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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Collaboration maps may aid neglected disease fight**

Plans to map research networks in the field of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) could help ensure the field’s scarce funding is better focused. Although NTDs affect more than one billion of the world’s 2.8 billion poorest people, pharmaceutical companies often neglect these diseases as they offer a poor return on investment. But some scientists think that studying existing networks of NTD research will allow strengths and gaps to be identified so limited funding can be more efficiently distributed.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919121456-sjldh/?source=jtTheWire**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919121456-sjldh/?source=jtTheWire)

CEE/CIS

**Across Region**

**Czech Red Cross provides medical aid to Ukraine**

The Czech Red Cross is sending 1,600 tonnes of medical aid to Ukraine this week, said its spokesperson on 18 September. One shipment arrived in Ukraine aboard a plane, the other will be transported to Kiev on 19 September. The spokesperson said that the medical material will be given to the Ukrainian Red Cross and to hospitals in east Ukrainian regions hit by the fighting. As the healthcare system collapsed in these regions, the Ukrainian Red Cross and the ICRC are providing the necessary services, he said.

**Xinhua -** [**http://www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article\_xinhua.aspx?id=241757**](http://www.shanghaidaily.com/article/article_xinhua.aspx?id=241757)

**Ukraine**

**Ukraine says Russia masses troops on Ukraine border**

The Ukrainian government accused Russia on 18 September of massing around 4,000 troops on the border of Russian-annexed Crimea and Ukraine, as Crimean residents also reported seeing troop movements. "According to our information, almost all military units of the Russian Federation stationed in the north of occupied Crimea ... were pushed to the administrative border with Ukraine along with all their equipment and ammunition," the National Security and Defence Council spokesperson reported. He said the units, totalling about 4,000 troops, were deployed in "small tactical groups" along the border in Crimea.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/kiev-says-russia-masses-4/1369034.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/kiev-says-russia-masses-4/1369034.html)

**Separatists say they will take part in new round of talks**

Ukrainian separatists say that they will take part in a new round of peace talks on 19 September. Participants of the meeting in Minsk, Belarus will discuss the Ukrainian law granting special status to separatist-controlled territories, Andrei Purgin of the Donetsk People‘s Republic says. Former Ukrainian president Leonid Kuchma, who has represented the government in earlier talks, also confirmed his participation in 19 September‘s talks.

**AFP –** [**http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2014/09/18/348912/new-ukraine-talks-to-take-place-in-minsk-friday-belarus.html**](http://www.focus-fen.net/news/2014/09/18/348912/new-ukraine-talks-to-take-place-in-minsk-friday-belarus.html)

**DPA-** [**http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/extraseparatists-say-they-will-take-part-in-new-round-of-ukraine-talks\_355750.html**](http://en.europeonline-magazine.eu/extraseparatists-say-they-will-take-part-in-new-round-of-ukraine-talks_355750.html)

**OSCE says will double its observers to 500**

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) said on 18 September that it would double the number of its observers in Ukraine to 500 to oversee a fragile ceasefire between Kiev and pro-Russian rebels. The observers will be deployed over the next two and a half months. The deployment is part of an OSCE-brokered truce signed 13 days ago between officials in Kiev and Ukrainian rebel leaders that has eased deadly violence in restive eastern Ukraine.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140918/osce-says-will-double-its-observers-ukraine-500**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140918/osce-says-will-double-its-observers-ukraine-500)

**Ukraine's Poroshenko says US promises $1 bln in financial guarantees**

Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said in a tweet on Friday that the United States had promised $1 billion in financial guarantees for Kiev to raise funds on the capital markets. "Agreed with Barack Obama that Ukraine will receive $1 billion in financial guarantees," he said after visiting Washington where he secured $53 million in assistance but failed to win the argument for the United States to provide Ukraine weapons to fight pro-Russian separatists in its east. In the first half of this year, Ukraine borrowed $1 billion on capital markets under a similar US guarantee.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919055925-h8cl3/?source=jtTheWire**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919055925-h8cl3/?source=jtTheWire)

EAP

**Across EAP**

**South Korea fires warning shots at North's patrol boat**

South Korea fired warning shots on Friday after a North Korean patrol boat crossed a disputed maritime border to the west of the divided peninsula, the South's military said. Such incidents are not unheard of along the tense sea border between the rivals but it came on the day that the Asian Games officially opened in the South, with North Korean athletes participating. A South Korean Defense Ministry official said the North Korean vessel intruded into waters controlled by the South off Baengnyeong island just after noon but it turned back six minutes after the South Korean navy fired warning shots.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919045306-6lptf/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919045306-6lptf/?source=search)

**Philippines**

**Heavy rain floods Manila; markets, schools shut**

A tropical storm dumped heavy rain on the Philippine capital on 19 September, flooding many parts of the city, shutting schools, government offices and financial markets. Thousands of residents in low-lying areas were moved to higher ground, officials said, as flood waters rose quickly after the equivalent of half a month's usual rain fell in six hours. Tropical storm Fung-Wong, with maximum winds of 85 kph and gusts of up to 100 kph, was hovering about 210 km east of Casiguran town in northern Aurora province. It is expected to hit land at around noon on 19 September and move northwest at 22 kph towards the South China Sea. About 7,000 people were evacuated in Marikina City in the eastern part of the capital where a swollen river caused flooding, said the city mayor.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919012634-csp36/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919012634-csp36/)

ESA

**Uganda**

**President removes prime minister and former ally Mbabazi**

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni has replaced Prime Minister Amama Mbabazi, the government said in a statement on Friday, removing a former ally who some analysts had seen as a potential future contender for the top job. A lawyer, Mbabazi has enjoyed a close relationship with Uganda's veteran leader, but relations between the two had become strained recently, with Museveni accusing Mbabazi of taking decisions in the ruling party without consulting him. Mbabazi had not said if he planned to run for president.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/19/us-uganda-politics-primeminister-idUSKBN0HE0RZ20140919**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/19/us-uganda-politics-primeminister-idUSKBN0HE0RZ20140919)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**New wave of Central American children to reach US soon**

Experts and activists believe that sooner rather than later a new wave of unaccompanied youngsters will arrive at the US border with Mexico. “The situation in Central America hasn’t changed, we have the same problems of insecurity and violence, the lack of governability continues and jobs are still a problem – there is no work for young people who are members of cartels or street gangs,” the director of the Americas Program of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, reported on 19 September. Though the entry of unaccompanied youngsters has declined in recent months following the massive arrivals in May and June, “that won’t last long,” he said.

**EFE -** [**http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=2352661&CategoryId=23558**](http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=2352661&CategoryId=23558)

**Colombia**

**Mystery illness plagues girls in Colombia**

A mystery illness is plaguing girls in this town in northern Colombia, and locals say a vaccine against the sexually transmitted human papillomavirus, or HPV, is to blame. The epidemic has grabbed national headlines, and President Juan Manuel Santos has been forced to weigh in. Insisting the HPV vaccination campaign was safe, Santos suggested the epidemic was no more than a "phenomenon of collective suggestion." US drug giant Merck, which makes the Gardasil vaccine, said it was "confident in the safety profile" of its product.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/mystery-illness-plagues-girls-colombia-052825963.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/mystery-illness-plagues-girls-colombia-052825963.html)

**El Salvador**

**Number of chikungunya cases tops 16,000**

At least 16,000 have contracted the chikungunya virus in El Salvador, prompting health officials in the country to step up the fight to eliminate disease-carrying mosquitoes. “Of the 16,000 chikungunya cases, 11,000 are in the department of San Salvador,” the Health Minister said during a press conference. She said the country remains on “national alert,” which was declared in June for both the chikungunya virus and dengue. She said officials would “intensify the response,” including stepping up fumigation efforts and national awareness campaigns aimed at reminding residents to eliminate stagnant water.

**AFP -** [**http://www.ticotimes.net/2014/09/15/number-of-chikungunya-cases-in-el-salvador-tops-16000**](http://www.ticotimes.net/2014/09/15/number-of-chikungunya-cases-in-el-salvador-tops-16000)

**Mexico**

**Government to aid recovery of regions hit by Odile**

The Mexican government will aid and finance the recovery process in regions hit by Hurricane Odile in Baja California Sur state, where urban infrastructure and airport services sustained heavy damage, officials said. Mexican officials and airlines are evacuating 26,000 people who were stranded in the region due to the hurricane, while dozens of relief teams are working to deal with the aftermath. The government sent extra federal police and soldiers to the Baja California peninsula to counter widespread looting. Odile, a Category 3 storm, battered Baja California Sur earlier this week with winds of more than 200 kph and gusts of up to 250 kph. The biggest challenge is to restore water and electric service, especially in the Los Cabos region.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/agencia-efe/140918/mexican-govt-aid-recovery-regions-hit-odile**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/agencia-efe/140918/mexican-govt-aid-recovery-regions-hit-odile)

**AFP -** [**http://www.themalaymailonline.com/world/article/resorts-in-mexico-arm-themselves-to-deter-post-hurricane-looting**](http://www.themalaymailonline.com/world/article/resorts-in-mexico-arm-themselves-to-deter-post-hurricane-looting)

MENA

**Across MENA**

**Two Lebanese soldiers killed in RPG attack at Syrian border-sources**

Two Lebanese soldiers were killed when insurgents hit a military personnel carrier with a rocket-propelled grenade in an attack at the Syrian border on Friday, a security source said. The attack occurred near the town of Arsal, where Islamist insurgents including militants affiliated to Islamic State staged a cross-border incursion last month that triggered five days of deadly battles.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919094433-i006a/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919094433-i006a/?source=search)

**Iraq**

**Iraq bombings kill at least 16**

A car bomb in a Shiite-majority district of Baghdad and a motorcycle bombing in the northern city of Kirkuk killed at least 16 people Friday, security and medical officials said. The attacks come as security forces and allied Shiite militiamen and Sunni tribesmen fight to regain ground from militants led by the Islamic State (IS) jihadist group who overran swathes of the country in June. The blast in the Karrada area of Baghdad killed at least eight people and wounded more than 20, while eight died and 13 were wounded in central Kirkuk.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/car-bomb-kills-five-iraqi-capital-094012236.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/car-bomb-kills-five-iraqi-capital-094012236.html)

**France says it launches first air strikes in Iraq**

France said on Friday its jets had launched strikes inside Iraq for the first time since the country promised to join military action against Islamic State insurgents who have taken over parts of the country. "This morning at 9:40 (0740 GMT) our Rafale jets launched a first strike against a logistics depot of the terrorists," President Francois Hollande's office said a statement issued shortly after the raids. The target in northeast Iraq was totally destroyed, said the statement, adding that there would be further operations "in the coming days".

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919095233-3yzmz/?source=jtTheWire**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919095233-3yzmz/?source=jtTheWire)

**Libya**

**Libya MPs reject govt. lineup, want crisis team**

Libya's parliament rejected Prime Minister Abdullah al-Thani's proposed 18-member cabinet Thursday, calling for a slimline "crisis" team of not more than 10 ministers, a deputy said. Thani and the internationally-recognized parliament, elected in June, are in virtual domestic exile in the far eastern city of Tobruk because of widespread insecurity, including in the capital, where a rival administration has been set up. That insecurity was underscored again on Thursday when unidentified gunmen murdered a retired air force chief of staff, general Ahmed Habib al-Mesmari, in second city Benghazi.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/147996-libya-mps-reject-govt-lineup-want-crisis-team**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/147996-libya-mps-reject-govt-lineup-want-crisis-team)

**Syria**

**US Congress approves arming Syrian rebels, funding government**

The US Congress gave final approval on Thursday to President Barack Obama's plan for training and arming moderate Syrian rebels to battle Islamic State, a major part of his military campaign to "degrade and destroy" the militant group. The Senate voted 78-22, in a rare bipartisan show of support for one of Obama's high-profile initiatives. With the House of Representatives approving the legislation on Wednesday, the measure now goes to Obama to sign into law. Ten Senate Democrats and 12 Republicans voted no.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140918231503-ctdcf/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140918231503-ctdcf/?source=search)

**'Syrian bombardment kills dozens' in Homs**

At least 48 people have been killed in Syrian government air bombardment around a town in the central province of Homs, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights says. Two days of air strikes left women, children and men including rebels among the dead, according to the Observatory. Nearly a dozen fighters and multiple rebel commanders were also reported killed in the bombardment, which targeted Talbiseh, a town in the north of Homs and on the country's main north-south highway. The death toll from the bombardment, which took place on Tuesday and Wednesday, was expected to rise because dozens of people including children were in critical condition, the Observatory said.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/bombardment-kills-dozens-homs-201491782119939402.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/bombardment-kills-dozens-homs-201491782119939402.html)

**Kerry says Assad broke Chemical arms pact with Chlorine gas**

US Secretary of State John Kerry on Thursday accused Syrian President Bashar Assad of breaking the terms of a global pact on chemical weapons by unleashing chlorine gas this year. "We believe there is evidence of Assad's use of chlorine, which when you use it - despite it not being on the list - it is prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention," Kerry told US lawmakers. The US also had "some questions about a couple of other items" which were being investigated "so he's in violation of the convention," Kerry added.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148030-kerry-says-assad-broke-chemical-arms-pact-with-chlorine-gas**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148030-kerry-says-assad-broke-chemical-arms-pact-with-chlorine-gas)

**Hundreds of Syrian Kurds fleeing Islamic State gather on Turkish border**

Close to a thousand Syrian Kurds gathered on the border seeking to cross into Turkey on Friday after Islamic State fighters seized 21 villages and besieged a Kurdish city in northern Syria, a Reuters witness said. The crowd of mostly women and children sat behind a barbed wire barrier along the border opposite the Turkish village of Dikmetas, 20 km from the Syrian Kurdish city of Ayn al-Arab, known as Kobani in Kurdish.

**Reuters-** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/19/us-syria-crisis-turkey-idUSKBN0HE0RR20140919**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/19/us-syria-crisis-turkey-idUSKBN0HE0RR20140919)

**Yemen**

**Shiite rebels shell Yemen state TV, residents flee fighting**

Armed Shi'ite rebels shelled Yemen's state-run television building in Sanaa on Friday and hundreds of residents were fleeing in a dramatic escalation of violence after weeks of fighting and protests in the capital, local officials said. The Houthi fighters pushed into Sanaa after clashing with the army on the outskirts of the capital on Thursday. Residents said the rebels were advancing along Thalatheen Street, a major route into the western edge of Sanaa.One military source said around 70 Houthi fighters were killed in fighting overnight, and residents told Reuters dozens of bodies were scattered in the north and northwest of the capital where the clashes took place.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140919073726-24wqb/?source=search**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140919073726-24wqb/?source=search)

**Clashes kill nearly 40 as UN envoy presses rebel talks**

Fighting between Shiite rebels and Sunni militants backed by troops killed nearly 40 people outside Sanaa on 18 September, as the UN envoy huddled in the rebel stronghold to try to end Yemen's political crisis. Fighting raged between the Huthis rebels and fighters of the Islah (Reform) party in Shamlan, where rebels have been camped for weeks. It has spread to Iman University of religion which belongs to a top Islah cleric. Most of the casualties occurred in clashes after tribal fighters ambushed a rebel convoy on the road linking Shamlan and the university, with a tribal source saying 30 Huthis had also been taken prisoner. The latest deaths brought to 81 the number registered in three days of fighting.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/yemen-clashes-kill-nearly-40-un-envoy-presses-191438356.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/yemen-clashes-kill-nearly-40-un-envoy-presses-191438356.html)

**Airlines suspend flights to violence-hit Yemen capital**

International airlines have suspended flights to Yemen's main airport for 24 hours due to weeks of clashes between rebels and Islamist fighters near the capital, authorities said. "Arab and foreign airlines have decided to suspend their flights to Sanaa for 24 hours because of developments in the capital," the Civil Aviation Authority said overnight. The measure could be extended or reconsidered depending on the security situation, it said in a statement carried by the official Saba news agency.

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148087-airlines-suspend-flights-to-violence-hit-yemen-capital**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/148087-airlines-suspend-flights-to-violence-hit-yemen-capital)

WCA

**Guinea**

**Deadly attack in Guinea on Ebola team**

Eight bodies, including those of three journalists, were found after an attack on a team trying to educate locals on the risks of the Ebola virus in a remote area of southeastern Guinea, a government spokesman has said. "The eight bodies were found in the village latrine. Three of them had their throats slit," Damantang Albert Camara told Reuters on Thursday.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/09/deadly-attack-guinea-ebola-team-2014918211547560228.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/09/deadly-attack-guinea-ebola-team-2014918211547560228.html)

**Mali**

**UN says 5 peacekeepers killed, 3 wounded in blast**

The UN mission in Mali said five of its Chadian peacekeepers were killed and another three wounded when their vehicle was hit by an explosive device between the desert towns of Aguelhok and Tessalit, in the Kidal region on 18 September. The attack brings the number of UN peacekeepers killed so far this month to 10.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/chadNews/idAFL6N0RJ4WY20140918**](http://af.reuters.com/article/chadNews/idAFL6N0RJ4WY20140918)

**Nigeria**

**Amnesty accuses authorities of rampant torture**

Nigeria’s security authorities regularly engage in acts of torture to extract criminal confessions from innocent civilians and further the government’s campaign against the armed group Boko Haram, rights group Amnesty International said in a report published on Thursday. The report, ["Welcome to Hell Fire: Torture and Other Ill Treatment in Nigeria,"](http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR44/011/2014/en) called for the Nigerian government to criminalize torture. Though the practice is prohibited by Nigeria's constitution, there are no laws on the books to punish offenders. As a result, Amnesty said, Nigeria has cultivated a culture of impunity for offenders.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/18/torture-nigeria-amnesty.html**](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2014/9/18/torture-nigeria-amnesty.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.

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