**UNICEF OPSCEN Brief - Thursday, 7 August 2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [GENERAL](#GENERAL) | **Across Regions** | US to spend up to $550 mln on African rapid response forces |
| [CEE/CIS](#CEECIS) | **Across CEE/CIS** | Tension escalates on Azerbaijani-Armenian border |
|  |  | Azerbaijani continued to violate cease-fire on Armenia border |
|  |  | NATO fears Ukraine invasion as Russia masses troops; Moscow restricts Western imports |
|  |  | Flooding hits Serbia and Bosnia again |
|  |  | Moldova asks Russia to withdraw troops |
|  | **Ukraine** | Danger increasing in east, warns UN |
|  |  | Shelling kills three civilians in Donetsk |
| [EAP](#EAP) | **Myanmar** | Nearly 5M sign up for changing charter |
|  | **Cambodia** | Tribunal convicts Khmer Rouge leaders |
| [ESA](#ESA) | **Burundi** | Flood victims need more help |
|  | **South Sudan** | Violence puts country close to catastrophe - UN |
|  |  | UN evacuates staff, aid workers |
| [LAC](#LAC) | **Colombia** | Court bars rebels guilty of war crimes from public office |
|  | **Guatemala** | Suspected children migrant traffickers arrested |
| [MENA](#MENA) | **Across MENA** | At least 100 Syrians dead or injured in Arsal |
|  | **Iraq** | Government seeks aid for thousands trapped – UNICEF mention |
|  |  | Christians flee as town taken |
|  | **Lebanon** | Army surrounds border town, evacuates refugees |
|  |  | Bomb goes off in Tripoli, kills one |
|  | **Libya** | Authorities call for UN-supervised ceasefire |
|  | **Saudi Arabia** | Suspected Ebola victim dies |
|  |  | Authorities ban brides from 4 countries |
|  | **State of Palestine/Israel** | Mediators race against clock to extend Gaza truce |
|  | **Sudan** | Controversial elections to be held in April |
|  | **Syria** | Two Italian aid workers kidnapped in Aleppo |
|  |  | Damascus shelling kills 16, wounds dozens |
|  | **Yemen** | 18 'Qaeda' gunmen, 7 soldiers killed in clashes |
| [SA](#SA) | **Across SA** | Pakistan Security Forces arrest Indian border guard |
|  | **Afghanistan** | 'Insider attack' leaves seven dead |
|  | **India** | Bill to try minors as adults after Delhi gang rape |
| [WCA](#WCA) | **Across WCA** | Healthcare systems reel as Ebola toll hits 932 |
|  |  | Suspected Boko Haram raid kills 10 in Cameroon |
|  | **Cameroon** | Cholera surges in country – UNICEF mention |
|  |  | Boko Haram-linked militants kill 10 in northern Cameroon |
|  | **DR Congo** | Opposition leader wrongfully jailed: lawyer |
|  | **Liberia** | President declares 'State of Emergency' amid Ebola outbreak |
|  | **Nigeria** | 'Dozens' killed in Boko Haram attack in northeast |

GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**US to spend up to $550 mln on African rapid response forces**

The US will announce plans to spend $110 million a year over the next three to five years to help African nations develop peacekeeping forces that can be rapidly deployed to head off militant threats and other crises, an Obama administration official said. President Obama is expected to unveil the program during the third day of a summit of African heads of state in Washington, along with another US plan to spend an initial $65 million to bolster security institutions in Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Tunisia, the official said. The US would partner with Senegal, Ghana, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda to develop rapid response forces. Those forces would be ready to deploy as part of UN or AU missions, the official said.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/nigeriaNews/idAFL2N0QC1UE20140806**](http://af.reuters.com/article/nigeriaNews/idAFL2N0QC1UE20140806)

CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Tension escalates on Azerbaijani-Armenian border**

An Azerbaijani soldier and two children have been injured in border clashes with Armenian forces on Wednesday, according to Azeri news agency APA. The Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense stated that Armenian soldiers violated a ceasefire for the 99th time by opening fire on the Azeri area in the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh enclave and other provinces in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani army in a move to shield against fire from Armenian armed forces have begun digging ditches and constructing soil barricades. Azerbaijan also said it will shoot down any military plane that attempts to breach its national air zone, said the country's defense ministry on Wednesday. According to a statement issued by the ministry, the Azerbaijani air zone was under the control of the country's air forces and they dismissed reports that claimed "Armenian warplanes are flying over the Azerbaijani border."

**AFP -** [**http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/putin-to-tackle-threat-of-karabakh-war-with-leaders-of-armenia-azerbaijan.aspx?pageID=238&nID=70059&NewsCatID=351**](http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/putin-to-tackle-threat-of-karabakh-war-with-leaders-of-armenia-azerbaijan.aspx?pageID=238&nID=70059&NewsCatID=351)

**WB -** [**http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/142027/azerbaijani-soldier-two-children-hurt-by-armenian-gunfire**](http://www.worldbulletin.net/news/142027/azerbaijani-soldier-two-children-hurt-by-armenian-gunfire)

**Azerbaijani continued to violate cease-fire on Armenia border**

On 6-7 August Azerbaijani side continued to violate cease-fire regime on Armenia-Azerbaijan border, shelling from different types of weapons, including large-caliber weapons. During August 5-6, Azerbaijani side violated ceasefire 56 times, 7,175 shots were fired, Armenian Defense Ministry said in a statement. Armenian armed forces opened retaliatory fire in 28 cases. On August 6-7 and in the morning of Thursday ceasefire was violated 39 times. Over 546 shots were fired in the direction of Armenian positions. Armenian armed forces opened retaliatory fire in 8 cases. No casualties from the Armenian side have been reported. The Armenian Armed Forces continued to maintain control of the border, to strictly respect ceasefire, and to take retaliatory actions only in case of targeted violations by the opposing side.

**Armenia News -** [**http://news.am/eng/news/222868.html**](http://news.am/eng/news/222868.html)

**NATO fears Ukraine invasion as Russia masses troops; Moscow restricts Western imports**

Russia has massed around 20,000 combat-ready troops on Ukraine's border and could use the pretext of a humanitarian mission to invade, NATO said on Wednesday, its starkest warning yet that Moscow could soon mount a ground assault against its neighbor. President Vladimir Putin announced Moscow's biggest economic response to Western sanctions, launching a tit-for-tat trade war by ordering his government to restrict imports of food from countries that have imposed sanctions on Russia. With fighting escalating and rebels losing ground in the weeks since a Malaysian airliner was shot down over separatist-held territory, Russia has announced military exercises this week in the border region.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28687172**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28687172)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-ukraine-crisis-idUSKBN0G61K220140806**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-ukraine-crisis-idUSKBN0G61K220140806)

**Flooding hits Serbia and Bosnia again**

One person was killed and another was missing after heavy rains brought a new wave of flooding to Serbia and Bosnia this week, just three months after historic floods killed almost 80 people. Torrential rain in the western Serbian town of Banja Koviljaca led to a 65-year old man drowning after his house was flooded. Several local roads were damaged as well as dozens of houses and a hospital, a press agency said. The Stira river overflowed in the neighboring town of Loznica, sweeping away two bridges and flooding around 100 homes. In Bosnia hundreds of households were flooded in several regions, mostly the same ones hit by May's severe floods, the worst in the Balkans in more than a century. Police said one person was reported missing in Banja Luka, where a state of emergency was declared. In the region of Gracanica, near Tuzla, some 200 homes were evacuated in several affected villages.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/142193-flooding-hits-serbia-and-bosnia-again**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/142193-flooding-hits-serbia-and-bosnia-again)

**Moldova asks Russia to withdraw troops**

Moldova's government has called on Moscow to withdraw troops and weapons from its separatist Transdniester region. The Foreign Ministry appealed to Russia on 5 August to pull out its 1,500 troops and thousands of tons of weapons from Transdniester in accordance with commitments made at a 1999 summit of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). On 4 August Moscow accused Moldova and Ukraine of trying to block Russia's access to its troops in Transdniester. Moscow earlier this month placed an embargo on Moldovan fruit, after Chisinau signed an association agreement in June with the European Union.

**RFE/RL -** [**http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-russia-troops-transdniester-withdrawal/26515618.html**](http://www.rferl.org/content/moldova-russia-troops-transdniester-withdrawal/26515618.html)

**Ukraine**

**Danger increasing in east, warns UN**

Civilians in eastern Ukraine are facing increasing hardships, with wrecked infrastructure and limited access to power and water supplies, the UN says. UN humanitarian chief John Ging said "immediate action" was needed to halt the conflict and prevent the situation from putting more people in danger. The UN estimates that 1,367 people have been killed since April. However, the true figure could be much higher, with the rebels saying they have lost at least 800 fighters and accusing the government of playing down its own losses. Eighteen Ukrainian soldiers were killed and 54 injured in clashes on 5 August, the government said.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28669764**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-28669764)

**Shelling kills three civilians in Donetsk**

Artillery fire overnight killed three civilians and injured five more in eastern Ukraine's besieged pro-Russian rebel stronghold Donetsk, city authorities said on Thursday. The mortar blasts damaged three apartment blocks and five houses in the Budyonivsky district in the southeast of the million-strong industrial city, the city council said in a statement. Shelling also destroyed two houses in a village on the western outskirts of the mining hub but no casualties were reported, the statement said.

**AFP -** [**http://gulftoday.ae/portal/e7c37347-5bcd-4277-851c-7c2bf3d8507c.aspx**](http://gulftoday.ae/portal/e7c37347-5bcd-4277-851c-7c2bf3d8507c.aspx)

EAP

**Myanmar**

**Nearly 5M sign up for changing charter**

The party of opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi had collected nearly 5 million signatures in support of changing Myanmar's military-drafted constitution and challenging the military's dominance in parliament. An article in the 2008 constitution requires 75% parliamentary approval to amend major chapters of the charter, but with the military occupying 25% of the seats, any major constitutional change will be a hurdle. Another clause prevents Suu Kyi from becoming president. Her party's campaign to change the article requiring the 75% approval garnered 4,941,998 signatures from May 27 May to 19 July. National League for Democracy party spokesman U Nyan Win said Wednesday the campaign for signatures was successful despite pressure and intimidation by authorities to those who signed, as well as difficult access to villages in the rainy season

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/5m-sign-changing-myanmar-charter-24861028**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/5m-sign-changing-myanmar-charter-24861028)

**Cambodia**

**Tribunal convicts Khmer Rouge leaders**

Three and a half decades after the genocidal rule of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge ended, a U.N.-backed war crimes tribunal on Thursday sentenced two top leaders of the former regime to life in prison on war crimes charges for their role in the country's terror period in the 1970s. The historic verdicts were announced against Khieu Samphan, the regime's 83-year-old former head of state, and Nuon Chea, its 88-year-old chief ideologue - the only two leaders of the regime left to stand trial. There was no visible reaction from either of the accused as the judge said both men were found guilty of crimes against humanity, forced transfers, forced disappearances and attacks against human dignity and sentenced to life imprisonment.

**AP - <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/08/06/cambodia-khmer-rouge/13707121/>**

ESA

**Burundi**

**Flood victims need more help**

Thousands of people displaced by floods and a mudslide in the Burundian capital Bujumbura and surrounding areas in February 2014 need more help to reconstruct their homes and livelihoods, aid workers say. “These people who haven’t been resettled and even those who have gone back to their homes are in need of proper shelter, food and blankets,” Methode Niyungeko, coordinator of the Platform for the Prevention of Risks, a local NGO said. “The government is working with partners to identify those who need help with reconstruction and is mobilizing resources towards that. We realize and appreciate many of those who were affected were orphans and widows who cannot reconstruct their homes on their own,” Divine Claudine from the deputy vice president’s office said.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/100453/burundi-flood-victims-need-more-help**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/100453/burundi-flood-victims-need-more-help)

**South Sudan**

**Violence puts country close to catastrophe – UN**

A top UN official on Wednesday told the UNSC that a fresh wave of violence in South Sudan is dragging the nascent country closer to a "humanitarian catastrophe." Edmond Mulet, the UN assistant secretary general for peacekeeping operations, warned council members that the militia violence in South Sudan has displaced more than a million people. Almost 500,000 more have scrambled across borders. The widespread displacement has been compounded by hunger and food problems. Almost 4 million people are at risk of going hungry amid "growing concerns of a famine," Mulet said. And up to 50,000 children are at risk of dying of acute malnutrition this year alone. A cholera epidemic worsens, with 5,300 cases and 115 deaths, Mulet added.

**AP -** [**http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/107893/World/Region/UN-Violence-puts-South-Sudan-close-to-catastrophe.aspx**](http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/2/8/107893/World/Region/UN-Violence-puts-South-Sudan-close-to-catastrophe.aspx)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140806205257-ty5ih/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140806205257-ty5ih/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**UN evacuates staff, aid workers**

UN peacekeepers evacuated 220 staff and aid workers from northeast South Sudan after militias killed at least six relief workers, a UN spokesman said. The troops from the UN mission in South Sudan were expected to continue evacuations on 7 August from Bunj, in Upper Nile State, where a local militia -- the Mabanese Defense Forces - was blamed for the killings. "The peacekeepers are in the process of collecting national staff members of humanitarian aid organizations deemed to be at risk and who need to be evacuated as soon as possible," said the deputy spokesman.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/un-evacuates-220-staff-aid-workers-south-sudan-190837261.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/un-evacuates-220-staff-aid-workers-south-sudan-190837261.html)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140806175134-e5ai3/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140806175134-e5ai3/?source=fiOtherNews2)

LAC

**Colombia**

**Court bars rebels guilty of war crimes from public office**

A Colombian high court on 6 August ruled that the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels found guilty of war crimes cannot hold public office, a decision that would block FARC leaders from entering politics and may complicate negotiations to end five decades of war. The ruling by the constitutional court throws into doubt agreements reached between the government and leaders of the FARC which laid the groundwork for rebel political participation if the two sides agree on peace terms. The court ruled that only rebels who have been involved in lesser crimes can seek election to political office. Congress must decide what constitutes such crimes.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/07/us-colombia-farc-court-idUSKBN0G703Q20140807**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/07/us-colombia-farc-court-idUSKBN0G703Q20140807)

**Guatemala**

**Suspected children migrant traffickers arrested**

Guatemalan authorities on 6 August captured six men and one woman suspected of smuggling migrants to the US, a prosecutor said. The arrests were made during law enforcement operations in the western province of Quetzaltenango. With assistance from the US Embassy in Guatemala, security forces captured seven people who were linked with the smuggling of unaccompanied minors to the US. The network had pocketed $3 million for taking people illegally to the US, according to Guatemala's interior minister.

**EFE -** [**http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2014/08/06/suspected-migrant-traffickers-arrested-in-guatemala/**](http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2014/08/06/suspected-migrant-traffickers-arrested-in-guatemala/)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**At least 100 Syrians dead or injured in Arsal**

At least 100 Syrian refugees have been killed or injured in five days of clashes in the Lebanese border town of Arsal, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The claims by the Observatory came after the town saw renewed fighting between Lebanese security forces and Syrian militants. A Lebanese security official said that the army had retaken most of the positions held by the insurgents. The Arsal Mayor said most of the militants had left the north-eastern town for nearby mountainous areas.

**DPA -** [**http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/1st-leadat-least-100-syrians-dead-or-injured-in-lebanese-town-says-watchdogby-weedah-hamzah-dpa\_349743.html**](http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/1st-leadat-least-100-syrians-dead-or-injured-in-lebanese-town-says-watchdogby-weedah-hamzah-dpa_349743.html)

**Iraq**

**Government seeks aid for thousands trapped on mountain** – **UNICEF mention**

Tens of thousands of people are trapped on a mountaintop in northwest Iraq, with no water, no vegetation and few supplies. Mount Sinjar, is surrounded by militants from the IS — which took over Sinjar City and the surrounding area. About 200,000 people, most of them from the Yazidi minority, fled, and more than 40,000 are now trapped on the barren mountain. Some have already died of dehydration, and aid workers have not yet been able to reach them. The Iraq representative for **UNICEF** reports: “There is an initiative that the Iraqi secular government initiated over the last 48 hours, which is airdropping water and food and trying to reach these people and ensure survival. Success rates are still very low because there are logistical difficulties and, obviously, risks and threats coming from the terrain. We truly hope that in the next 48 hours the support and the multi-partner attempt to make these airdrops more specific, more precise, more targeted will save more lives.”

**NPR -** [**http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/08/06/iraqis-trapped-mountain**](http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/08/06/iraqis-trapped-mountain)

**Christians flee as town taken**

The IS group captured Qaraqosh in the north overnight after the withdrawal of Kurdish forces. An international Christian organisation said at least a quarter of Iraq's Christians were leaving Qaraqosh and other surrounding towns. The French organisation Fraternite en Irak [said on its Facebook page](http://fraternite-en-irak.org/2014/08/07/les-populations-fuient-la-plaine-de-ninive-sos-de-mgr-sako/) (in French) that a majority of inhabitants of Nineveh province had fled as the militants took over Qaraqosh. The archbishops of the cities of Mosul and Kirkurk confirmed that the Christian town had fallen.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28686998**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28686998)

**Lebanon**

**Army surrounds border town, evacuates refugees**

Lebanon's army surrounded a border town occupied by Islamist militants on Wednesday as mediators reported progress in negotiations to end to the most serious spillover of Syria's civil war yet onto Lebanese soil. Soldiers arrested men and evacuated refugees from the hill town of Arsal on the border with Syria. One Syrian refugee said she had seen fighters' bodies lying in the streets. Saudi Arabian King Abdullah granted $1 billion to help the Lebanese army bolster security as they battle militants in Arsal on the Syrian frontier.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-lebanon-security-arsal-idUSKBN0G616W20140806**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-lebanon-security-arsal-idUSKBN0G616W20140806)

**Bomb goes off in Tripoli, kills one**

A bomb exploded in the Lebanese city of Tripoli on 6 August, killing one person and wounding seven others, security sources said. It was not immediately clear what had been targeted. Ambulances were seen rushing to the area of the blast, which was cordoned off by the military. Tensions have flared in Tripoli in recent days as a result of clashes between the army and militants in the border town of Arsal.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-lebanon-security-arsal-casualties-idUSKBN0G629Z20140806**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/06/us-lebanon-security-arsal-casualties-idUSKBN0G629Z20140806)

**Libya**

**Authorities call for UN-supervised ceasefire**

The newly inaugurated Libyan parliament has threatened to act against warring militias who don't abide by its call for an immediate cease-fire, which it says will be supervised by the UN. The parliament's call late Wednesday is among its first since it convened in the eastern city of Tobruk, after violence swept through the capital, Tripoli, and Libya's second largest city of Benghazi. In a statement obtained by The Associated Press on Thursday, parliament also made changes to an earlier constitutional declaration, giving itself more powers it said would help it rein in out-of-control militias.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/libyas-extremists-tighten-grip-benghazi-24865022**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/libyas-extremists-tighten-grip-benghazi-24865022)

**Saudi Arabia**

**Suspected Ebola victim dies**

A Saudi man who was being treated for Ebola-like symptoms has died at a hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia's health ministry says. If confirmed, this would be the first Ebola-related death outside Africa. The Saudi man who was suspected of contracting the disease died of cardiac arrest, according to the website of the country's health ministry. The 40-year-old is said to have returned from a recent business trip to Sierra Leone. The ministry's website said he was being tested for Ebola, but did not say if the tests had concluded that he had the disease.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/health-28678699**](http://www.bbc.com/news/health-28678699)

**Authorities ban brides from 4 countries**

Saudi men have been banned from marrying women from three Asian and one African country as the Gulf state toughens the rules restricting marriage with foreigners, a local daily said. Marrying women from Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar and Chad is no longer permissible, Makkah newspaper reported. It said the total population of these communities in Saudi Arabia has exceeded 500,000 people, citing unofficial statistics, implying that this might be the reason. The paper said the new restrictions are now stipulated in the application forms that any Saudi wishing to marry a foreign woman should present to authorities.

**AFP -** [**http://www.straitstimes.com/news/world/middle-east/story/saudi-bans-brides-4-countries-newspaper-20140807**](http://www.straitstimes.com/news/world/middle-east/story/saudi-bans-brides-4-countries-newspaper-20140807)

**State of Palestine/Israel**

**Mediators race against clock to extend Gaza truce**

Mediators worked against the clock on Thursday to extend a Gaza truce between [Israel](http://www.reuters.com/places/israel?lc=int_mb_1001) and the Palestinians as the three-day ceasefire went into its final 24 hours. [Israel](http://www.reuters.com/places/israel?lc=int_mb_1001) has said it is ready to agree to an extension as Egyptian mediators pursued talks with Israelis and Palestinians on an enduring end to a war that devastated the Hamas-ruled enclave, while Palestinians want an Israeli-Egyptian blockade of Gaza to be lifted and prisoners held by Israel to be freed. “Indirect talks are ongoing and we still have today to secure this,” an Egyptian official said when asked whether the truce was likely to go beyond Friday.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/07/us-mideast-gaza-idUSKBN0G70JY20140807**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/07/us-mideast-gaza-idUSKBN0G70JY20140807)

**Sudan**

**Controversial elections to be held in April**

Sudan is to go ahead with general elections in April, the agency in charge of the ballot confirmed Wednesday, despite opposition concerns that the vote is being imposed. It is still unclear whether President Omar al-Bashir will stand for re-election, 25 years after he seized power in an Islamist-backed coup. The vote for president, national and state legislators and for governors will be only the second since the coup. Elections which Bashir won in 2010 were marred by opposition boycotts, and monitors said the ballot failed to meet international standards. The voting will take place on April 2.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/sudan-hold-controversial-elections-april-005656490.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/sudan-hold-controversial-elections-april-005656490.html)

**Syria**

**Two Italian aid workers kidnapped in Aleppo**

Two Italian aid workers have been kidnapped in Syria, the Italian foreign ministry said on 6 August. The two workers, whose names were not released, were working on humanitarian projects in the embattled northern Syrian city of Aleppo, the ministry said, adding that they disappeared "a few days ago." A ministry spokesman gave no further details on the workers, saying that all channels were being explored to try to obtain more information and secure their release.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140806155250-nbtcg**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140806155250-nbtcg)

**Damascus shelling kills 16, wounds dozens**

At least 16 people, including two children, were killed when rebels shelled many districts of Damascus overnight, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said. The Observatory said another 79 people were wounded in the bombardment by a militant rebel brigade. Several of the wounded were in serious condition, and the death toll was expected to rise, the Observatory said. The Observatory director said more than a dozen areas of Damascus had been targeted, including in the upscale western Mazzeh district and central Abu Rummaneh.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-06/266223-damascus-shelling-kills-16-wounds-dozens-activists.ashx#axzz39UwsbJRe**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-06/266223-damascus-shelling-kills-16-wounds-dozens-activists.ashx#axzz39UwsbJRe)

**Yemen**

**18 'Qaeda' gunmen, 7 soldiers killed in clashes**

Seven Yemeni soldiers and 18 suspected Al-Qaeda militants were killed Wednesday in confrontations in southern and southeastern provinces, security officials and the defence ministry said. Five soldiers were killed in an ambush in the southern province of Shabwa in the third attack of its kind this month blamed by security officials on the jihadists. "Gunmen probably belonging to Al-Qaeda opened fire on an army vehicle in Habban in Shabwa province, killing five soldiers and wounding another," a security official said. He added that the attackers then escaped. Meanwhile, two soldiers were killed and two others wounded in a clash with gunmen in Sayun, in the southeastern Hadramawt province, another security official said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/18-qaeda-gunmen-7-yemeni-soldiers-killed-clashes-145407229.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/18-qaeda-gunmen-7-yemeni-soldiers-killed-clashes-145407229.html)

SA

**Across SA**

**Pakistan Security Forces arrest Indian border guard**

Pakistan Security Forces have arrested an Indian border guard for allegedly violating their de-facto border in the disputed Himalayan territory of Indian occupied Kashmir, officials said Thursday. "An Indian national has been arrested who crossed into Pakistani territory," a senior official from the paramilitary rangers said without elaborating on the circumstances of the arrest or the exact location.

**AFP -** [**http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/108-pakistan-top-news/187372-security-forces-arrests-indian-border-guard.html**](http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/108-pakistan-top-news/187372-security-forces-arrests-indian-border-guard.html)

**Afghanistan**

**'Insider attack' leaves seven dead**

An Afghan policeman has turned his gun on his colleagues at a police checkpoint in the country's south, killing seven policemen, a provincial official has said. The incident late on Tuesday night in the Uruzgan provincial capital of Tirin Kot was the latest among so-called insider attacks in which Afghans dressed in police or army uniforms turn their weapons on their colleagues or NATO forces.

**Al Jazeera - <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/08/afghan-insider-attack-leaves-seven-dead-20148613532163946.html>**

**India**

**Bill to try minors as adults after Delhi gang rape**

India's cabinet has approved a bill to allow children over 16 to be tried as adults for crimes like rape and murder. The move follows calls for stricter punishment for juveniles after a 17-year-old was among those convicted of gang rape and murder in Delhi in 2012. At present, juvenile courts can jail those under 18 for at most three years. Under the bill, minors convicted in adult courts would face longer jail terms but would be spared the death penalty or life imprisonment. The bill still needs the approval of parliament.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-28684744**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-28684744)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**Healthcare systems reel as Ebola toll hits 932**

Health workers in West Africa appealed on Wednesday for urgent help in controlling the world's worst Ebola outbreak as the death toll climbed to 932 and Liberia shut down a major hospital where several staff were infected, including a Spanish priest. WHO said it would ask medical ethics experts to explore the emergency use of experimental treatments to tackle the highly contagious disease after a trial drug was given to two US charity workers infected in Liberia. With West Africa's rudimentary healthcare systems swamped, 45 new deaths from Ebola were reported in the three days to 4 August WHO said. Liberia and Sierra Leone have deployed troops in the worst-hit areas in their remote border region to try to stem the spread of the virus, for which there is no known cure. WHO experts began a two-day crisis meeting in Geneva to discuss whether the epidemic constitutes a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern" and to consider steps to help overstretched emergency organisations.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140806165456-5an7x/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140806165456-5an7x/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**Cameroon**

**Cholera surges in country – UNICEF mention**

Rains and insecurity caused by Boko Haram are aggravating a cholera outbreak in northern Cameroon which has killed at least 75 people and infected some 1,400 others since April. Population movement during the current school holidays could help spread infections to other regions of Cameroon or even to neighbouring countries, said Félicité Tchibindat, the UNICEF representative in Cameroon. The first cholera case was in a Nigerian family who were among a group of refugees fleeing to Cameroon from bombings and attacks by Boko Haram in April. Scarcity of safe drinking water, open defecation and other poor hygienic habits have exacerbated the cholera cases in northern Cameroon, Tchibindat said. More than 26,000 cholera cases have been reported in Nigeria since the start of the year, according to health authorities. So far no Ebola cases have been reported in Cameroon, though neighbouring Nigeria recently reported its first case.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/100447/cholera-surges-in-cameroon**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/100447/cholera-surges-in-cameroon)

**Suspected Boko Haram raid kills 10 in Cameroon**

Suspected members of Nigerian group Boko Haram killed 10 people and kidnapped one in a raid on the village of Zigague in northern Cameroon on 6 August, state radio reported. The heavily armed gunmen arrived in a pick-up truck and on motorcycles and stormed the house of a local chief, kidnapping one of his children and stealing a car, an army commander told state radio. "On their way back, they came face-to-face with Cameroonian soldiers but succeeded in shooting to death nine villagers and a soldier of the Rapid Intervention Brigade (BIR)," a senior divisional officer for the Logone and Chari region, told state radio.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL6N0QC6AF20140806**](http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL6N0QC6AF20140806)

**DR Congo**

**Opposition leader wrongfully jailed: lawyer**

An opposition lawmaker arrested after leading protests against the president of DRC has been jailed in violation of a court order, one of his lawyers said. Jean-Bertrand Ewanga, general secretary of the Union for the Congolese Nation (UNC) party, was arrested on Tuesday, accused of "insulting the head of state and inciting tribal hatred", according to his lawyers. "He spent the night in the prison at Makala in violation of the order of the Supreme Court," his lawyer, Jean-Baudouin Mayo said, accusing the prosecutor's office of responsibility for the "arbitrary" detention. Mayo said late Tuesday that Ewanga had been placed under house arrest.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/dr-congo-opposition-leader-wrongfully-jailed-lawyer-201003798.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/dr-congo-opposition-leader-wrongfully-jailed-lawyer-201003798.html)

**Liberia**

**President declares 'State of Emergency' amid Ebola outbreak**

Liberia’s president declared a state of emergency on 6 August and announced quarantine checkpoints as the government struggles to deal with the deadliest Ebola outbreak in the nation’s history. The government also announced the deployment of military personnel to affected areas of the country, where troops will enforce checkpoints, keep residents from uninfected areas from travelling into regions that have seen the disease and provide security for health workers.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-28684561**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-28684561)

**Nigeria**

**'Dozens' killed in Boko Haram attack in northeast**

Boko Haram gunmen attacked Nigeria's restive northeastern town of Gwoza on 6 August leaving dozens dead, residents said, in the latest violence blamed on the militants. The extremists raided the town, some 135 kilometres from Maiduguri, Borno state, forcing residents to flee their homes, locals said. "Dozens of our people have been killed by the attackers, some were slaughtered and many others shot with guns," a resident reported. He said the attackers also burnt down the divisional police headquarters, the local government secretariat and other public buildings in the town. "They have scared hundreds of residents to flee to the mountains along Nigeria and Cameroon borders," said a former vice chairman of Gwoza local government. Locals said there were no soldiers to defend the town during the attack, with some saying that the whereabouts of the Gwoza emir were unknown.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/dozens-killed-boko-haram-attack-nigeria-locals-233047282.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/dozens-killed-boko-haram-attack-nigeria-locals-233047282.html)

The Brief is produced by UNICEF's Emergency Operations Centre (OPSCEN) and is a daily compilation of the main humanitarian, political and security-related media stories from around the world. It aims to provide field offices and senior decision-makers with critical information related to humanitarian emergencies and staff security.

Disclaimer: The views presented here are those of the original authors and are not necessarily shared by UNICEF. Please note that these news stories should be used solely for official purposes. Our license agreement does not permit users to store, post or redistribute the contents beyond personal use. We kindly ask that UNICEF colleagues be responsible users of copyrighted material. For information on this service please contact: