Words in This Story

permanent

英 ['pɜːm(ə)nənt] 美 ['pɝmənənt]

adj. 永久的，永恒的；不变的

n. 烫发（等于permanent wave）

famine

英 ['fæmɪn] 美 ['fæmɪn]

n. 饥荒；饥饿，奇缺

Averting Famine in Africa

“Across South Sudan, Yemen, Nigeria, and Somalia, 20 million people are at risk for famine,” said U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley.

Speaking recently in New York at a UN Security Council Open Arria-Formula Meeting on the Risk of Famine in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and Northeast Nigeria, Ambassador Haley warned, “In Nigeria, those who have liberated towns from Boko Haram have reportedly discovered people eating grass and bugs off the ground. In Yemen, families cannot afford to pay for the transportation of their starving children to the few treatment centers that are still open. In Somalia, some mothers are forced to walk more than a hundred miles with their crying children just to find a reliable source of food and water.”

“In Nigeria, South Sudan, Yemen, and Somalia,” she said, “people are not dying from some natural disaster, but from something manmade: armed conflict.”

“Since last fall, the United States has given more than $1 billion in assistance to these four countries. In 2017, the United States has provided one quarter of the humanitarian funding for these countries, according to UN data. The United States will continue to lead in bringing together resources to help overcome this crisis. And, as we heard today, others are stepping up too, with the World Bank expanding its operations to include famine response for the first time. These funds provide food and clean water, specialized nutrition and medical care, shelter, education, protection, and other life-sustaining services.”

“Access,” the Ambassador noted, “remains a key obstacle. Because of war, food cannot reach the people who need it. In South Sudan, Yemen, and Nigeria, warring parties need to let the food in. In Somalia, the challenges caused by years of conflict with terrorist organizations are compounding the impact of a drought. So the answer to famine is not rocket science. The answer is that we must put pressure on armed groups to allow food into places that don't have it.”

The U.S calls on the UN Security Council to hold all governments accountable when they refuse to allow access to help their people in need. “The longer we wait to act,” said Ambassador Haley, “the higher the cost.”