**UNICEF OPSCEN Brief - Friday, 29 August 2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [GENERAL](#GENERAL) | **Across Regions** | Lack of toilets blights the lives of 2.5bn people, UN chief warns |
| [CEE/CIS](#CEECIS) | **Turkey** | Erdogan sworn in as president, consolidates power |
|  | **Ukraine** | Nearly 2,600 killed in conflict: UN |
|  |  | UNSG alarmed by ‘dangerous escalation’ in crisis; UNSC holds emergency talks |
|  |  | Rebel forces detain, torture civilians - HRW |
|  |  | Ukraine accuses Russia of sending in tanks, armor |
| [EAP](#EAP) | **China** | Landslide death toll rises to 15, report says |
|  | **PNG** | Volcano erupts, locals evacuate |
| [ESA](#ESA) | **Kenya** | Teenager bleeds to death giving birth days after FGM/C |
|  |  | 31 killed in a week of clan wars |
|  | **Somalia** | Nine killed in fighting between rival regions in north |
|  | **South Sudan** | Riek Machar rebels reject deal |
| [LAC](#LAC) | **Across LAC** | Mexico operations thwart child, family migrants |
|  |  | Poverty down in Latin America and the Caribbean - UNDP |
|  | **Colombia** | Authorities allow lesbian couple to adopt child |
| [MENA](#MENA) | **Egypt** | Jihadist group claims beheading of four men in Sinai |
|  | **Iraq** | UN chief slams ‘brutal’ IS killings |
|  |  | Forces retake villages on way to besieged town |
|  | **Libya** | Militia says it accepts UN call for truce |
|  |  | Government resigns to allow parliament to form new cabinet |
|  | **State of Palestine** | Europe seeks role in postwar Gaza |
|  | **Syria** | UN says more than 3 million have fled war |
|  |  | IS group threatens aid access - UN |
|  |  | UN soldiers seized by rebels in Golan Heights |
| [SA](#SA) | **Across SA** | 15,000 Kashmiris take shelter as cross-border tensions escalate |
|  | **Afghanistan** | Election audit done around 10 September |
|  | **India** | Child marriage on rise in Kerala - UNICEF |
|  | **Pakistan** | Military to mediate amid protest stand-off |
| [WCA](#WCA) | **Across WCA** | More Ebola cases in past week than any other - WHO |
|  | **CAR** | UNICEF distributes half a million mosquito nets amid heavy rains and violence |
|  | **Mali** | Rebel factions agree to end hostilities ahead of September talks |
|  | **Nigeria** | At least 60 killed in central communal battle |

GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Lack of toilets blights the lives of 2.5bn people, UN chief warns**

The world’s lack of progress in building toilets and ending open defecation is having a “staggering” effect on the health, safety, education, prosperity and dignity of 2.5 billion people, the UN deputy secretary general, Jan Eliasson, has warned. Speaking as the UN prepares to debate a new set of development goals – and in the aftermath of the rape and murder of two Indian girls who were attacked as they ventured into a field to relieve themselves – Eliasson said failure to address the issue of sanitation would prove disastrous for a third of humanity.

**Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/aug/28/toilets-lives-un-chief**](http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2014/aug/28/toilets-lives-un-chief)

CEE/CIS

**Turkey**

**Erdogan sworn in as president, consolidates power**

Tayyip Erdogan was sworn in as Turkey's president on Thursday, cementing his position as its most powerful leader of recent times, in a step opponents fear heralds more authoritarian rule and widening religious influence in public life.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/28/us-turkey-erdogan-president-idUSKBN0GS18120140828**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/08/28/us-turkey-erdogan-president-idUSKBN0GS18120140828)

**Ukraine**

**Nearly 2,600 killed in conflict: UN**

The conflict in eastern Ukraine has killed nearly 2,600 people since mid-April, the UN said Friday in their latest report, explaining the sharp increase by fighting in densely populated areas between Kiev's army and pro-Russian rebels. "At least 2,593 people have been killed in Ukraine between mid-April and 27 August 2014," the report said, noting human rights violations like abductions and torture are "committed primarily by the armed groups" fighting the Ukrainian army.

**AFP -** [**https://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/nearly-2-600-killed-east-ukraine-conflict-un-082335708.html**](https://en-maktoob.news.yahoo.com/nearly-2-600-killed-east-ukraine-conflict-un-082335708.html)

**UNSG alarmed by ‘dangerous escalation’ in crisis; UNSC holds emergency talks**

UNSG Ban Ki-moon said he is alarmed by what seems to be a “dangerous escalation” in the crisis in Ukraine with reports of intensified fighting in the country south-east near the border with Russia, as the UNSC held emergency talks on the latest developments. “The international community cannot allow the situation to escalate further nor can a continuation be allowed of the violence and destruction that the conflict has wrought in eastern Ukraine,” a statement said.

**UN -** [**http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48584#.VAAor2jD\_cs**](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=48584#.VAAor2jD_cs)

**Rebel forces detain, torture civilians – HRW**

Russian-backed insurgent forces in eastern Ukraine are arbitrarily detaining civilians and subjecting them to torture, degrading treatment, and forced labor. They also have detained civilians for use as hostages. Beginning in April 2014, armed fighters supporting the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic (DPR) and Luhansk People’s Republic (LPR) have captured hundreds of civilians, targeting presumed critics, including journalists, pro-Ukrainian political activists, religious activists, and in some cases their family members.

**HRW -** [**http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/08/28/ukraine-rebel-forces-detain-torture-civilians**](http://www.hrw.org/news/2014/08/28/ukraine-rebel-forces-detain-torture-civilians)

**Ukraine accuses Russia of sending in tanks, armor**

Ukraine accused Russia on Thursday of entering its territory with tanks, artillery and troops, and Western powers said Moscow had "outright lied" about its role and dangerously escalated the conflict. Russia dismissed the allegations, describing the fighters there as "Russian volunteers." NATO said at least 1,000 Russian troops are in Ukraine and later released what it said were satellite photos of Russian self-propelled artillery units moving last week.

**AP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/strategic-ukraine-town-under-rebel-control-083655022.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/strategic-ukraine-town-under-rebel-control-083655022.html)

EAP

**China**

**Landslide death toll rises to 15, report says**

The death toll from a landslide that destroyed a Chinese village has risen to 15, state media reported Friday. Half of a 600-metre high knoll near Fuquan city in the southwestern province of Guizhou broke free and "wiped out a majority of the village" at its base, the official Xinhua news agency said. Rescue workers were still trying to extract survivors from the debris, it added. A total of 77 houses were destroyed when the disaster struck Wednesday evening, Xinhua said citing local authorities, with 15 people confirmed dead and eight missing. Another 22 were injured.

**AFP -** [**https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/24847756/china-landslide-death-toll-rises-to-15-report-says/**](https://au.news.yahoo.com/world/a/24847756/china-landslide-death-toll-rises-to-15-report-says/)

**PNG**

**Volcano erupts, locals evacuate**

A volcano erupted Friday in eastern Papua New Guinea, spewing rocks and ash into the air, forcing the evacuation of local communities and international flights to be re-routed, officials said. Mount Tavurvur, which destroyed the town of Rabaul when it erupted simultaneously with nearby Mount Vulcan in 1994, rumbled to life early in the morning on the tip of the remote island of New Britain. There were no immediate reports of injuries or damage.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/volcano-erupts-png-spewing-ash-rock-officials-030256174.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/volcano-erupts-png-spewing-ash-rock-officials-030256174.html)

ESA

**Kenya**

**Teenager bleeds to death giving birth days after FGM/C**

A 16-year-old girl bled to death after giving birth because her body had not healed from the female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) she had been forced to undergo several days earlier, Kenya’s Daily Nation reported. The girl from the town of West Pokot, was forced to have the operation when her family discovered she was pregnant, the paper reported. Kenyan law provides for life imprisonment when a girl dies from FGM/C. Around 27% of Kenyan women and girls undergone FGM/C, with the highest rates among the Somali, Kisii and Maasai communities. Kenya has stepped up its fight against FGM by creating an anti-FGM Board in 2013 and an anti-FGM prosecution unit in March 2014.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140828163151-dw7ni/?source=jtOtherNews1**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140828163151-dw7ni/?source=jtOtherNews1)

**31 killed in a week of clan wars**

Thirty one people have been killed and 155 others injured in inter-clan fighting in Mandera County. Thousands more have been displaced since the violence started a week ago. Police say the violence is about elective politics, with each clan wanting a dominant role.

**Daily Nation -** [**http://www.nation.co.ke/news/31-killed-in-a-week-of-clan-wars/-/1056/2434034/-/2ae3ce/-/index.html**](http://www.nation.co.ke/news/31-killed-in-a-week-of-clan-wars/-/1056/2434034/-/2ae3ce/-/index.html)

**Somalia**

**Nine killed in fighting between rival regions in north**

At least nine people were killed in fighting on Thursday between rival areas in Somalia's usually calm Somaliland region, residents said, highlighting the fragility of security improvements anywhere in the country. Somaliland forces launched an offensive on the town of Saahdheer, where people had inaugurated a man they said was president of the newly autonomous Khatumo area. Officials and many attending the occasion in north Somalia fled to the nearby Ethiopian border.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140828165603-weha6/?source=fiOtherNews2**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140828165603-weha6/?source=fiOtherNews2)

**South Sudan**

**Riek Machar rebels reject deal**

South Sudan rebels have denied that they were party to a deal to form a power-sharing government within 45 days to end the conflict. The rebels' negotiator said they only signed the document that set out how a ceasefire should be implemented at the ceremony in Ethiopia on Monday. Taban Deng Gai accused the regional mediators of favouring the government side in the political settlement. On Wednesday, the rebels denied an allegation that they shot down a UN helicopter near the oil hub of Bentiu this week.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28966971**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-28966971)

LAC

**Across LAC**

**Mexico operations thwart child, family migrants**

The largest crackdown by Mexican authorities on illegal migration in decades has decreased the flow of Central American migrants trying to reach the US, and has dramatically cut the number of child migrants and families, according to officials. On 7 August, the US Department of Homeland Security released data showing the number of unaccompanied children and children traveling with a parent arrested along the Southwest border of the US in July was roughly 13,000, half what it had been in June.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/mexico-operations-thwart-child-family-migrants-25170785**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/mexico-operations-thwart-child-family-migrants-25170785)

**Poverty down in Latin America and the Caribbean - UNDP**

More than 56 million people have been lifted out of poverty in Latin America and the Caribbean in recent years, according to UNDP. A new UNDP report says poverty levels in the period from 2000-2012 fell from 41.7% to 25.3% of the population. But despite the progress, it warned that some 200m people, or 37.8% of the population, remained vulnerable. UNDP has called for more investment in social protection programmes. It calculates poverty as living with less than $4 (£2.40) a day.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28946221**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-28946221)

**Colombia**

**Authorities allow lesbian couple to adopt child**

Colombia has taken a major step recognizing the rights of same-sex couples after the country's constitutional court allowed a lesbian couple to adopt a child born to one of its members. The decision comes on the heels of a number of favorable gay-friendly rulings in Colombia and other parts of Latin America. While Thursday's ruling applies to couples where one member is a biological parent, legal experts say it could indicate a willingness by the high court to extend adoption rights to all same-sex couples.

**AP -** [**http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2014/08/28/5135984/colombia-allows-lesbian-couple.html#.U\_\_wHsVdXFk**](http://www.charlotteobserver.com/2014/08/28/5135984/colombia-allows-lesbian-couple.html#.U__wHsVdXFk)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Jihadist group claims beheading of four men in Sinai**

An Egyptian jihadist group on Thursday released a video in which it claimed responsibility for beheading four men accused of being "Israeli informants" before showing the victims' decapitated bodies. In the video, militants belonging to Ansar Beit al-Maqdis, considered the deadliest jihadist group in Egypt, say they killed the men in the restive Sinai Peninsula for assisting neighbouring Israel. Their bodies were found in Sheikh Zuweid town on 20 August, two days after they were abducted, security officials said.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-jihadist-group-claims-beheading-four-men-sinai-155727686.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/egypt-jihadist-group-claims-beheading-four-men-sinai-155727686.html)

**Iraq**

**UN chief slams ‘brutal’ IS killings**

UNSG Ban Ki-moon on Friday slammed "brutal killings of civilians" by Islamic State jihadists in northern Iraq, saying the Sunni radical group was tearing apart whole communities. Earlier this week, the UN rights chief Navi Pillay accused the group of "ethnic and religious cleansing" in Iraq, saying their reign of terror against non-Arab ethnic groups and non-Sunni Muslims involved targeted killings, forced conversions and abductions. She said that persecution of minority groups in Iraq by IS amounted to crimes against against humanity. She said that minority groups targeted include Christians, Yazidi, Shabaks, Turkomen, Kakae and Sabaeans.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/un-chief-slams-brutal-is/1335566.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/un-chief-slams-brutal-is/1335566.html)

**Forces retake villages on way to besieged town**

Iraqi security forces backed by volunteer militiamen on Thursday retook several villages located on the way to the town of Amerli, which jihadists have besieged for months, officers said. Time is running out for Amerli's Shiite Turkmen-majority residents, who face danger both because of their faith, which jihadists consider heresy, and their resistance against the militants, which has drawn deadly retribution elsewhere. And the town, besieged since militants led by the IS group launched a sweeping offensive in June, is without electricity and running dangerously short on both food and water. Army Staff Lieutenant General Abdulamir al-Zaidi said that villages north of Al-Adhaim were retaken as part of a major operation aimed at advancing toward Amerli.

**AFP -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/iraqi-forces-retake-villages-way-besieged-town-212839464.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/iraqi-forces-retake-villages-way-besieged-town-212839464.html)

**Libya**

**Militia says it accepts UN call for truce**

The Islamist militia in control of Libya's capital, Tripoli, says it agrees with a UN call for a cease-fire but vows to resist any foreign interference in Libyan affairs. Senior commander Ahmed Hadiya from Dawn of Libya, an umbrella of Islamist militias, says his group will "cooperate with the world" unless this violates Libya's sovereignty. The remarks, which came in a statement late Thursday, are seen as a rejection of a recent appeal by a group of Libyan lawmakers for UN to intervene to stop ongoing militia battles.

**AP -** [**http://bigstory.ap.org/article/libyan-militia-says-it-accepts-un-call-truce**](http://bigstory.ap.org/article/libyan-militia-says-it-accepts-un-call-truce)

**Government resigns to allow parliament to form new cabinet**

Libyan PM Abdullah al-Thinni and his cabinet resigned on Thursday to pave the way to forming a new government after parliamentary elections in June. The country is at risk of splitting or even sliding into civil war after rival groups set up an alternative parliament this week. A Misrata-led group, part off which is Islamist-leaning, now controls the capital and has pushed to reinstate the previous parliament, the General National Congress.

**Reuters -** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL5N0QY6LS20140828**](http://af.reuters.com/article/commoditiesNews/idAFL5N0QY6LS20140828)

**State of Palestine**

**Europe seeks role in postwar Gaza**

European nations are offering to help enforce the cease-fire in Gaza, a scenario that could provide key international backing for maintaining the peace and step up the pressure on Hamas militants to relinquish power. The European plan remains vague, and it is unclear whether Israel or the Palestinians will agree. Israel and Hamas militants battled for 50 days this summer before reaching a truce on Tuesday. More than 2,100 Palestinians were killed, including hundreds of civilians. Seventy people on the Israeli side, including six civilians, died. An estimated 100,000 Gazans have been left homeless, and reconstruction is expected to take years.

**AP -** [**https://news.yahoo.com/poll-israelis-skeptical-pm-gaza-victory-claim-072007941.html**](https://news.yahoo.com/poll-israelis-skeptical-pm-gaza-victory-claim-072007941.html)

**Syria**

**UN says more than 3 million have fled war**

More than three million Syrians are now registered as refugees and the desperate crisis is only getting worse, UNHCR says. Syria is now "the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era" with almost half of all Syrians forced to flee their homes, the UN agency said. UNHCR says one in every eight Syrians has fled across the border and a further 6.5 million are displaced within Syria - half of them children. Families arriving at refugee camps in neighboring countries are exhausted and scared, with some having spent a year or more fleeing from village to village inside Syria.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28977117**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28977117)

**UNHCR -** [**http://www.unhcr.org/53ff76c99.html**](http://www.unhcr.org/53ff76c99.html)

**IS group threatens aid access – UN**

The Islamic State group is taking violence against civilians in Syria "to a new level," threatening the cross-border humanitarian aid operations recently approved by the Security Council, a top UN aid official said. The UN's deputy humanitarian chief, Kyung-wha Kang, told the UNSC that both the extremists and the al-Qaida-linked Nusra Front are advancing on border crossings with Turkey "and could hinder additional cross-border operations." The threat comes as UN humanitarian officials reported the first bit of improvement on getting aid to hard-to-reach people inside Syria.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/islamic-state-group-threatens-syria-aid-access-25163275**](http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/islamic-state-group-threatens-syria-aid-access-25163275)

**UN soldiers seized by rebels in Golan Heights**

Al-Qaeda linked Syrian rebels have been accused of seizing 43 UN soldiers in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and trapped another 81 in the region, the UN has said. The US said on Thursday it believed members of the Nusra Front were among those who captured 43 Fijian soldiers serving in the UN disengagement observer force near Quneitra, a crossing from Syria into Israeli-occupied territory. A further 81 soldiers from the Philippines are understood to be under siege near Rwihinah. The Philippine government said its troops refused to give up their weapons when confronted.

The capture and standoff come after Syrian rebels, including Nusra Front fighters, stormed the Quneitra crossing on Wednesday, sparking an exchange of fire with Israeli troops.

Al Jazeera - <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/08/un-personnel-seized-israel-occupied-golan-2014828153141458872.html>

SA

**Across SA  
15,000 Kashmiris take shelter as cross-border tensions escalate**

Thousands of Kashmiris stayed in shelters near the disputed region's de facto border on Thursday after Indian and Pakistani border troops traded gunfire and shelling overnight, despite an attempt by their commanders to defuse escalating tensions. A recent flare-up in violence has left two civilians and a border guard dead on the Indian side of what's widely recognised as an international border between the two countries. Up to 15,000 villagers fled to government buildings temporarily converted into shelters. By Thursday, many villagers had returned home, but about 2,000 elected to stay. **Guardian -** [**http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/28/kashmir-fighting-15000-villagers-shelter-india-pakistan**](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/28/kashmir-fighting-15000-villagers-shelter-india-pakistan)

**Afghanistan**

**Election audit done around 10 September**

A massive audit of Afghanistan's disputed presidential election won't be done until around 10 September, the UN said Thursday, quashing hopes the new president would be determined before an upcoming NATO summit. The UN has been helping supervise an audit of eight million ballots to see who will succeed President Hamid Karzai, with the goal that the new president would be inaugurated by the end of August. But the audit has become increasingly contentious, which has slowed down the process.

**AP -** [**http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/afghan-election-audit-sept-10-25159842**](http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/afghan-election-audit-sept-10-25159842)

**India**

**Child marriage on rise in Kerala - UNICEF**

Notwithstanding a better gender balance in the southern part of the country, child marriage has been found to be on the rise in Kerala in recent years, according to UNICEF. “In the southern part of India we have a relatively better gender balance which explains lower rates of child marriage. Nevertheless, recent studies have shown a rising rate in Kerala,” UNICEF’s Child Protection Specialist in India Dora Giusti said. Giusti attributed the phenomenon in the state, considered India’s most literate, to migration from the northern part of the country.

**PTI -** [**http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/child-marriage-on-rise-in-kerala-unicef/**](http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/child-marriage-on-rise-in-kerala-unicef/)

**Pakistan**

**Military to mediate amid protest stand-off**

Pakistan's powerful army chief has stepped in to the political deadlock between the PM and two opposition figures leading huge anti-government rallies in the capital, Islamabad. Cleric Tahir ul-Qadri told thousands of his followers that General Raheel Sharif had asked to be given a day in which to mediate. His ally, cricketer-turned-politician Imran Khan, echoed his comments. The two opposition figures want PM Nawaz Sharif to resign.

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-28978048**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-28978048)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**More Ebola cases in past week than any other - WHO**

WHO says the past week has seen the highest increase of Ebola cases since the outbreak began, more evidence that the crisis is worsening. WHO said more than 500 cases were recorded over the past week, by far the worst toll of any week so far. The vast majority of the cases were in Liberia, but the agency said it was also the highest number of cases in one week for Guinea and Sierra Leone. WHO warned Thursday that the outbreak in West Africa is accelerating and could eventually infect 20,000 people. So far, it has killed more than 1,500 of the 3,000 people it has sickened.

**AP -** [**http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/un-ebola-disease-caseload-could-reach-20000/2014/08/28/9cfcf0fe-2f2a-11e4-be9e-60cc44c01e7f\_story.html**](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/africa/un-ebola-disease-caseload-could-reach-20000/2014/08/28/9cfcf0fe-2f2a-11e4-be9e-60cc44c01e7f_story.html)

**CAR**

**UNICEF distributes half a million mosquito nets amid heavy rains and violence**

Amid heavy rains and violence UNICEF and partners have distributed more than half a million mosquito bed nets reaching every home in Bangui to protect families from malaria - the leading killer of children under 5 in CAR. With the current heavy rains the risk of malaria significantly increases. To ensure children are protected UNICEF and the National Red Cross with support from the Ministry of Health mobilized more than 7,000 volunteers who went door-to-door distributing more than 530,000 mosquito nets in a single month.

**UNICEF -** [**http://www.unicef.org/media/media\_75047.html**](http://www.unicef.org/media/media_75047.html)

**Mali**

**Rebel factions agree to end hostilities ahead of September talks**

Representatives of two platforms of rebel groups from northern Mali agreed on Thursday in the Burkinabe capital Ouagadougou to end hostilities and present a united front for talks with the Malian government in Algeria in early September. In recent months, there has been fighting between the Tuareg-led National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA) and the Arab Movement of Azawad (MAA), and even clashes between rival MAA factions.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140828233109-v8g3j**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140828233109-v8g3j)

**Nigeria**

**At least 60 killed in central communal battle**

Fighting between Fulani herdsmen and farmers from the Eggon ethnic group has left at least 60 people dead in central Nigeria, mostly from machete cuts, police said on Thursday. The clashes broke out on Wednesday in Nasawrawa state, a week after some Eggon villagers accused Fulanis of stealing cattle, a Nasarawa police spokesman said. "The report we have is 60 dead from the clash in Tudun-Ababu village," he said. "Some bodies were burned beyond recognition."

**Reuters –** [**http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN0GS1FO20140828**](http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFKBN0GS1FO20140828)

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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