

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
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APPEAL FOR GLOBAL CEASE-FIRE

Our world faces a common enemy: COVID-19.

The virus does not care about nationality or ethnicity, faction or faith. It attacks all, relentlessly.

Meanwhile, armed conflict rages on around the world.

The most vulnerable — women and children, people with disabilities, the marginalized and the displaced — pay the highest price.

They are also at the highest risk of suffering devastating losses from COVID-19.

Let's not forget that in war-ravaged countries, health systems have collapsed.

Health professionals, already few in number, have often been targeted.

Refugees and others displaced by violent conflict are doubly vulnerable.

The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war.

That is why today, I am calling for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world.

It is time to put armed conflict on lockdown and focus together on the true fight of our lives.

To warring parties, I say:

Pull back from hostilities.

Put aside mistrust and animosity.

Silence the guns; stop the artillery; end the airstrikes.

This is crucial...

To help create corridors for life-saving aid.

To open precious windows for diplomacy.

To bring hope to places among the most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Let us take inspiration from coalitions and dialogue slowly taking shape among rival parties to enable joint approaches to COVID-19. But we need much more.

End the sickness of war and fight the disease that is ravaging our world.

It starts by stopping the fighting everywhere. Now.

That is what our human family needs, now more than ever.