**UNICEF OPSCEN Brief – Wednesday, 10 September 2014**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [GENERAL](#GENERAL) | **Across Regions** | Violence at home costs $8 trillion a year, worse than war – study – UNICEF mention |
|  |  | No "Back to School" for 30million children affected by conflict and crisis – UNICEF mention |
| CEE/CIS | **Across CEE/CIS** | Most Russian troops in Ukraine have withdrawn, Ukrainian president says |
|  | **Ukraine** | Amnesty accuses both sides in Ukraine conflict of war crimes |
| [EAP](#EAP) | **Fiji** | Fiji retracts claim release of UN peacekeepers imminent |
|  | **Phillipines** | Philippines to enact law on Muslim autonomy |
| [ESA](#ESA) | **Lesotho** | Zuma prods Lesotho leaders to renew peace talks |
|  | **South Sudan** | AU committee launches probe into alleged war crimes in S. Sudan |
| [MENA](" \l "MENA) | **Egypt** | Egypt to host Gaza reconstruction conference on 12 October |
|  | **Syria** | Obama ready to authorize airstrikes on ISIS in Syria |
|  |  | UNSG urges Assad to seek political solution to Syria crisis |
|  |  | Rebel group names new leader |
|  | **Yemen** | Yemen at dangerous crossroads as rebel supporters killed |
| [SA](#SA) | **Across SA** | Death toll from flooding in India and Pakistan exceeds 400 |
|  | **Pakistan** | Gunmen killed a policeman guarding a polio vaccination team |
| WCA | **Across WCA** | Ebola 'devouring everything in its path' |
|  | **Liberia** | Ebola crisis: Liberia 'faces huge surge' says WHO |

GENERAL

**Across Regions**

**Violence at home costs $8 trillion a year, worse than war – study – UNICEF mention**

Domestic violence, mainly against women and children, kills far more people than wars and is an often overlooked scourge that costs the world economy more than $8 trillion a year, experts said on Tuesday. The study, which its authors said was a first attempt to estimate global costs of violence, urged the UN to pay more attention to abuse at home that gets less attention than armed conflicts from Syria to Ukraine. "For every civil war battlefield death, roughly nine people ... are killed in inter-personal disputes," Anke Hoeffler of Oxford University and James Fearon of Stanford University wrote in the report. The study said about 290 million children suffer violent discipline at home, according to estimates based on data from UNICEF.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.trust.org/item/20140909124726-66gkk**](http://www.trust.org/item/20140909124726-66gkk)

**No "Back to School" for 30million children affected by conflict and crisis – UNICEF mention**

As students around the world return to school, a record number of conflicts and crises are depriving millions of children of their right to an education. Almost 30 million children are out of school in emergency or conflict affected countries - approximately half of all children out of school worldwide. Schools have been targeted and millions of displaced children have been forced from their homes and studies.

In Liberia and Sierra Leone, primary and secondary schools will remain closed until at least the end of the year because of the Ebola outbreak, affecting over 3.5 million children. "For children living through emergencies, education is a life line," said Josephine Bourne, UNICEF's head of global education programmes.

**All Africa -** [**http://allafrica.com/stories/201409091025.html**](http://allafrica.com/stories/201409091025.html)

CEE/CIS

**Across CEE/CIS**

**Most Russian troops in Ukraine have withdrawn, Ukrainian president says**

Some 70% of the Russian troops believed to have been in Ukraine have withdrawn back across the border, Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko said, according to the national news agency Ukrinform.

"This is another hope that peaceful initiatives have a good perspective," Poroshenko is quoted as saying during a Cabinet meeting in Kiev on Wednesday. The remarks came several days into a shaky ceasefire deal between Ukrainian forces and pro-Russia rebels, signed last Friday after nearly five months of fighting in eastern Ukraine. The Presidents of Russia and Ukraine are "broadly satisfied" with the status of the ceasefire, a Kremlin aide said Wednesday.

**CNN -** [**http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/10/world/europe/ukraine-crisis/index.html?hpt=ieu\_c1**](http://edition.cnn.com/2014/09/10/world/europe/ukraine-crisis/index.html?hpt=ieu_c1)

**Ukraine**

**Amnesty accuses both sides in Ukraine conflict of war crimes**

Amnesty International on Wednesday said it had documented evidence that both Ukrainian forces and pro-Russia separatists have committed war crimes in eastern Ukraine, rejecting Moscow's claims that it is not a party to the conflict. The human rights group’s secretary general, Salil Shetty, said “all sides in [this conflict](http://www.france24.com/en/20140907-ukraine-ceasefire-threatened-artillery-fire-mariupol/) have shown disregard for civilian lives and are blatantly violating their international obligations”, adding that Amnesty's researchers on the ground in eastern Ukraine “have documented incidents of indiscriminate shelling, abductions, torture, and killings”.

**France 24 -** [**http://www.france24.com/en/20140910-amnesty-accuses-both-sides-ukraine-conflict-war-crimes/**](http://www.france24.com/en/20140910-amnesty-accuses-both-sides-ukraine-conflict-war-crimes/)

EAP

**China**

**U.N. says China not yet deploying peacekeepers in South Sudan**

China will send 700 soldiers to a U.N. peacekeeping force in South Sudan later this year to protect civilians amid a rebellion in the African country, a U.N. official said on Wednesday, denying a report they were already being deployed. The Wall Street Journal had quoted a spokesman for South Sudan's president as saying the airlift of a Chinese infantry battalion to the South Sudanese states of Unity and Upper Nile was under way and would be completed in several days. UNMISS said no date had been finalized, nor the deployment area.

**Reuters -** [**http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/09/10/uk-china-sudan-idUKKBN0H502U20140910**](http://uk.reuters.com/article/2014/09/10/uk-china-sudan-idUKKBN0H502U20140910)

**Fiji**

**Fiji retracts claim release of UN peacekeepers imminent**

Fiji on Wednesday retracted a claim that 45 UN peacekeepers being held hostage in the Golan Heights by Syrian Al-Nusra Front rebels were about to be released, blaming a communications mix-up. The government later deleted the posts and released a statement saying negotiations with the rebels were continuing. In an earlier report, Fiji said Syrian insurgents agreed to release 45 UN peacekeepers this week without conditions.

**AFP -** [**http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/fiji-retracts-claim/1354690.html**](http://www.channelnewsasia.com/news/world/fiji-retracts-claim/1354690.html)

**Yahoo -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/fiji-says-syrian-insurgents-agree-release-45-un-231107076.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/fiji-says-syrian-insurgents-agree-release-45-un-231107076.html)

**Phillipines**

**Philippines to enact law on Muslim autonomy**

Philippine President Benigno Aquino has asked the country’s congress to swiftly enact a law creating a Muslim autonomous area in the south of the mainly Roman Catholic state. The move aims at in ending nearly five decades of conflict, which has seen the two sides signing a deal in March to end a rebellion that has killed more than 120,000 people, displaced two million and stifled development in the resource-rich region. Hopes for peace were thrown into doubt after the deal, when the rebels accused the government of reneging on the pact.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2014/09/philippines-enact-law-muslim-autonomy-201491042920151184.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2014/09/philippines-enact-law-muslim-autonomy-201491042920151184.html)

ESA

**Lesotho**

**Zuma prods Lesotho leaders to renew peace talks**

Rival Lesotho leaders vowed to resolve an 11-day crisis that has spurred calls for regional military intervention in the tiny African nation, after South Africa brokered talks on Tuesday. The sparring factions agreed to hold further negotiations and present a concrete date for reopening Lesotho's parliament to South Africa's President Jacob Zuma on Friday.

**AFP -** [**http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140909/zuma-prods-lesotho-leaders-renew-peace-talks-0**](http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/afp/140909/zuma-prods-lesotho-leaders-renew-peace-talks-0)

**South Sudan**

**AU committee launches probe into alleged war crimes in S. Sudan**

A special human rights commission formed by the African Union (AU) has begun its investigations into whether crimes were committed in South Sudan’s Jonglei state during the country’s current crisis, which erupted in mid-December last year. The six-member commission, led by Jose Dougan, will look into alleged crimes and human rights violations committed by both the South Sudanese army (SPLA) and rebel forces loyal to former vice-president Riek Machar.

**Sudan Tribune -** [**http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52336**](http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article52336)

MENA

**Egypt**

**Egypt to host Gaza reconstruction conference on 12 October**

Egypt will host a donors conference on the reconstruction of the Gaza Strip on October 12 in Cairo following the recent conflict between Israel and the Palestinian militant movement Hamas, the Egyptian foreign minister said on Tuesday. The announcement carried on the state news agency came after Norway's foreign minister held talks with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi. Egypt and Norway will chair the international conference. Rebuilding Gaza will cost $7.8 billion, the Palestinian Authority said this month, in the most comprehensive assessment yet of damage from a seven-week war with Israel during which whole neighborhoods and vital infrastructure were flattened.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/09/us-egypt-gaza-conference-idUSKBN0H424Z20140909?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/09/us-egypt-gaza-conference-idUSKBN0H424Z20140909?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews)

**Syria**

**Obama ready to authorize airstrikes on ISIS in Syria**

President Obama is prepared to authorize airstrikes in Syria, a senior administration official said on Tuesday, taking the military campaign against the Sunni militant group, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, into new and unpredictable terrain. But Mr. Obama is still wrestling with a series of challenges, including how to train and equip a viable ground force to fight ISIS inside Syria, how to intervene without aiding President Bashar al-Assad, and how to enlist potentially reluctant partners like Turkey and Saudi Arabia.

**NYT -** [**http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/10/us/obama-isis-congress.html?\_r=1**](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/10/us/obama-isis-congress.html?_r=1)

**Syria**

**UNSG urges Assad to seek political solution to Syria crisis**

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged President Bashar al-Assad to seek a political solution to Syria's war, saying this would help international efforts against Islamic State militants in Syria and Iraq, al-Hayat newspaper reported on Wednesday. In an interview with the pan-Arab daily, Ban said years of war between Assad's forces and armed rebel groups had allowed militants such as Islamic State to take root in the region. Asked whether Assad would have any role to play in an international coalition being assembled to fight Islamic State in Syria and Iraq, the U.N. chief said Assad could contribute by working politically towards an end to the war in his country.

**Reuters -** [**http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/10/us-syria-crisis-un-idUSKBN0H50OM20140910**](http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/09/10/us-syria-crisis-un-idUSKBN0H50OM20140910)

**Syria**

**Rebel group names new leader**

Ahrar al-Sham, a Syrian armed opposition organisation, has announced its new leadership after it lost its top brass during a bomb attack on a high-level meeting in Idlib province. Hassan Abboud, the head of Ahrar al-Sham, was among up to 45 people killed in an underground bunker near an ammunition dump outside Ram Hamdan on Tuesday. The new head is Hashim al-Sheikh, also known as Abu Jaber, while his deputy is Abu Saleh Tahan, the group announced on Wednesday. It pledged to keep fighting against Syrian government forces and the Islamic State armed group, Reuters news agency said

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/syria-rebel-leader-killed-suicide-blast-201499181811320610.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/09/syria-rebel-leader-killed-suicide-blast-201499181811320610.html)

**Yemen**

**Yemen at dangerous crossroads as rebel supporters killed**

Police shot dead seven Shiite rebel activists trying to storm government headquarters Tuesday and troops clashed with rebels on Sanaa's outskirts, amid warnings Yemen is at a "dangerous crossroads." The violence comes after rebel chief Abdul-Malik al-Houthi vowed to step up protests and with Saudi Arabia accusing rebels of "conspiring" to destabilize Yemen.

**Yahoo -** [**http://news.yahoo.com/rebel-activist-killed-trying-storm-yemen-govt-hq-095309478.html**](http://news.yahoo.com/rebel-activist-killed-trying-storm-yemen-govt-hq-095309478.html)

SA

**Across SA**

**Death toll from flooding in India and Pakistan exceeds 400**

The floods in northwestern India and northeastern Pakistan have affected almost a million people in both countries, killing at least 203 in Pakistan and 200 in India. At least 24 people were killed in Lahore on Tuesday when the roof of a mosque collapsed during afternoon prayer. Rescue efforts in Pakistan, meanwhile, have focused on Punjab, where the flood peak continues to pass through barrages and rivers, officials at the Punjab meteorological department told Al Jazeera.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/09/20149910475443471.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia/2014/09/20149910475443471.html)

**Pakistan**

**Gunmen killed a policeman guarding a polio vaccination team**

Pakistan is one of only three countries in the world where polio remains endemic but efforts to stamp it out have been badly hit in recent years by attacks on immunization teams. The latest attack was in Bajaur. "A member of the tribal police guarding a polio vaccination team was killed when the team came under attack in Damadola area of Bajaur agency".  The attackers lay in wait for the polio team in nearby fields before opening fire. The health workers escaped unharmed. Nobody has so far claimed responsibility.

**AFP -** [**http://www.geo.tv/article-159312-One-dead-in-attack-on-polio-team-in-Bajaur**](http://www.geo.tv/article-159312-One-dead-in-attack-on-polio-team-in-Bajaur)

WCA

**Across WCA**

**Ebola 'devouring everything in its path'**

The death toll from the worst Ebola outbreak in history has risen to almost 2,300 and is accelerating, as a government minister in the worst affected country warned the disease was "devouring everything in its path". WHO said on Tuesday the death toll had rapidly escalated to 2,296 out of 4,293 cases in five west African countries, and was expecting thousands of new cases in Liberia over the next three weeks. At the UN in New York, Liberia's minister of national defence, Brownie Samukai, warned that his country was facing catastrophe as it battled against the disease."Liberia is facing a serious threat to its national existence. The deadly Ebola virus has caused a disruption of the normal functioning of our state," he told the UN security council.

**Al Jazeera -** [**http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/09/ebola-devouring-everything-path-201499161646914388.html**](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2014/09/ebola-devouring-everything-path-201499161646914388.html)

**Liberia**

**Ebola crisis: Liberia 'faces huge surge' says WHO**

Ebola is spreading exponentially in Liberia, with thousands of new cases expected in the next three weeks, the World Health Organization (WHO) says. Conventional methods to control the outbreak were "not having an adequate impact", the UN's health agency added. At least 2,100 people infected with Ebola have died so far in the West African states of Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria this year.

The WHO says 79 health workers have been killed by the virus. Organisations combating the outbreak needed to scale-up efforts "three-to-four fold", [the WHO said](http://reliefweb.int/report/liberia/ebola-situation-liberia-non-conventional-interventions-needed)

**BBC -** [**http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29115298**](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29115298)

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

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

**UNICEF Operations Centre (OPSCEN)**  
*Providing assistance 24 hours a day*  
  
Tel:       +1 212 326 7222  
Fax:      +1 212 303 7924  
Bberry: +1 917 582 3620 (for SMS)  
Sat:      +870 761 112 299  
Email:   [opscen@unicef.org](mailto:opscen@unicef.org)

Skype:  opscen.unicef  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
  
UNITE FOR CHILDREN