**UNICEF OPSCEN Brief – 15 August 2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [GENERAL](#GENERAL) | **Across Regions** |  |
| [CEE/CIS](#CEECIS) | **Across CEE/CIS** | Russian military vehicles enter Ukraine as aid convoy stops short of border |
|  |  | Border guards have crossed border to inspect Russian aid cargo |
|  | **Ukraine** | Families in war zone affected by infrastructure failures |
|  |  | At least 11 civilians killed by shelling in Donetsk |
|  | **Turkey** | Hundreds of Syrian refugees leave Turkish city after clashes |
| [EAP](#EAP) | **Myanmar** | MSF urges government to allow it to resume work as health crisis worsens |
|  | **Philippines** | Government, rebels wrap up talks on draft Muslim self-rule law |
|  | **Thailand** | Yala bomb blast leaves 2 rangers dead |
| [ESA](#ESA) | **Somalia** | At least 14 killed as AU forces attack insurgents in Mogadishu |
|  | **South Sudan** | Heavy fighting amid sanctions warnings |
| [LAC](#LAC) | **Across LAC** | Central America braces for drought-linked food crisis |
|  | **Colombia** | Wide range of protests spread across country |
|  | **Haiti** | UN troops disperse protesters supporting Aristide |
|  |  | Cholera vaccines for 200,000 people – UNICEF mention |
|  | **Nicaragua** | Citizens told to eat iguanas as drought threatens food crisis |
| [MENA](#MENA) | **Egypt** | Five dead as pro-Islamists mark Rabaa anniversary |
|  | **Iraq** | Nuri al-Maliki resigns as prime minister, backs successor Abadi |
| [SA](#SA) | **Nepal** | Landslides kill 10 people in monsoon |
|  | **Pakistan** | Ten people dead in attacks on air force bases in Quetta |
|  |  | Clashes break out after shots fired at opposition leader's car |
| [WCA](#WCA) | **CAR** | LRA still holding on in Central Africa |
|  | **Cameroon** | Attacks curb aid work in the north - UNICEF mention |
|  | **DR Congo** | UN envoy condemns murder of family in eastern town |
|  | **Niger** | Floods kill 12 people, leave thousands hungry |
|  | **Nigeria** | Boko Haram abduct dozens of boys in the northeast |
|  | **Senegal** | Student killed in protest clash with police |

CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Russian military vehicles enter Ukraine as aid convoy stops short of border**

Two British newspapers and a Russian are reporting that a column of Russian military vehicles has crossed into Ukraine separately from a convoy of some 250 Russian trucks that Moscow says is carrying humanitarian aid. Media have reported witnessing the military convoy crossing the border near the Ukrainian city of Donetsk after nightfall on 14 August. The column of about 23 armored personnel carriers was supported by logistics vehicles and used a dirt road to cross the border through a gap in a barbed-wire fence. The crossing occurred around 10 p.m. local time.

**The Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/14/russian-military-vehicles-enter-ukraine-aid-convoy-stops-short-border**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/14/russian-military-vehicles-enter-ukraine-aid-convoy-stops-short-border)

**New Times -** [**http://www.newtimes.ru/articles/detail/85685**](http://www.newtimes.ru/articles/detail/85685)

**The Telegraph -** [**http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11035401/Russian-armoured-vehicles-and-military-trucks-cross-border-into-Ukraine.html**](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/ukraine/11035401/Russian-armoured-vehicles-and-military-trucks-cross-border-into-Ukraine.html)

**Border guards have crossed border to inspect Russian aid cargo**

Ukrainian border guards have crossed the border into Russia to begin inspecting a Russian cargo of aid intended for humanitarian relief in eastern Ukraine, a border guard spokesperson said. The border guards would check the cargo on Russian territory at a point opposite the Ukrainian settlement of Izvaryne which is held by pro-Russian separatists, the spokesperson said.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ukraine-russia-parry-russian-aid-convoy-24983163**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/ukraine-russia-parry-russian-aid-convoy-24983163)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-ukraine-crisis-border-idUSKBN0GF0H420140815**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-ukraine-crisis-border-idUSKBN0GF0H420140815)

**Ukraine**

**Families in war zone affected by infrastructure failures**

The humanitarian situation in eastern Ukraine is deteriorating. In Lugansk, families that have not left are finding it even more difficult to get basic needs met. The city of Lugansk remains a war zone and there is shelling and gunfire across the city. After months of fighting, the infrastructure is falling apart. A humanitarian corridor in and out of Lugansk appears to be functioning, but the city's infrastructure is worsening every day. Residents who remain in Lugansk have been without electricity, clean drinking water and gas for two weeks now; welfare payments have been interrupted and there are problems with food supplies. The school year is supposed to begin on 1 October, but the possibility of resuming normal educational programmes in these areas is unlikely at the moment.

**SOS -** [**http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/news-and-stories/news/lugansk-update-broken-infrastructure-war-zone**](http://www.sos-childrensvillages.org/news-and-stories/news/lugansk-update-broken-infrastructure-war-zone)

**At least 11 civilians killed by shelling in Donetsk**

Shelling killed 11 civilians and wounded eight more over the past 24 hours in the besieged rebel stronghold of Donetsk in eastern Ukraine, local authorities said on 15 August. Fighting raged overnight in central and western districts of the insurgent-controlled industrial hub, the city council said in a statement. Fierce mortar fire on 14 August pummeled the centre of the city and also severely damaged a satellite town on the outskirts as Ukrainian forces tightened their vice on hunkered-down separatist fighters. Meanwhile, government troops pushed on with their offensive across the region by retaking three small towns, the military said in a statement. Fierce clashes had also taken place in the outskirt of the stricken rebel bastion of Lugansk, the military said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/11-civilians-killed-shelling-rebel-held-donetsk-084257362.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/11-civilians-killed-shelling-rebel-held-donetsk-084257362.html)

**Turkey**

**Hundreds of Syrian refugees leave Turkish city after clashes**

The Turkish authorities were moving hundreds of Syrian refugees on 14 August from the southern city of Gaziantep to camps, after three nights of violent protests by locals angered by their presence, reports said. Tensions between Turkish residents and Syrian refugees in Gaziantep have flared in recent days since the murder of a Turkish landlord allegedly stabbed to death by his Syrian tenant. Some 50 Turkish residents in Gaziantep have been arrested over the violent protests, which started this week and have seen anti-riot police fire tear gas to quell the unrest, NTV television said. About a dozen Syrian refugees were wounded in the violence.

**AFP -** [**https://news.yahoo.com/hundreds-syrian-refugees-leave-turkish-city-clashes-223529428.html**](https://news.yahoo.com/hundreds-syrian-refugees-leave-turkish-city-clashes-223529428.html)

EAP

**Myanmar**

**MSF urges government to allow it to resume work as health crisis worsens**

MSF has urged the Myanmar government to follow through on a commitment to let it resume work in one of the poorest parts of the country, warning that healthcare there has seriously deteriorated since it was expelled. The government ordered the MSF out of the western state of Rakhine in February after the group said it had treated people it believed were victims of sectarian violence. The government denied that an attack had taken place and it has also accused MSF of being biased in favor of members of the minority Muslim community. The withdrawal of the agency, which had operated in the area for more than 20 years, left some half-a-million Rohingya Muslims without access to reliable medical care.

**Reuters -** [**http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-myanmar-rohingyas-idINKBN0GF0RM20140815**](http://in.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-myanmar-rohingyas-idINKBN0GF0RM20140815)

**Philippines**

**Government, rebels wrap up talks on draft Muslim self-rule law**

The Philippines government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) rebel group said on 15 August they had wrapped up talks aimed at ensuring the terms of a landmark peace deal would be enacted into law. The joint statement said on 15 August that the resolutions arrived at by both parties since the new talks began on 1 August "will be incorporated into the final draft Basic Bangsamoro Law that will be prepared and submitted to the President. The statement did not discuss the details of these resolutions.

**AFP -** [**https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/24729348/philippines-rebels-wrap-up-talks-on-draft-muslim-self-rule-law/**](https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/24729348/philippines-rebels-wrap-up-talks-on-draft-muslim-self-rule-law/)

**Thailand**

**Yala bomb blast leaves 2 rangers dead**

Two rangers died and one was seriously injured when a bomb similar to one that killed two soldiers earlier this month exploded in Yala province. They died in the 4.30pm explosion which occurred while a Ranger Task Force 47 team were on patrol near Samakkhi School in Kato, in Yala district's tambon Patae. The injured ranger was not identified. A bomb-disposal team examining the scene said the device was stuffed in a gas cylinder and buried next to a tree near a canal. The attack came as security agencies closely monitored the activities of the Patani Liberation Army (PLA) which is reportedly recruiting and training insurgents to perpetrate further acts of violence in the far South.

**Bangkok Post -** [**http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/426591/yala-bomb-blast-leaves-2-rangers-dead**](http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/security/426591/yala-bomb-blast-leaves-2-rangers-dead)

ESA

**Somalia**

**At least 14 killed as AU forces attack insurgents in Mogadishu**

At least 14 people were killed in heavy fighting when AMISOM entered a surburb of Mogadishu in an offensive against armed militias. The sounds of warfare rattled Mogadishu residents from their beds as government troops launched a dawn attack on a house belonging to a former warlord as part of a disarmament campaign. Explosions and gunfire were heard as troops battled militiamen loyal to the former warlord. Launched last week, the government's disarmament campaign is an attempt to reduce the number of weapons in the city. The government says some 500 guns were recovered during the first four operations.

**AP -** [**http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/08/15/somalia-raid-disarmament/14096839/**](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/08/15/somalia-raid-disarmament/14096839/)

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/500-guns-seized-somalia-disarm-mogadishu-24980529**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/500-guns-seized-somalia-disarm-mogadishu-24980529)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140815074936-jgb4t**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140815074936-jgb4t)

**South Sudan**

**Heavy fighting amid sanctions warnings**

South Sudan's civil war entered its ninth month on 15 August with rebels and government troops engaged in heavy battles, diplomats said, days after UN warnings of sanctions if the conflict continues. Fighting was reported around the town of Bentiu, Unity State, as well as in Jonglei State. A rebel spokesperson claimed it was the start of a "long awaited government offensive", reporting clashes to the east and south of Bentiu. He also said there was fighting in the village of Ayod in the eastern Jonglei state, one of the areas hardest hit by a growing hunger crisis. Aid workers also reported heavy shooting around Bentiu.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/heavy-fighting-south-sudan-amid-sanctions-warnings-073231644.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/heavy-fighting-south-sudan-amid-sanctions-warnings-073231644.html)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**Central America braces for drought-linked food crisis**

Low rainfall linked to the El Nino weather phenomenon has led to drought in parts of Central America, causing widespread damage to crops, shortages and rising prices of food, and worsening hunger among the region’s poor. An unusually hot season and extended dry spells have brought drought to areas in eastern and western Guatemala and El Salvador, southern Honduras and northern and central Nicaragua, destroying swathes of bean and maize crops, the region’s staple foods, and putting pressure on subsistence farmers and food prices. In response to the drought, the Guatemalan government has said it will begin distributing 4,000 tonnes of food aid to more than 170,000 families affected by the drought from early October, using government and WFP food reserves. In Honduras, the government is distributing food, including rice, beans and flour, and vitamin supplements to 76,000 families, many subsistence farmers, affected by the drought.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.euronews.com/newswires/2644200-central-america-braces-for-drought-linked-food-crisis/**](http://www.euronews.com/newswires/2644200-central-america-braces-for-drought-linked-food-crisis/)

**Colombia**

**Wide range of protests spread across country**

Social protests spread across northern and southwestern Colombia, and into the city of Medellin on 14 August as residents went on strike over lacking infrastructure, water and electricity shortages, and drought. In the Catatumbo region of the Norte de Santander state, some 5,000 inhabitants reportedly took to the streets with banners and chants to show their anger with local authorities over what they called government negligence that caused the local Zulia river to dry up. In several municipalities along Colombia’s Pacific Coast, protests broke out to demand improvement access to health care, education and energy. The locals claimed they have suffered a days-long energy black-out. According to local newspaper, the protests have mobilized a staggering 240,000 people in the area.

**Colombia Reports -** [**http://colombiareports.co/social-protests-colombia-border-states/**](http://colombiareports.co/social-protests-colombia-border-states/)

**Haiti**

**UN troops disperse protesters supporting Aristide**

UN peacekeepers in Haiti have clashed with supporters of former President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in Port-au-Prince. Dozens of Mr Aristide's supporters had set up barricades outside his home, fearing he could be arrested. UN troops fired smoke grenades to disperse the protesters after a car carrying UN staff was attacked. Mr Aristide faces charges of money laundering, but his supporters say the investigation is politically motivated. A judge issued an arrest warrant for him after he failed to appear in court for questioning about the charges, which also include corruption and drug trafficking.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/haiti-tense-summons-issued-president-24983572**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/haiti-tense-summons-issued-president-24983572)

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28798889**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28798889)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/14/us-haiti-aristide-idUSKBN0GE2D020140814**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/14/us-haiti-aristide-idUSKBN0GE2D020140814)

**Cholera vaccines for 200,000 people – UNICEF mention**

With support from the OCHA-managed CERF, Haiti’s Ministry of Health and the PAHO/WHO are set to vaccinate 200,000 people against cholera. The three-phase vaccination initiative, which is part of a comprehensive Government and UN-supported operation to fight cholera in Haiti, is targeting 600,000 people in areas where the disease persists. More than 100,000 people were vaccinated during the first phase of the campaign in 2013 and another 300,000 vaccinations are planned for late 2014. In January 2014, CERF allocated $6 million from its Underfunded Emergencies window to sustain cholera-prevention-and-treatment operations in Haiti, and in May, another $2.7 million was approved of which $1.7 million went to PAHO/WHO. The remaining $1 million went to UNICEF for cholera prevention efforts.

**OCHA -** [**http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/haiti-cholera-vaccines-200000-people**](http://www.unocha.org/top-stories/all-stories/haiti-cholera-vaccines-200000-people)

**Nicaragua**

**Citizens told to eat iguanas as drought threatens food crisis**

Nicaraguans struggling to afford meat as the country suffers its worst drought in 32 years should consider raising and eating iguanas, a government expert has suggested. The advice comes amid warnings that 4 Central American countries could require levels of humanitarian aid not seen since the aftermath of hurricane Mitch 16 years ago, as poor harvests and rapid increases in the prices of staple items threaten a food crisis. The situation in the country is growing increasingly serious. According to the national livestock commission, Conagan, the drought saw 2,500 cattle starve to death in July, while a further 600,000 of Nicaragua’s 4.1m livestock are on the verge of starvation.

**The Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/aug/15/nicaraguans-iguanas-drought-food-crisis**](http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/aug/15/nicaraguans-iguanas-drought-food-crisis)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Five people dead as pro-Islamists mark Rabaa anniversary**

At least five people were killed in sporadic violence in Egypt on Thursday after Islamists called protests to mark the first anniversary of a police crackdown that cost the lives of hundreds of demonstrators. On August 14, 2013, after then army chief and now President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi had removed Egypt's first freely elected Islamist president Mohamed Morsi, police set upon thousands of Morsi supporters at protest camps in Cairo's Rabaa al-Adawiya and Nahda squares, leaving hundreds of people dead.

**AFP -** [**http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/three-dead-in-egypt-clashes-on-crackdown-anniversary/article/397059**](http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/world/three-dead-in-egypt-clashes-on-crackdown-anniversary/article/397059)

**Iraq**

**Nuri al-Maliki resigns as prime minister, backs successor Abadi**

Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki has agreed to resign and lend his support to Haider al-Abadi, who was named to replace him this week amid fears that Maliki might seek to hold on to power through force. "I announce before you today, to ease the movement of the political process and the formation of the new government, the withdrawal of my candidacy in favour of brother Dr. Haider al-Abadi," Maliki said in a televised address late on 14 August, with Abadi standing by his side. Maliki said his decision to resign was based on a desire to "safeguard the high interests of the country" and spoke of the "terrorist" threat the country was facing from an insurgency.

**AFP -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20140814-iraq-nuri-maliki-resigns-prime-minister-support-abadi-isis/**](http://www.france24.com/en/20140814-iraq-nuri-maliki-resigns-prime-minister-support-abadi-isis/)

SA

**Nepal**

**Landslides kill 10 people in monsoon**

Multiple landslides triggered by monsoon rains have left at least 10 people dead in Nepal and caused a major bridge along a national highway to cave in, officials said on 15 August. Heavy rains have swept away homes and damaged roads across the country's hilly western region and along the eastern plains bordering India, said the Home Ministry spokesperson. The deaths come two weeks after the worst landslide in more than a decade slammed into hamlets in northeastern Nepal, leaving 156 people dead.

**AFP -** [**http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/1-front-top-news/188623-landslides-kill-10-in-nepal-monsoon.html**](http://www.brecorder.com/top-news/1-front-top-news/188623-landslides-kill-10-in-nepal-monsoon.html)

**Pakistan**

**Ten people dead in attacks on air force bases in Quetta**

Ten Taliban-linked militants were killed and 13 members of the Pakistani security forces were wounded in attacks on two air force bases in the strategic West Pakistan city of Quetta on 14 August, officials said. While the attackers did not get inside either facility, the raids marked the third time since June Pakistani airports had been targeted and will raise more questions about how secure such facilities are. Police said some of the attackers in the 14 August night's raids were killed at the Samungli air force base, which shares a runway with the civilian airport in Quetta. More were killed at Khalid air force base, said a provincial Inspector General.

**AFP -** [**https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/24721608/gunbattle-near-pakistan-airbases-kills-four/**](https://au.news.yahoo.com/a/24721608/gunbattle-near-pakistan-airbases-kills-four/)

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-pakistan-militants-attacks-idUSKBN0GE1ZC20140815**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/15/us-pakistan-militants-attacks-idUSKBN0GE1ZC20140815)

**Clashes break out after shots fired at opposition leader's car**

Clashes have broken out in the Pakistani city of Gujranwala after gun shots were fired at the vehicle of Imran Khan as he led an anti-government march to Islamabad. Mr Khan's spokesperson said the politician was not injured but his vehicle was hit. The convoy was also attacked by a stone-throwing mob and police did not intervene, she said. Mr Khan and cleric Tahir ul-Qadri are both leading protest marches to Islamabad where they intend to hold a sit-in until the Prime Minister resigns.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-15/clashes-after-shots-fired-at-opposition-leader-imran-khan/5674644**](http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-15/clashes-after-shots-fired-at-opposition-leader-imran-khan/5674644)

WCA

**Cameroon**

**Attacks curb aid work in the north - UNICEF mention**

An escalation of attacks by Boko Haram is restricting aid operations in the Far North Region of Cameroon where thousands of Nigerian refugees have sought safety, say aid workers. Local authorities in the Far North Region of Cameroon estimate that as many as 25,000 Nigerians have fled into the region. UNHCR says it has registered some 11,000 refugees. Recently, some 2,800 refugees were moved to Minawao camp 130km from the border, bringing the total camp population to around 6,000. UNICEF recently voiced concern about the impact of insecurity on efforts to curb the spread of cholera in northern Cameroon. In a recent interview, UNICEF's representative in Cameroon reported that she feared that insecurity would prevent community health workers from reaching the affected population..

**IRIN -** [**http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=100493**](http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?reportID=100493)

**Central African Republic**

**LRA still holding on in Central Africa**

Down, but not out, the guerrillas of the Lord's Resistance Army, led by one of Africa's most brutal militia leaders Joseph Kony, are holding on in the CAR with support from the rebels who temporarily seized power last year. "Each week, the LRA raids a village in the bush, steals, rapes, kills and kidnaps," said Guillaume Cailleaux, a coordinator with the US group Invisible Children. One of the factors keeping the group alive, said Cailleaux and other analysts, is the support of the Seleka rebel group that took power in the CAR last year for nine months.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/konys-lra-still-holding-central-africa-054533207.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/konys-lra-still-holding-central-africa-054533207.html)

**DR Congo**

**UN envoy condemns murder of family in eastern town**

The head of MONUSCO condemned the murder of six members of the same family in the eastern DR Congo and urged those living in the town of Mutarule to practice restraint to avoid further escalation. Following the killings, MONUSCO forces were immediately placed on alert and are joining forces with the Congolese security forces to locate the assailants in order to bring them to justice. “The Mission has increased its patrols to better protect the population. Ensuring peace is a primarily in the hands of the Congolese. I therefore call the inhabitants of the Ruzizi plain to calm and restraint to avoid an escalation,” he stressed.

**UN News Centre -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48482#.U-29lGjD\_ct**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48482#.U-29lGjD_ct)

**Niger**

**Floods kill 12 people, leave thousands hungry**

Heavy rains and flooding in western and central Niger have killed 12 people and left thousands without food or shelter. The country has been hit by an alternating series of droughts and floods in recent years, causing hunger. The Prime Minister's humanitarian adviser, said on 15 August that hundreds of fields have been swamped. The government with UN help has brought food and other supplies to more than 2,000 families. But he said more than 2,000 still need help.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/floods-niger-kill-12-leave-thousands-hungry-24993025**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/floods-niger-kill-12-leave-thousands-hungry-24993025)

**Nigeria**

**Boko Haram abduct dozens of boys in the northeast**

Suspected Boko Haram fighters have abducted dozens of boys and men in a raid on a village in northeast Nigeria, loading them onto trucks and driving them off, witnesses who fled the violence said on 15 August. Several witnesses who fled after the raid on Doron Baga, a sandy fishing village near the shores of Lake Chad, said the militants had burned several houses and that as many as 97 people were unaccounted for. "They left no men or boys in the place; only young children, girls and women," said a witness looking exhausted after a 180 km road trip on the back of a truck to the city of Maiduguri. The villagers said six older men were also killed in the raid.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140815102840-snf0z**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140815102840-snf0z)

**Senegal**

**Student killed in protest clash with police**

A student taking part in a protest in Dakar was killed when demonstrators and police clashed, a government minister said on 15 August. Several students and officers were also badly hurt in the protest on 14 August at the Cheikh Anta Diop University, the Higher Education Minister reported. Demonstrators were demanding that the government pay scholarships. One student said he witnessed police ransacking students' bedrooms and destroying belongings, especially computers, mobile telephone and televisions. The prosecutor's office was looking into the incident, the minister said. Students' union SAES called for the resignation of the Higher Education Minister and the Interior Minister.

**AFP -** [**http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-15/267349-student-killed-in-senegal-protest-clash-with-police.ashx#axzz3ASPFtb7e**](http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Middle-East/2014/Aug-15/267349-student-killed-in-senegal-protest-clash-with-police.ashx#axzz3ASPFtb7e)

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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