

UNICEF says Yemen is one of the worst places to be a child



United Nations, November 21 (RHC)-- Yemen is one of the worst places to be a child according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as around 12 million children, a number representing almost all the country's children, need urgent humanitarian assistance.

Despite gains made for children's rights since the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted in 1990 by the U.N., the ongoing brutal war and the ensuing economic crisis have left elementary social services systems across the country on the brink of collapse with devastating consequences on children.

In 1991, Yemen signed the CRC, placing it among the first countries in the world to commit to improving rights for children in the country and reporting on progress. "Those who bear the responsibility, including the Yemeni authorities have fallen short of their promises and commitments to the children," said UNICEF's Yemen Representative Sara Beysolow Nyanti in a reference to the country's ratification of the CRC 30 years ago.

"The 30th anniversary of the convention should serve as a stark reminder to all of us to urgently recommit to our accountabilities to help the children of Yemen to survive and grow in a safe and peaceful environment," she added.

Countless children have been killed in blatant attacks since the beginning of the conflict in 2015. These children lost their lives while playing outdoors with their friends, while going to or coming back from school, or even within the security of their homes with their families, the U.N. body reported, as not a single part of the war-torn country can guarantee the safety of its children.

“Every day we strive to deliver on our promise to meet the needs and help realize the rights of the children of Yemen. But the purest form of childhood – play, is so often neglected,” Beysolow Nyanti concluded.

The endless Yemeni civil war started on March 26, 2015, when Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates led a coalition of countries in a military campaign against the Houthis in Yemen in support of the Saudi-backed government of Abd-Rabu Mansour Hadi.

The conflict has since killed more than 100,000 people including more than 12,000 civilians, as well as estimates of more than 85,000 dead as a result of an ongoing famine, and put more than 24 million others in severe need of assistance. The UN said the country is facing the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

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