

World faces biggest humanitarian crisis since 1945

13th March, 2017



The United Nations (UN) has reported that the world is facing its biggest humanitarian crisis since 1945. It has issued a plea to all nations to help avoid "a catastrophe". UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, warned that more than 20 million people face the threat of starvation and famine in Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen. He stressed there was an urgent need for, "accelerated global efforts to support UN humanitarian action on the ground". Mr O'Brien told the UN Security Council: "We stand at a critical point in history. Already at the beginning of the year we are facing the largest humanitarian crisis since the creation of the UN."

The UN warned of a bleak future for millions in the affected African countries and Yemen. It said: "Without collective and coordinated global efforts...people risk starving to death and succumbing to disease ... [with] stunted children, lost futures, mass displacements and reversed development gains." While the natural El Niño weather phenomenon has brought little or no rain, a lot of the problems fuelling the crisis are man made. War and conflicts are displacing many in these countries and are hampering efforts to distribute aid. There are reports of aid convoys being attacked. Mr O'Brien said: "It is possible to avert this crisis, to avert these famines, to avert these looming human catastrophes. It is all preventable."

Sources: bbc.com / un.org / allafrica.com

Writing

Everyone should donate more than they have ever donated before. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

humanitarian / crisis / plea / catastrophe / starvation / global / action / beginning / bleak / future / disease / development / El Niño / conflicts / aid / convoys / famine

True / False

- The UN has made a plea to 20 countries to help victims of the crisis. T / F
- Over 20 million face the threat of dying of hunger. T / F
- The article mentioned five countries that the UN said were in crisis. T / F
- The UN said it is the biggest crisis in the history of the UN. T / F
- The UN warned that millions of people faced a bleak future. T / F
- There will be no loss of development gains despite the crisis. T / F
- The article said all of the problems were man made. T / F
- A UN spokesperson said it is now impossible to avert the crisis. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. facing | a. dying from |
| 2. plea | b. menace |
| 3. threat | c. hastened |
| 4. accelerated | d. common |
| 5. critical | e. appeal |
| 6. bleak | f. give out |
| 7. collective | g. crucial |
| 8. succumbing | h. prevent |
| 9. distribute | i. unpromising |
| 10. avert | j. encountering |

Discussion – Student A

- What do you think about what you read?
- What is making the problems worse in Yemen?
- What is making the problems worse in South Sudan?
- How can the world act collectively to help?
- If the problems are man made, why can't they be 'man-solved'?
- Do you think it is possible to avert this crisis?
- What would you do if you were the UN boss?
- What questions would you like to ask the UN?

Phrase Match

1. It has issued a plea
 2. 20 million people face the
 3. He stressed there was an urgent
 4. We stand at a critical
 5. the largest humanitarian crisis since the
 6. The UN warned of a bleak
 7. millions in the
 8. people risk starving
 9. the natural El Niño weather
 10. It is possible to avert
- a. future
 - b. creation of the UN
 - c. phenomenon
 - d. affected African countries
 - e. threat of starvation
 - f. to all nations
 - g. to death
 - h. point in history
 - i. this crisis
 - j. need

Discussion – Student B

- a) Why does the world let things get to this stage?
- b) Why is it that poor countries suffer the most?
- c) What can we do to help?
- d) What does starvation in the 21st century say about humanity?
- e) What will your country do to help?
- f) What do you know about previous famines in Africa?
- g) What do you know about the United Nations?
- h) Should we learn about the benefits of giving at school?

Spelling

1. help avoid a tatsoraceph
2. 20 million people face the tearth
3. narosivatt and famine
4. eclaeaeacrtd global efforts
5. We stand at a ccialtr point in history
6. since the eiaocrn of the UN
7. The UN warned of a blkea future
8. collective and oriaedcdnto global efforts
9. hampering efforts to itrtibedus aid
10. aid vnscooy
11. It is possible to tvaer this crisis
12. It is all abnpeelertv

Answers – Synonym Match

1. j	2. e	3. b	4. c	5. g
6. i	7. d	8. a	9. f	10. h

Role Play

Role A – Blankets

You think blankets are the most important thing for victims of the humanitarian crisis. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): the Internet, livestock or protection.

Role B – Internet

You think the Internet is the most important thing for victims of the humanitarian crisis. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): blankets, livestock or protection.

Role C – Livestock

You think livestock is the most important thing for victims of the humanitarian crisis. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): the Internet, blankets or protection.

Role D – Protection

You think protection is the most important thing for victims of the humanitarian crisis. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their things aren't as necessary. Also, tell the others which is the least necessary of these (and why): the Internet, livestock or blankets.

Speaking – Aid

Rank these with your partner. Put the things the crisis victims need most at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- seeds
- blankets
- livestock
- Internet
- a water well
- money
- protection
- tents

Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.