SELECTED GLOBAL TOPICS

Six of 10 World Crisis Hotspots Are in Africa Says UN

They are the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Central African Republic (CAR), the Sahel, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and the Horn of Africa. Other crisis hotspots are Syria, Yemen, Myanmar and Bangladesh, and Afghanistan.

The UN notes the COVID-19 pandemic dominated much of the world’s attention last year adding “there are other crises that will continue to require urgent attention from the international community.”

Syria and Yemen are probably the best-known long-running conflict zones. A decade of fighting in Syria has seen millions displaced, with many requiring humanitarian assistance. Yemen remains the scene of the world’s worst humanitarian crises, where the risk of large-scale famine has never been more acute.

Insecurity in the DRC is exacerbated by the pandemic, which compounded the country’s economic decline and the country now has the world’s second-highest number of people classified severely food insecure and the highest number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in Africa.

Read more.

Hundreds Missing After Attack in Mozambique

Story from Human Rights Watch.

Hundreds of people remain missing days after an Islamic State (ISIS)-linked armed group known as Al-
Shabab raided the town of Palma in Mozambique’s northern Cabo Delgado province, killing and wounding an unknown number of civilians and causing thousands to flee.

On Sunday evening, the government gave only its second update since the March 24 attacks, but added few details. The Defense Ministry spokesman, who took no questions from reporters, said security forces were committed to clearing areas around Palma to ensure the local population’s safe return. But little information was provided about the whereabouts of the natural gas-rich town’s residents, many of whom evacuated by boat from the town’s port.

Dozens of civilians were killed when the armed Islamist group raided the town and fired on people and buildings. Seven more people were killed in an ambush on a convoy of vehicles as it attempted to leave the town, the government said.

Read more.

Catholic Officials Call for End to Death Penalty

HARARE, ZIMBABWE — Catholic officials and human rights campaigners across Africa are reiterating their opposition to capital punishment after Botswana carried out two executions for murder convictions in February.

Botswana, located north of South Africa, confirmed the executions of 33-year-old Wedu Mosalagae and 29-year-old Kutlo Setima on February 8. Both had been found guilty in separate cases of killing a woman.

Oluwatosin Popoola, a legal advisor for Amnesty International on death penalty issues, told NCR that the organization is "very concerned" about the executions, especially as they are the fifth and sixth since President Mokgweetsi Masisi came into office in 2019.

This as "a high number for Botswana within a 16-month period and an indication that the country is not relenting in its adherence" to the use of the death penalty, said Popoola.

"The recent executions are regressive and they slow down Africa's push against the death penalty," said Popoola. "There is no unique imperative for any country to use the death penalty."
The Coronavirus Pandemic Raised Poverty in Latin America to its Highest Level in 12 Years

Poverty in Latin America increased in 2020 to the highest levels in the last 12 years, reaching 33.7% of the total population of the region, due to the economic crisis caused by COVID-19, reported recently the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Despite the emergency, social protection measures adopted by the governments of the region to curb COVID-19, “poverty and extreme poverty in Latin America reached levels in 2020 that have not been observed in the last 12 and 20 years, respectively,” said a report on the social impact of the pandemic.

According to ECLAC, as a consequence of the acute economic crisis derived from the coronavirus, which caused a 7.7% drop in GDP in all of 2020 in Latin America, poverty reached 209 million people, 33.7% of the population, total population of the region of 654 million inhabitants. Meanwhile, extreme poverty affected 78 million people. ECLAC highlighted in its study the increase in social unrest in the region, which should be used to establish new models of development and well-being.

More Topics to Explore

Myanmar Cardinals Urge Nonviolence as Coup Death Count Climbs

Indonesia Bombing: Worshippers Wounded in Makassar Church Attack

Brazil: Political and Covid Crisis

Two weeks, two shootings and more anti-Asian hate crimes: What can I do?

CALL TO ACTION
Before we can take action on an issue and make a change in our lives, first we need to educate ourselves. In today's Call to Action, we encourage you to watch this video "The Story of Stuff."

Learn about how our "stuff" is made and what happens to it long after its no longer useful.

GLOBAL GOALS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production

Our planet has provided us with an abundance of natural resources. However, we have been responsible with those resources and currently consume far beyond what our planet can provide. We must learn how to use and produce in sustainable ways that will reverse the harm that we have inflicted on the planet.

Many of us live in a throwaway culture. If something breaks, we simply go purchase a new one. We are filling up our landfills with items that can't decompose for millions of years. But this problem is not just about the consumer. We must realign how we use resources beginning with our production and supply chains. Making changes at home — reusing, recycling, and going without — can help influence the way companies produce and use resources.

Some of the targets of Global Goal 12 are:

- Sustainable management and use of natural resources.
- Halve global per-capita food waste — this goes beyond individual efforts to conserve food. This goal reaches all the way to the production and supply chains.
Support developing countries’ scientific and technological capacity for sustainable consumption and production.

Learn more about Sustainable Development Goal 12 [here](#).

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**U.N. INTERNATIONAL DAYS**

2021

**April 4**

**International Mine Awareness Day**

On December 8, 2005, the General Assembly declared that April 4th of each year shall be observed as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action. It called for continued efforts by states, with the assistance of the United Nations and relevant organizations, to foster the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities in countries where mines and explosive remnants of war constitute a serious threat to the safety, health, and lives of the civilian population, or an impediment to social and economic development at the national and local levels. [Learn more](#).

**April 5**

**International Day of Conscience**

Conscious of the need for the creation of conditions of stability and well-being and peaceful and friendly relations based on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, the General Assembly declared April 5 the International Day of Conscience. [Learn more](#) about promoting a culture of peace with love and conscience.

**April 7**

**International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi in Rwanda**

2021 marks the 27th anniversary of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, one of the darkest chapters in human history. More than one million people — overwhelmingly Tutsi, but also moderate Hutu, Twa, and others who opposed the genocide — were systematically killed in less than three months. On this day, we honor those who were murdered and reflect on the suffering of those who survived. [Learn more](#).

**April 22**

**Earth Day**

Mother Earth is clearly urging a call to action. Nature is suffering. Australian fires, heat records and the worst locust invasion in Kenya. Now we face COVID-19, a worldwide health pandemic link to the health of our ecosystem. Climate change, man-made changes to nature as well as crimes that disrupt biodiversity, such as deforestation, land-use change, intensified agriculture and livestock production or the growing illegal wildlife trade, can increase contact and the transmission of infectious diseases from animals to humans (zoonotic diseases) like COVID-19. From one new infection disease that emerges in humans every 4 months, 75% of these emerging diseases come from animals, according to UN Environment. This shows the close relationships between human, animal and environmental health. [Learn more](#).
World Day for Safety and Health at Work
The World Day for Safety and Health at Work will aim to stimulate national tripartite dialogue on safety and health at work. The ILO is using this day to raise awareness on the adoption of safe practices in workplaces and the role that occupational safety and health (OSH) services play. It will also focus on the medium- to long-term, including recovery and future preparedness, in particular, integrating measures into OSH management systems and policies at the national and enterprise levels. Learn more.