plants, the scope of Hong Kong's import ban could be narrowed down.

[10 dead in central China mine accidents](#)

A pair of accidents at two neighboring gold mines in central China's Henan Province killed 10 people Friday, local authorities said early Saturday.

Thick smoke engulfed a pit at Qinling gold mine of China National Gold Group in Lingbao City at 10:36 a.m. Friday, trapping 12 workers and six management staff, the press office of the city committee of the Communist Party of China said in a statement.

It said rescuers retrieved seven dead bodies in the pit Friday night. Of the 10 people who were found and sent to hospital, one failed to respond to emergency treatment and the other nine were recuperating.

One of the trapped workers remained missing as of Saturday morning. But search and rescue had to be halted in the pit, where carbon monoxide density was extremely high and visibility was less than 1 meter, the city's emergency response office said.

It said rescuers would use high-tech devices to locate the missing worker before search and rescue resumed.

A similar accident was reported in a neighboring gold pit at 3 p.m. Friday, the provincial work safety administration said Saturday.

Of the six workers trapped, four were rescued at 5:30 p.m. and the other two were found dead later in the evening.

The administration has launched an investigation.

[International efforts towards Middle East peace must be matched by steps on the ground – UN envoy](#)

24 March 2017 – Noting that international engagement on reviving the Middle East peace process over the last three months reconfirmed the consensus that the two-state solution is the only means of realizing the national aspirations of both peoples a senior United Nations official called for continued expansion of the momentum into a concrete vision to end the wider conflict.

“Shaping a credible political horizon through reviving engagement between the parties with intensified international and regional support is essential to advancing this goal,” Nickolay Mladenov, the UN Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, told the Security Council today.

In his briefing, the Mr. Mladenov highlighted that the recent increase in rockets fires from Gaza towards Israel was a worrying development and said that such potentially lethal provocations are unnecessary, dangerous and risk devastating escalation.

At the same, he also called on Israel to do more to improve the daily lives of the Palestinians and said that introduction of polices that increase Palestinian civil authority, support Palestinian development and preserve the prospect of a two-state solution, in line with the recommendations of the Middle East Quartet, remained essential.

He also spoke of the general situation over the past few months as well as detailed specific instances that had the potential to escalate the situation.

There had been a marked increase in statements, announcements and decisions related to construction and expansion, he continued.

Israel made two major announcements for a total of 5,500 housing units in settlements in Area C of the occupied West Bank, he said. Within three weeks, some 3,000 housing units had advanced through the planning process and more than 240 units had reached the final approval stage. Eighty per cent of the 4,000 settlement moves in the last three months were concentrated in and around major Israeli population centres close to the 1967 line, while some 20 per cent were in outlying locations deep inside the occupied West Bank.

“While the [Security Council] called upon both parties to refrain from acts of provocation, incitement, and inflammatory rhetoric, such actions continued during the reporting period,” he noted.

Turning to tangible actions that can help progress the peace process, the UN Special Coordinator underlined that it is essential that international efforts are accompanied by significant steps taken on the ground by the parties, to create an environment conducive to peace.

“The United Nations will continue to call on and work with the parties and all interested stakeholders to find a just, sustainable and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, based on the relevant Security Council resolutions,” he concluded.

[Building peace requires culture,](#)

education – message of historic UN Security Council resolution

24 March 2017 – Univocally condemning unlawful destruction and pillaging of cultural heritage such as religious sites and artefacts, the United Nations Security Council today adopted an historic resolution that is expected to strengthen protections for such heritage during armed conflicts where they are most vulnerable.

“The deliberate destruction of heritage [...] has become a tactic of war to tear societies over the long term, in a strategy of cultural cleansing,” said Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) following the resolution’s adoption.

“This is why defending cultural heritage is more than a cultural issue, it is a security imperative, inseparable from that of defending human lives,” she added.

Today’s briefing by Ms. Bokova to the Security Council was the first time a head of UNESCO has been invited in that capacity.

In her briefing, she explained that since the adoption of Resolution 2199 (in 2015), which prohibits trade in cultural property from Iraq and Syria, efforts were well-underway to disrupt terrorist financing through the illicit trafficking of antiquities.

“Together, UNESCO, INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), customs services, the private sector and museums are all bolstering cooperation, coordinating new action,” she noted.



Irina Bokova, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), addresses the Security Council. UN Photo/Evan Schneider

Through the newly-adopted resolution, the Security Council also underlined that such destruction can hamper post-conflict reconciliation, undermine economic and cultural development and, that, in certain conditions, could constitute a war crime.

“Weapons are not enough to defeat violent extremism. Building peace requires culture also; it requires education, prevention, and the transmission of heritage,” added Ms. Bokova.

“This is the message of this historic resolution,” she stated.

Need for supply chain integrity and stopping illicit trade of cultural property

Also today, the top UN political official said that in addition to making every effort to implement the international legal and normative framework on protection of culture, as well as strengthen international cooperation, a response was needed from global criminal justice to prevent trafficking in cultural property by disrupting organized criminal and terrorist networks.



The Security Council unanimously adopts resolution 2347 (2017), condemning the unlawful destruction of cultural heritage in the context of armed conflicts, notably by terrorist groups. UN Photo/Manuel Elias

“We need to put a stronger focus on investigation, cross-border cooperation and exchange of information, and on bringing in private and public sector partners, including dealers and the tourism sector, to promote supply chain integrity and stop the illicit trade and sale of cultural property.”

Yury Fedotov, the Executive Director of UNODC also welcomed the resolution’s emphasis on international cooperation in crime prevention and criminal justice responses to counter trafficking in cultural property.

“The resolution [...] addresses the vital issue of trafficking in cultural property as a source of terrorism financing, and also sets out ways of protecting cultural heritage during armed conflict where it is most vulnerable,” he said, noting that it strengthened the international community’s ability to tackle the issue and help acts that fund terrorism, and enable yet more destruction and looting of cultural sites and archaeological treasures.

Also speaking at the Security Council, Commander Fabrizio Parulli of the Carabinieri Italiani (the national gendarmerie of Italy) and the UNESCO Unite4Heritage task force shared the latest data on illicit trafficking, and said that over the course of last year, 800,000 artefacts had been seized by Italian forces in the fight against the financing of criminal activities.

AUDIO: The destruction of cultural heritage by terrorists, described as “cultural cleansing” by Irina Bokova, the Director-General of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), is a war crime.

[Press release: Privy Council appointment: Tobias Ellwood MP and Ben](#)

Wallace MP

The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Tobias Ellwood MP and Ben Wallace MP as members of the Privy Council.

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