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GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Twitter introduces an alert system for emergencies, disasters**

Twitter said on Wednesday it will help users receive special alerts from government agencies and aid agencies during emergencies. Users who sign up will receive smartphone notifications via the Twitter app as well as SMS text messages - assuming they agree to handover their cell phone numbers - from any of several dozen agencies who have signed on to the program. The US Federal Emergency Management Agency, Tokyo's Disaster Prevention service and WHO are among those participating. A similar lifeline service played a part in the rescue efforts in Japan following the devastating 2011 tsunami, Twitter said. The program is initially available in the US, Japan and Korea and will be expanded to other countries.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130925185655-77ufa/?source=hpeditorial**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130925185655-77ufa/?source=hpeditorial)

**Studies warn of slow progress in achieving gender equality**

Progress toward achieving gender equality around the globe has stalled in recent years, with women still holding fewer salaried jobs than men and receiving lower wages for their work, the IMF said in a study Monday. Just having as many women in the labor force as men could boost economic growth by 5% in the US, 9% in Japan and 34% in Egypt, the IMF said. Around the world, half of women participate in the labor force, but that number falls to just a fifth in places like the Middle East and North Africa.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/24/imf-warns-of-slowprogressachievinggenderequality.html**](http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/9/24/imf-warns-of-slowprogressachievinggenderequality.html)

**Israeli-Palestinian talks to intensify, greater US role**

Israel and the Palestinians have agreed to intensify their peace talks and to increase the US role, US Secretary of State John Kerry said on Wednesday in a rare comment on the negotiations. Speaking to donors who support the Palestinian Authority, Kerry said the two sides have met seven times since the talks resumed on 29 July although Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas have not met.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130925205302-x2vwz/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130925205302-x2vwz/?source=hpbreaking)

EAPR

**Myanmar  
More WASH interventions in Rakhine needed – UNICEF mention**Aid workers are calling for stronger interventions to expand access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in western Rakhine State, where sectarian violence more than a year ago has left close to 200,000 people in need.  “WASH activities need to be scaled up and dramatically improved by all aid agencies and government partners working in Rakhine,” Vickie Hawkins, deputy country director for MSF in Myanmar, told IRIN, describing current standards and coverage as “very uneven.” According to OCHA, more than 176,000 people are in need following two bouts of inter-communal violence between Buddhist ethnic Rakhine residents and Muslim Rohingyas in June and October 2012, which left 167 people dead and more than 10,000 homes and buildings destroyed. Of these, 140,000 IDPs, mostly Rohingya Muslims[, are living in more than 70 camps and camp-like settings, with another 36,000 vulnerable people living in 113 isolated and remote host communities in Minbya, Myebon, Pauktaw, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Sittwe in Rakhine State.](http://www.irinnews.org/report/96801/briefing-myanmar-s-rohingya-crisis" \t "_blank)**[IRIN -](http://www.irinnews.org/report/96801/briefing-myanmar-s-rohingya-crisis" \t "_blank)** [**[http://www.irinnews.org/report/98831/more-wash-interventions-in-rakhine-needed](http://www.irinnews.org/report/96801/briefing-myanmar-s-rohingya-crisis" \t "_blank)**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98831/more-wash-interventions-in-rakhine-needed)

**Philippines**

**Death toll rises to 30 people as floods subside**

Rescuers dug more bodies out of landslides as floodwaters receded in the Philippines, raising the death toll from days of monsoon rains worsened by Typhoon Usagi to 30. Twenty-seven people were killed after rain-drenched hillsides collapsed on four mountainous villages around the northern town of Subic, the civil defence office in the region said. Two other people drowned in the area, while an elderly man succumbed to the cold, it said in a written update. Subic is about 80km northwest of Manila. The office said a woman and a four-year-old girl remain missing near San Marcelino close to Subic, where rescuers are still digging in a neighbourhood hit by one of the landslides.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/death-toll-rises-to-30-as/826004.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/asiapacific/death-toll-rises-to-30-as/826004.html)

**Thailand**

**Provinces hit by floods, nine people dead**

Nine people have died and more than 1 million have been affected by flooding, officials reported, but authorities offered assurances that floodwaters would not reach central industrial areas and near Bangkok as in 2011. Authorities discount the possibility of any similar disruption, but have expressed concern over one industrial estate in Ayutthaya province, 80km north of Bangkok. The national meteorological department forecast more rain for the coming weekend. So far, around 1.5 million people living in 27 of Thailand's 77 provinces have been affected by the floods. Nine districts have been evacuated.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130925081250-ybal6/**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130925081250-ybal6/)

ESAR

**Across ESAR  
Foreigners in Kenya "legitimate target" - Shabaab**Al-Shabaab said Wednesday that foreigners were a "legitimate target" and confirmed witness accounts that gunmen tried to let Muslims go free while killing or taking the others captive in the Westgate mall attack. In an email exchange Wednesday with The Associated Press, al-Shabaab said "The Mujahideen carried out a meticulous vetting process at the mall and have taken every possible precaution to separate the Muslims from the Kuffar (disbelievers) before carrying out their attack." Asked if al-Shabaab had intended to kill foreigners, the group said "our target was to attack the Kenyan government on its soil and any part of the Kenyan territory is a legitimate target ... and Kenya should be held responsible for the loss of life, whether foreigners or local."  
**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/shabab-foreigners-kenya-legitimate-target-20369968**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/shabab-foreigners-kenya-legitimate-target-20369968)

**Kenya  
Muslims and Somali refugees threatened with further marginalization and discrimination**The Society for Threatened Peoples (STP) fears that the terrible terrorist attack in Nairobi will have serious consequences for the Muslim population of Kenya and for the refugees from Somalia who sought refuge in the neighboring country. "The Muslims are now threatened to be labeled as terror suspects, although the Muslim Supreme Council repudiated the violence in Kenya," said the STP's Africa-expert, Ulrich Delius, in Göttingen on Tuesday. "The imported terrorism by Somali extremists might confound the efforts to work against discrimination and disdain."   
**Society for Threatened Peoples - <http://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/after-terrorist-attack-nairobi-kenyas-muslims-and-refugees-somalia-are-threatened>  
  
Militant group attacks border town**The same extremist group that took over a Nairobi mall attacked a security post near the Somali border Thursday and killed two police officers, while promising the violence would continue until Kenyan troops were withdrawn from Somalia. The leader of the Somalia-based al-Shabaab, Ahmed Godane Shaykh Mukhtar Abu Zubayr, warned the Kenyan public there was no way they could "withstand a war of attrition inside your own country," in a new statement posted on the Internet late Wednesday. "Make your choice today and withdraw all your forces,..." Godane said. "Otherwise be prepared for an abundance of blood that will be spilt in your country, economic downfall and displacement." The early morning attack on the town of Mandera was the second by al-Shabaab militants following the bloody four-day standoff at the Westgate Mall that ended Tuesday.   
**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/us-experts-kenyans-hunt-bodies-mall-20367273**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/us-experts-kenyans-hunt-bodies-mall-20367273)

**Namibia  
Shortages of medicines in public hospitals**  
The Vice Chairperson of the National Council Margaret Mensah-Williams dropped a bombshell in the National Council yesterday morning, when she said many of the country's public hospitals face a serious shortage of medicines and other pharmaceuticals. The revelation by the outspoken and activist parliamentarian contradicts an earlier response by the Ministry of Health and Social Services rejecting media reports that public hospitals had run out of medicines and other vital items. Mensah-Williams says she was requested by concerned members of the public to raise the issue in parliament so that government takes it up as a matter of urgency. She urged the Ministry of Health and Social Services to give urgent attention to the problem, in order to protect people's lives, arguing that she was reliably informed that the problem is not about lack of funds to buy medicines but the way the Central Medical Store is managed. “People should decentralize things, this is because the function is centralized, it is in Windhoek, everything happens in Windhoek and people in the regions are suffering,” she argued.  
**News Afrique -** [**http://www.afriquejet.com/news/12097-shortage-of-medicines-in-public-hospitals-namibia.html**](http://www.afriquejet.com/news/12097-shortage-of-medicines-in-public-hospitals-namibia.html)

**Mozambique  
Thousands of flood victims still await resettlement**Thousands of victims of the 2007 floods in the Zambezi Valley, in central Mozambique, have not yet been resettled, over six years later. This sombre fact is contained in the report from the National Disasters Management Institute (INGC) to the meeting of the Coordinating Council of the Ministry of State Administration, under way in Inhassoro in the southern province of Inhambane. According to the Deputy General Director of the INGC, Casimiro Abreu, the data, as of 5 September this year, show that “of the 285,000 people affected, 163,000 were resettled, equivalent to 25,000 households”. “Those not yet covered by resettlement – about 122,000 people – have plots of land, and are currently living in tents, or in improvised and precarious houses”, said Abreu.   
**The Zimbabwean - <http://reliefweb.int/report/mozambique/thousands-flood-victims-still-await-resettlement>**

**Zimbabwe  
Cloning food security**Cloning healthy sweet potato plants by means of tissue culture is helping to alleviate food insecurity in Zimbabwe, and while new production data is hard to come by, some [studies](http://www.lrrd.org/lrrd15/1/maph151.htm" \t "_blank) show plantings are increasing. People have [been resorting](http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/v9/v9i3a4.htm" \t "_blank) to sweet potatoes because the cost of processed starch foods like bread has been escalating. Tissue culture - a biotechnology incorporating several techniques - is used to grow improved seedlings that could then produce better fruit or flowers, and be more disease-resistant. A [food security survey](http://www.fews.net/docs/Publications/Zimbabwe_FSO_07_2013.pdf" \t "_blank) by the Zimbabwe Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) put an estimated 1.5 million people of almost 13 million in need of assistance between October and December 2013, and this figure is expected to rise to 2.2 million between January and March 2014.   
**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report/98830/cloning-food-security-in-zimbabwe**](http://www.irinnews.org/report/98830/cloning-food-security-in-zimbabwe)

MENA

**Across MENA  
Syrian conflict takes a toll on Palestinian aid**Displaced Palestinians are losing out to Syrians in desperate need of aid, and the UN is asking Arab countries to pitch in and bolster funding for its agency mandated with helping Palestinian refugees. UNSG Ban Ki-moon and his counterpart at the Arab League, Nabil El Araby, are co-chairing a ministerial meeting Thursday in New York on the funding challenges that the UN Relief and Works Agency is facing. UNRWA, which helps nearly 5 million registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in addition to the West Bank and Gaza, is facing a $54 million shortfall of its roughly $600 million annual operational budget.   
**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/syrian-conflict-takes-toll-palestinian-aid-20378149**](http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/syrian-conflict-takes-toll-palestinian-aid-20378149)

**Iraq**

**At least 33 people killed in violence across country**

At least 33 people were killed in attacks across Iraq that included a coordinated assault against local government and police buildings in the north of the country, police and medical sources said. In the northern town of Hawija, two suicide car bombs were detonated outside a local council building and a police station before militants fired mortar rounds and exchanged fire with the army, killing three soldiers, military sources said. A bomb planted inside a wooden cart on a commercial street in the northern city of Mosul exploded, killing seven people, and a roadside bomb south of Tikrit killed five more, police said. Gunmen opened fire at a vehicle in Taji, around 20km north of Baghdad, killing two off-duty soldiers, police and medical sources said. In Baghdad, gunmen broke into the house of a policeman in the Shaab district of northern Baghdad, killing him, his wife, his sister-in-law and his three children, police and medics said.   
**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/25/uk-iraq-violence-idUKBRE98O0LS20130925**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2013/09/25/uk-iraq-violence-idUKBRE98O0LS20130925)

**Lebanon**

**For Syrian children, education needs are urgent, and urgently underfunded**

A roundtable discussion on the educational needs of Syrian refugee children in Lebanon is among events on the agenda of UN Special Envoy for Global Education, and former PM of the UK, Gordon Brown, during the 68th session of the UN General Assembly. Mr. Brown’s role as Special Envoy includes garnering support for Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon’s Global Education First Initiative, which strives to achieve quality education for all children. That goal is in jeopardy in Lebanon, where, despite a lack of formal refugee camps, more than 756,630 Syrians are now staying – in rented accommodations, in the homes of Lebanese families, in informal tent settlements

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.educationandtransition.org/resources/for-syrian-children-education-needs-are-urgent-and-urgently-underfunded/**](http://www.educationandtransition.org/resources/for-syrian-children-education-needs-are-urgent-and-urgently-underfunded/) **UN says Lebanon faces social explosion over Syria refugees**The UN gave a grim warning Wednesday that Lebanon faces an explosion of social tensions unless the international community helps to handle hundreds of thousands of Syrian refugees. President Michel Suleiman told FM’s from the world's leading nations that his country faces an "existential crisis" because of the influx fleeing the war between President Bashar Assad and opposition rebels. He told the International Support Group for Lebanon that major financing was needed to pay for the refugees, reinforce public services because of the burden and bolster the army. The Syria conflict will cost Lebanon $7.5 billion from 2012 to 2014, according to an estimate given by the World Bank. The UN says there are already 760,000 Syrians registered in Lebanon and there will be one million by the end of the year. Lebanon's government estimates there are already 1.2 million with many not bothering to register.  
**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/99750-u-n-says-lebanon-faces-social-explosion-over-syria-refugees-suleimen-asks-for-major-financing**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/99750-u-n-says-lebanon-faces-social-explosion-over-syria-refugees-suleimen-asks-for-major-financing)

**Army opens fire at radical militants from Syria, 1 person killed**

The Lebanese army morning opened fire at a group of extremist militants trying to sneak into the country from neighboring Syria, killing one and wounding two others. The Lebanese soldiers opened fire at a mini-bus with several members of al-Qaida-linked al-Nusra Front onboard when the driver refused to stop at a checkpoint in the Bekaa town of Arsal bordering war-torn Syria, the official National News Agency reported. The report claimed that the group of Syrian militants was trying to illegally enter into Lebanon through Arsal.

**Xinhua -** [**http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-09/25/c\_132749858.htm**](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2013-09/25/c_132749858.htm)

**Oman**

**Over a dozen cases of measles reported in Sohar**

Over a dozen cases of measles have been reported among a group of expatriates in the wilayat of Sohar. A top-level team from the Ministry of Health (MoH), comprising senior doctors and experts, have been trying to get in touch with those affected by the disease. A ministry official said that the expatriates came to the sultanate due to the unrest prevailing in their country. According to WHO, a health mission had visited the sultanate this year to validate the elimination of measles, rubella and congenital rubella syndrome. The mission had a number of meetings with MoH experts. The WHO team was satisfied with the findings and noted that Oman met all the criteria for elimination of the diseases.

**Muscat Daily -** [**http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Over-a-dozen-cases-of-measles-reported-in-Sohar-says-Ministry-of-Health-2l2b**](http://www.muscatdaily.com/Archive/Oman/Over-a-dozen-cases-of-measles-reported-in-Sohar-says-Ministry-of-Health-2l2b)

**Sudan**

**29 dead in 3 days of riots**At least 29 people have been killed in three days of rioting in Sudan sparked by a government decision to scrap subsidies on fuel, medical officials said on Thursday. "We have received the bodies of 21 people" since the protests began on Monday, a hospital source in Khartoum's twin city Omdurman told AFP. Eight other people were killed in other regions across the country, witnesses and families said.   
**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130926/29-dead-3-days-sudan-riots**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130926/29-dead-3-days-sudan-riots)

**Syria**

**Rebels urge boycott of any conference involving Iran**

More than 100 senior officers of the Free Syrian Army have signed a petition urging a boycott of any peace conference on their country if Iran is involved, an opposition general said on Wednesday. The statement "condemned once more the criminal regime of Assad and any conference which will open any path other than the toppling of the regime." It accused Tehran, a key ally of Syrian President Bashar Assad, of being a "serious part of the problem," and added that it "should not be involved in any way in any conference on Syria." The officers sought a "boycott of any conference or discussion which involves Iran in one way or the other."

**AFP -** [**http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/99682-syrian-rebels-urge-boycott-of-any-conference-involving-iran**](http://www.naharnet.com/stories/en/99682-syrian-rebels-urge-boycott-of-any-conference-involving-iran)

ROSA

**Across ROSA**

**12 killed by militants in Kashmir**At least 12 people have been killed in attacks by militants on a police station and an army camp in India's northern Jammu and Kashmir state, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said. The gunfight took place at the army camp in Samba district of Jammu region, near the border with Pakistan. The timing and location of the "terrorist attacks" indicated they were aimed to derail talks between the PM’s of India and Pakistan scheduled in New York on 29 September.   
**DPA -** [**http://tribune.com.pk/story/609600/12-dead-as-indian-army-camp-police-station-attacked-in-kashmir/**](http://tribune.com.pk/story/609600/12-dead-as-indian-army-camp-police-station-attacked-in-kashmir/)

**Maldives**

**Pressure mounts over election hold-up**

International pressure mounted on the Maldives to go ahead with a presidential run-off election due this weekend which the Supreme Court has suspended. Canada, Australia and the European Union joined the Commonwealth, the US and other countries in calling on authorities to hold the vote on 28 September as previously scheduled. Ex-president Mohamed Nasheed is seen as the front-runner in the run-off against Abdullah Yameen, the half-brother of former ruler Maumoon Abdul Gayoom. The statements triggered a strong reaction from President Mohamed Waheed, who branded them "irresponsible" and urged the international community to halt speculation.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h-ZjvbucYvgDvZfgtD6uQ1IY3bGA?docId=41f868a5-4e37-4ebb-91ea-c56ee38127dc&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h-ZjvbucYvgDvZfgtD6uQ1IY3bGA?docId=41f868a5-4e37-4ebb-91ea-c56ee38127dc&hl=en)

**Pakistan**

**Aid chopper targeted; 355 dead in quake**Two rockets fired by militants in Pakistan's quake-struck region narrowly missed a government helicopter on Thursday as survivors complained that aid was not reaching far-flung areas and the harrowing death toll climbed to 355. The attack underscored the dangers authorities and aid workers face in helping victims in southwestern Baluchistan province where a massive, magnitude 7.7 earthquake hit earlier this week. Two days after the tremor struck, rescuers were still struggling to help survivors. The death toll from the quake reached 355 on Thursday, with nearly 700 people injured, according to a statement from the country's National Disaster Management Authority. In the town of Arawan, about 100 protesters gathered around the district office to call attention to the plight of those living in outlying villages still waiting for help.  
**AP - <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/pakistan-struggles-quake-victims-271-dead-20367620>**

**Sri Lanka  
UN calls on authorities to probe war crimes**  
The UN has said that Sri Lanka could face an international probe unless it properly investigates suspected war crimes and other abuses from the civil war that ended in 2009. Navi Pillay, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said on Wednesday she had seen no new or comprehensive Sri Lankan effort to properly and independently investigate as the UN's 47-nation Human Rights Council had repeatedly demanded. As Australia and Britain were encouraging engagement, rather than isolation of Sri Lanka on Wednesday, Pillay said in the report that Sri Lanka might be sliding towards an authoritarian system, as President Mahinda Rajapaksa gathered power around him. Her report said that she would recommend that the Council establish its own probe if the nation does not show more "credible'' progress by March. Pillay said the country was also seeing a surge of violence against religious minorities - Christians, Muslims and Hindus - while the Colombo government stood by. **Al Jazeera - <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2013/09/un-raises-sri-lanka-war-crimes-concerns-2013925223211209555.html>**

TACR

**Across TACR  
Colombia's Santos says support of Venezuela, Cuba key to peace talks**

The support of Venezuela and Cuba will play a key role in Colombia's efforts to reach a negotiated end to Latin America's last major guerilla war, Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos said on Wednesday. Santos, who 10 months ago launched a round of talks with the left-wing FARC rebels, said he believed talks in Havana could bring an end to a 50-year conflict that has taken the lives of more than 220,000 people, mostly civilians. Even if the talks, due to resume on 3 October, succeed, Colombia will face challenges in re-integrating members of the resistance into mainstream society, rather than allowing people accustomed to violence to slide into lives of crime, Santos said.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20130925233915-vfep5/?source=hpbreaking**](http://www.trust.org/item/20130925233915-vfep5/?source=hpbreaking)

**Brazil**

**Gender violence kills 50,000 women in 10 years**

More than 50,000 women were killed in gender violence in Brazil between 2001 and 2011, a study showed Wednesday. Brazil's Institute for Applied Economic Research stressed in its survey that a 2006 law that toughened punishments for such assaults did not improve the murder rate. "We did not see a reduction of the annual mortality rates: the mortality rates were of 5.28 per 100,000 women during the 2001-2006 period, before the law and of 5.22 between 2007-2011," the study found. Those figures mean that more than 5,000 women were killed each year during the decade that ended in 2011. Then president Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva approved the so-called "Maria da Penha" law in 2006 in honor of a biochemist who fought for years to have her husband sentenced for trying to murder her twice and leaving her crippled. A special government hotline for battered women received 730,000 calls last year alone.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130925/gender-violence-kills-50000-brazil-women-10-years**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/130925/gender-violence-kills-50000-brazil-women-10-years)

**Paraguay**

**Government announces aid plan for hailstorm victims**

Paraguay announced an aid plan for victims of weekend hailstorms that killed two people and damaged thousands of homes in several parts of the country. According to the Vice President, some 10,000 families were left homeless by the hail that fell, destroying not just homes, but also crops, especially in the department of Caaguazu. The government began implementing the second part of the aid plan to help small-scale farmers by giving the people seeds so they can plant again.

**Xinhua -** [**http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/813460.shtml**](http://www.globaltimes.cn/content/813460.shtml)

**Venezuela**

**President scraps UN trip over 'threats'**

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro said Wednesday he had scrapped his plan to take part in the UN General Assembly in New York to "protect my life" after purported threats on it. Maduro, just back from a visit to China, said that on a layover in Vancouver he received intelligence on what he said were "two highly serious provocations", which prompted him to scrap his UN trip. "When I got into Vancouver I evaluated the intelligence which we received from several sources. I decided then and there to continue back to Caracas and drop the New York trip to protect a key goal: safeguarding my physical integrity, protecting my life," Maduro told local media.

**AFP -**

[**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jjnJPgsdPA3GIk-irkfpnWoQLZ3A?docId=c46677ad-ba91-4fd5-8d8c-73e0e9afe1a4**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jjnJPgsdPA3GIk-irkfpnWoQLZ3A?docId=c46677ad-ba91-4fd5-8d8c-73e0e9afe1a4)

WCAR

**DR Congo**

**UN reports renewed violence in eastern Congo**A spokesman for the UN mission in eastern Congo says renewed fighting has broken out between M23 rebels and the Congolese army. Alexandre Essome said Thursday that fresh violence had erupted near the town of Mabenga, north of the regional capital of Goma. Omar Kavota, a spokesman for a local civil society group, said that rebels had attacked Mabenga around 3 a.m. and later assaulted two other communities in the area. M23 president Bertrand Bisimwa, however, said it was government forces and their allies who had attacked first.   
**AP -** [**http://www.seattlepi.com/news/world/article/UN-reports-renewed-violence-in-eastern-Congo-4845209.php**](http://www.seattlepi.com/news/world/article/UN-reports-renewed-violence-in-eastern-Congo-4845209.php)

**Making the best of displacement**

The army's insistence that it is safe to go home does little to convince the thousands of people who have made a temporary residence of the northeastern DR Congo town of Dungu, in Orientale Province. About a quarter of the town's 73,000 inhabitants are IDPs who fled there to escape attacks by the LRA insurgency, which has been weakened over the years but continues to sow terror in both DRC and neighbouring CAR. The UN estimates that, since January, some 17 people have been killed and 54 abducted in around 50 attacks attributed to the LRA. This is despite claims by the army that it has driven all remaining LRA fighters out of eastern DR Congo.

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98829**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=98829)

**Guinea**

**Government warns of 'danger from outside forces'**

A Guinean government minister said on 25 September that the country was "in danger" from outsiders plotting against it amid media reports that a coup was being planned in Conakry. The Security Minister made the comments in response to a story in the latest edition of Paris-based weekly Le Canard Enchaine which said it had seen French and American secret service documents "announcing a coup in Conakry". "Guinea is in danger and the strings are being pulled from outside," the minister told a meeting in Conakry of the International Organisation of the Francophonie, refusing to comment on the specific details of the story.

**AFP -** [**http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j1W8e4uP5Y9\_boRwTUxV5SQzS9vA?docId=c5f6a001-0a82-45ed-aa24-72762d3c7c1f&hl=en**](http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j1W8e4uP5Y9_boRwTUxV5SQzS9vA?docId=c5f6a001-0a82-45ed-aa24-72762d3c7c1f&hl=en)

**Liberia  
Court upholds 50 years for Taylor**An international war crimes court upheld the conviction and 50-year sentence of former Liberian President Charles Taylor for aiding rebels in neighboring Sierra Leone, ruling Thursday that his financial, material and tactical support fueled horrendous crimes against civilians. The appeals chamber of the Special Court for Sierra Leone upheld the 65-year-old Taylor's conviction on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including terrorism, murder, rape and using child soldiers. The court found Taylor provided crucial aid to rebels in Sierra Leone during that country's 11-year civil war, which left an estimated 50,000 people dead before its conclusion in 2002.   
**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/court-upholds-50-years-liberias-taylor-103038292.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/court-upholds-50-years-liberias-taylor-103038292.html)

**Mali**

**UN’s peace keepers ‘raped women in Mali’**At least four UN peacekeepers have been involved in the rape of a woman in Mali, according to the UN. The soldiers have been identified as being among 1,500 Chadian troops serving with Minusma. The UN says it wants Chad to investigate the incident and take disciplinary action against the men. Minusma took over security duties in July after the withdrawal of French forces, which led an operation to oust Islamist militants from the north.The assault is believed to have happened last Thursday in the northern city of Gao.  
**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24272839#**](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-24272839)

**Nigeria**

**Radical leader claims recent attacks**

The leader of Boko Haram uprising in Nigeria's northeast has resurfaced and is claiming responsibility for a recent spate of attacks. Nigeria's military in August said Boko Haram leader Abubakar Shekau might have been killed. In a video viewed on 25 September a man believed to be Shekau responded: "The world should know that I cannot die except by the will of Allah." He said Boko Haram was celebrating victories in Benisheik, where more than 143 civilians were killed, and in Monguno and surrounding northern villages where more than a dozen civilians have been killed this month.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigeria-radical-leader-claims-recent-attacks-20368628**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigeria-radical-leader-claims-recent-attacks-20368628)

**Attackers kill pastor, torch church in Nigeria**Police say suspected Islamic militants armed with automatic rifles and explosives killed a pastor and his son and torched a church in northeast Nigeria before dawn Thursday. Corporal Musa Ibrahim said the attackers also killed the village head at Dorawa, about 100km from the Yobe state school where extremists in July killed 29 students.   
**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigeria-radical-leader-claims-recent-attacks-20368628**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/nigeria-radical-leader-claims-recent-attacks-20368628)

**Senegal**

**Water cuts shorten President's UN visit**

For nearly two weeks, Dakar residents have bathed in the ocean, dug makeshift wells along the beach and waited in long lines near distribution trucks in search of water that is no longer running from the taps. The city's poor outer suburbs and wealthy expatriate neighborhoods alike have been affected by water cuts that officials blame on faulty equipment located hundreds of kilometers away. Frustration with the government has mounted daily, compounded by the fact that Senegal is in the middle of the rainy season and large sections of the city are simultaneously dealing with flooding. Though water and power cuts are common, a two-week cut in services is unprecedented in Senegal, and young men have burned tires in the streets in protest. On Wednesday, President Macky Sall decided to cut short his visit to the UN General Assembly to return and address the problem, according to a statement issued by his office. He will preside over a cabinet meeting on 26 September, the statement said.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/water-cuts-shorten-senegal-leaders-visit-20371938**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/water-cuts-shorten-senegal-leaders-visit-20371938)

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