Condemning coup, UN officials call for immediate release of Burkina Faso’s leaders

17 September - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the United Nations human rights chief today spoke out against the coup d'état in Burkina Faso and called for the immediate release of the country’s transitional leaders.

President Michel Kafando, Prime Minister Yacouba Isaac Zida and several Government ministers were detained on Wednesday by elements of the Régiment de sécurité présidentielle while they were at a meeting in the capital, Ouagadougou.

“The Secretary-General condemns in the strongest terms the coup d’état in Burkina Faso. He reiterates that all Burkinabé officials under detention must be released immediately and demands the resumption of the country’s political transition, in accordance with Burkina Faso’s Constitution and Transitional Charter,” said a statement issued by Mr. Ban’s spokesperson.

“The Secretary-General deplores the violence reported in the country and calls on the Burkinabé defence and security forces to exercise restraint and ensure respect for the human rights and security of all Burkinabé citizens. Those responsible for the coup d’état and its consequences must be held accountable.”

High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said in a statement that he is “extremely concerned” at the military coup in Burkina Faso. “The arrest and detention of the President, the Prime Minister and two ministers of the Transitional Government by members of the Presidential Security Regiment is unacceptable.”

He stressed that the detainees should be treated with dignity and humanity, and released immediately. “I also urge the coup leaders to avoid any use of force, particularly in the context of anti-coup demonstrations, and to respect the rights of the population to demonstrate peacefully.”
The Secretary-General’s Special Representative for West Africa, Mohamed Ibn Chambas, is presently in Ouagadougou and working closely with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union and other international partners to support and safeguard the transition in Burkina Faso.

The UN, ECOWAS and AU issued a joint statement in which they demanded that the defense and security forces submit themselves to the political authority and in the current context, to the transitional authorities. They also reiterate their full support to the transition in this crucial period ahead of the elections scheduled for 11 October, and reaffirmed their determination to support the national authorities to ensure the successful completion of the transition process.

The members of the Security Council, in a statement issued to the press, condemned the detention “in the strongest terms” and demanded that the leaders be released safely and immediately.

“The members of the Security Council expressed their strong support to the transitional authorities of Burkina Faso and urged all actors to comply with the transitional calendar, notably the holding of free, fair and credible elections, scheduled for 11 October 2015.”

**Ban seeks support from Member States to end sexual misconduct by UN personnel**

17 September - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon today highlighted specific actions aimed at ending sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel that require “urgent” support from countries that provide troops and police to peacekeeping operations.

“Your sons and daughters risk their lives in some of the most troubled parts of the world to protect the vulnerable while advancing the cause of peace,” Mr. Ban told delegates. “Yet, as we have regrettably seen, the integrity of their mission can be called into question – indeed undermined – by flagrant cases of sexual exploitation and abuse.”

The UN chief pointed to more than a dozen recent allegations of misconduct by peacekeepers that are under investigation in the Central African Republic, which he said is not a “new phenomenon.”

“As you know, I have taken difficult but necessary decisions to demonstrate our resolve. Much more needs to be done to stamp out sexual exploitation and abuse in our missions,” he continued.

“I cannot do it alone. This is also a core responsibility for Member States.”

For this reason, Mr. Ban said he is asking countries that contribute troop and police personnel to join him in doing more to end this “unacceptable conduct,” through seven specific actions.

“First, we must work to prevent misconduct even before personnel are on the ground,” he stated. “Pre-deployment education and human rights training must be enhanced. Troops and police must be made fully aware of what constitutes sexual exploitation and abuse, and the importance of upholding the zero-tolerance policy.”

Mr. Ban said personnel must be properly and fully vetted so no individual with a past record of sexual exploitation and abuse can ever be allowed to serve the UN in any capacity.

He also underlined the need for rapid and effective investigations, with the goal of concluding those that are UN-led within six months, and called on Member States to ensure the same.

“As we all know, DNA samples are critical to the effectiveness of investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse. As such, the Secretariat will explore with Member States the feasibility of collecting DNA samples of all uniformed personnel,” he added.
As a fourth action, the Secretary-General said he has committed to ensuring consistent measures for all categories of personnel, including the option to withhold payment.

“That is why I have begun suspending payments to alleged perpetrators and individual experts on mission if there is credible evidence of sexual exploitation and abuse,” he noted.

The need to boost assistance to victims was also highlighted, with Mr. Ban announcing that he will establish a trust fund to strengthen victim assistance programmes and support awareness-raising and community outreach. He will be asking Member States to agree that the funds withheld from individuals in connection with imposed sanctions be diverted to this trust fund.

In addition, the UN chief stressed the need for stronger reporting. “As you know, I will include country-specific information in my future reports to the General Assembly concerning the number of credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving military and police personnel,” he said.

“This will be in addition to the status updates on allegations, which I currently provide. My decision to name specific countries is not designed to create public embarrassment, but to demonstrate transparency and promote accountability. There is no shame for a Member State that takes decisive action against alleged perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse.”

Mr. Ban added that with mobile phones, everyone can be a human rights monitor.

He called on troop-contributing countries to work together “without excuses” to protect the good name of peacekeeping and uphold the trust placed in the UN by the people who need the Organization the most.

Last week, the Secretary-General presented a report containing his agenda to strengthen UN peacekeeping, setting out three fundamental changes urgently required to adapt operations to new realities. These are to prioritise prevention and mediation to break the cycle of responding too late and too expensively; to change the way the UN plans and conducts peace operations to make them faster, more responsive and more accountable to countries and people in conflict; and to put in place a global-regional framework to manage today’s peace and security challenges.

The report also outlined over a dozen new measures he is taking to rid the UN of sexual exploitation and abuse.

**UN rights chief ‘appalled’ at recent treatment of refugees, migrants by Hungarian authorities**

17 September - The United Nations human rights chief said today he is “appalled” at the recent actions displayed by the Hungarian Government in its treatment of refugees and migrants, and urged European institutions to take firm action to respond to the crisis affecting several countries.

“The images of women and young children being assaulted with tear gas and water cannons at Hungary’s border with Serbia were truly shocking,” High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said in a news release.

“I am appalled at the callous, and in some cases illegal, actions of the Hungarian authorities in recent days, which include denying entry to, arresting, summarily rejecting and returning refugees, using disproportionate force on migrants and refugees, as well as reportedly assaulting journalists and seizing video documentation. Some of these actions amount to clear violations of international law.”

The Hungarian Government has built a fence on its border with Serbia and closed border crossings. A new law criminalizing irregular entry into Hungary came into effect Tuesday, according to the High Commissioner’s office (OHCHR).

Hungary has reportedly already begun returning refugees to Serbia, following very summary proceedings. The Government
is also talking of building more fences along its other borders with Romania and Croatia.

Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Orban defended the measures, arguing that they concerned “defending our lifestyle,” and contrasted this lifestyle with that of Muslims, the news release pointed out.

High Commissioner Zeid deplored the xenophobic and anti-Muslim views that appear to lie at the heart of current Hungarian Government policy.

“The package of measures brought in overnight between Monday and Tuesday is incompatible with the human rights commitments binding on Hungary,” the High Commissioner said. “This is an entirely unacceptable infringement of the human rights of refugees and migrants. Seeking asylum is not a crime, and neither is entering a country irregularly.”

“Many have made harrowing sea journeys to avoid other border fences,” he added.

He also said he is extremely concerned at the “repeated failures” of the European Union to agree on firm and principled action to respond to the crisis in Hungary and elsewhere. “Current events highlight the urgent need for bolder and more human-rights driven migration and asylum policies in Europe.”

**UN officials outraged at accounts of Sri Lanka war crimes, stress need for accountability**

17 September - Senior United Nations officials today expressed outrage at the very serious accounts of war crimes and crimes against humanity that were allegedly committed between 2002 and 2011 by all parties to the conflict in Sri Lanka, including Government security forces, affiliated paramilitary groups and the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

The comments by the Secretary-General’s Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide, Adama Dieng, and on the Responsibility to Protect, Jennifer Welsh, follow the release yesterday of a report by the UN human rights office (OHCHR) that identified patterns of grave violations, including indiscriminate shelling, extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, harrowing accounts of torture and sexual violence, and recruitment of children.

Welcoming the report, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon hoped that its recommendations will help support the efforts of the people and the Government of Sri Lanka “to carve a durable path towards long-lasting peace and stability and respect for human rights, through a genuine and credible process of accountability and reconciliation that meets international standards.

“The victims of all communities, their families and the Sri Lankan nation itself demand no less than a full and proper reckoning,” he added in a statement issued by his spokesperson.

Indeed, the report recommended the establishment of a hybrid special court to ensure that justice is served.

“Sri Lanka has gone through a very dark period of its history during the years of the conflict, which has caused immense suffering for all communities,” the Secretary-General’s Special Advisers stated.

“Accountability is not just a matter of justice; it is also a matter of reconciliation, peace and non-recurrence,” they continued. “The wounds of the past need to be properly treated and healed in order to write a new peaceful page in Sri Lankan history.”

The Special Advisers called for the establishment of accountability and reconciliation mechanisms that would meet international human rights law standards.
“This is a process that will be painful and difficult, but indispensable for long-lasting peace and stability in the country,” they added.

Ms. Welsh stressed that the Sri Lankan Government has the primary responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. “This responsibility entails bringing to account those responsible for crimes committed but also taking concrete steps to prevent their recurrence.”

For his part, Mr. Dieng cautioned that outstanding grievances among Sinhalese and Tamil communities could pave the way to further violence.

The Special Advisers highlighted that respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue and non-discrimination must be incorporated into national level policies. They also recommended that the Government ensure greater representation of all ethnic and religious communities.

“The voices of the minorities need to be heard because they too are Sri Lankan,” they stressed.

**Global malaria target met amid sharp drop in cases, but 3 billion people still at risk – UN**

**17 September** - Malaria death rates have plunged by 60 per cent since 2000, but the ancient killer remains an acute public health problem with 15 countries mainly in sub-Saharan Africa accounting for some 80 per cent of cases and deaths globally, according to a new United Nations report released today.

“Global malaria control is one of the great public health success stories of the past 15 years,” said Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the UN World Health Organization (WHO). “It’s a sign that our strategies are on target, and that we can beat this ancient killer, which still claims hundreds of thousands of lives, mostly children, each year.”

The joint report by WHO and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – Achieving the Malaria Millennium Development Goal Target – shows that the MDG target of halving and beginning to reverse the incidence of malaria by 2015 has been met “convincingly.”

UNICEF Executive Director Anthony Lake said “malaria kills mostly young children, especially those living in the poorest and most remote places. So the best way to celebrate global progress in the fight against it is to recommit ourselves to reaching and treating them.”

“We know how to prevent and treat malaria,” Mr. Lake said. “Since we can do it, we must.”

Malaria death rates have plunged by 60 per cent over the past 15 years, translating into 6.2 million lives saved, and new malaria cases have dropped by 37 per cent since 2000, according to the report, which was released in London.

“An increasing number of countries are on the verge of eliminating malaria,” stated the report.

“In 2014, 13 countries reported zero cases of the disease and six countries reported fewer than 10 cases,” it said. “The fastest decreases were seen in the Caucasus and Central Asia, which reported zero cases in 2014, and in Eastern Asia.”

But malaria remains an acute public health problem in many regions.

“In 2015 alone, there were an estimated 214 million new cases of malaria, and approximately 438,000 people died of this preventable and treatable disease,” the report said. “About 3.2 billion people – almost half of the world’s population – are at risk of malaria.”
And some countries carry a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. Fifteen countries, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, accounted for 80 per cent of malaria cases and 78 per cent of deaths globally in 2015.

According to WHO, children under five account for more than two-thirds of all deaths associated with malaria. Between 2000 and 2015, the under-five malaria death rate fell by 65 per cent or an estimated 5.9 million child lives saved.

A surge in funding has led to an unprecedented expansion in the delivery of core interventions across sub-Saharan Africa.

In May 2015, the World Health Assembly adopted the WHO Global Technical Strategy for Malaria – a new 15-year road map for malaria control. The strategy aims at a further 90 per cent reduction in global malaria incidence and mortality by 2030.

The WHO-UNICEF report noted that annual funding for malaria will need to triple – from $2.7 billion today to $8.7 billion in 2030.

‘War-weary Afghan population clamouring for peace and they deserve it’ – UN envoy

17 September - The top United Nations official in Afghanistan told members of the Security Council today that the country’s path to stability and self-reliance cannot be taken for granted, and that support from the international community continues to be crucial.

“The current refugee exodus reflects the despondency of many Afghans,” said Nicholas Haysom, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for Afghanistan. “A clear signal of continued international support will mitigate the uncertainty fuelling this exodus.”

Mr. Haysom, who heads the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), noted that shortly after his last briefing in June, many points of friction emerged within the National Unity Government, and between the Government and elements of the political elite, driven in part by deteriorating security and economic conditions.

“Although neither of these were of the Government's making, charges of inaction and miscalculation surfaced in the media,” he stated. “Since then, there have been a number of positive developments, including signs of progress in the functioning of the National Unity Government.”

He informed the Council that with a few exceptions, all senior-level national posts have now been filled and both the Council of Ministers and Cabinet are active. The Government has also made progress in addressing the issue of electoral reforms by establishing the Special Electoral Reform Commission, one of its key commitments.

In addition, Mr. Haysom reported that a Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) held in Kabul earlier this month proved to be an important element of the bridge between past donor commitments and future pledges to meet Afghanistan's need for ongoing support.

“The SOM […] provided an opportunity for the whole of Government to establish its commitment to a credible reform agenda. This is necessary to give confidence to the donors ahead of critical meetings in Warsaw and Brussels in 2016 at which donor commitments are expected to be renewed.”

At the same time, the UN envoy warned that conflict continues to take a horrid toll on Afghan civilians. In the first eight months of 2015, UNAMA documented the highest level of civilian casualties since it began records.

“Anti-Government elements continue to cause the majority of civilian deaths and injuries although casualties caused by Afghan security forces continue to rise. UNAMA is encouraged by recent statements made by President Ashraf Ghani to take official steps to reduce civilian casualties.”
He further noted that UNAMA anticipates the intensification of violence to continue, underscoring the importance of renewing a viable peace process, including formal talks between the Taliban and a Government delegation.

“I reiterate my call for direct engagement between the Taliban and the Government. A war-weary Afghan population is clamouring for peace and they deserve it,” he insisted, adding that UNAMA will continue to engage, in the background, with the Government, the Taliban, neighbouring countries, and the international community to promote a process that will allow Afghans to find an arrangement by which they can live in peace.

Also briefing the Council was the Executive Director of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) who said it is important to acknowledge the positive steps that have been taken by Afghanistan to counter the narcotics trade that is undermining the country's development and fuelling terrorism.

Last year, Afghanistan accounted for an estimated 85 per cent of global opium production and 77 per cent of global heroin production.

“Illicit drugs are supporting instability, insurgency, corruption and organized crime, while weakening state institutions and Afghanistan's overall ability to promote peace and good governance,” Yury Fedotov told the Council.

“If we want to achieve sustainable progress, we need the steadfast commitment and engagement of the Afghan authorities and the international community,” he added.

UNODC will soon present the full results of the 2015 Afghanistan opium survey. Mr. Fedotov said he can confirm that figures available at this stage clearly indicate a decrease in cultivation.

### Following earthquake, UN says Chile’s investment in disaster risk reduction paid off

17 September - The head of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) today lauded the Chilean Government’s successful efforts to reduce disaster risk and minimise the number of casualties from the 8.3-magnitude earthquake and tsunami which occurred last night.

“Chile’s investment in resilient infrastructure, early warning systems and urban planning have ensured that casualties have been low on this occasion despite the intensity of the earthquake,” Margareta Wahlström said in a statement.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Chilean authorities declared a disaster area in the Choapa and Coquimbo provinces of Coquimbo region following the earthquake, which took the lives of eight people.

“Early warnings have been very effective in saving lives and the country’s mechanism for ensuring compliance with building codes has also paid dividends,” Ms. Wahlström added. “The evacuation of one million people ensured that there was no repetition of the loss of life which happened five years ago when 523 people died.”

She further explained that the fact that one million people had to be evacuated to escape the threat of high waves and coastal flooding is evidence that the world is seeing a huge surge in exposure to natural hazards, as more and more people live in coastal areas and river basins exposed to tsunamis and storms.

Meanwhile, while OCHA and its partners continue to monitor any possible impact in the Pacific region, “none of significance” is expected at this stage, it noted.

Chile is among the many disaster-prone countries that played a key role in formulating the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, a global plan for reducing disaster losses that was adopted earlier this year at a UN conference held in the Japanese city.
In regaining hope for the future, two Yazidi girls deal ‘greatest blow’ to ISIL – UN envoy

17 September - Five months after she first met with two girls from the Yazidi community who had been held by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the United Nations official dealing with sexual violence in conflict said after seeing them again today that they are “filled with hope for the future,” and that is “the greatest blow they could have dealt” to the terrorist group.

“I am so proud of these girls, of their courage and strength,” Zainab Hawa Bangura, the Secretary-General’s Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, said after her reunion with the girls in Germany.

The girls, aged 15 and 11, were brought to Germany over the summer to receive medical and psychosocial support, and plan to resume their schooling.

Ms. Bangura had originally met the girls during her visit to Iraq, Syria and the neighbouring countries in April, looking at how sexual violence is being used as a weapon of war and tactic of terrorism.

“The change in them from our first meeting in Lalish is remarkable,” said Ms. Bangura. “They are filled with hope for the future again. That is the greatest blow they could have dealt to ISIL.”

Ms. Bangura wanted to see how the girls are adjusting to their new lives, and is also discussing with Yazidi leaders how the UN can support their efforts to trace girls held in ISIL territory and bring them home.

“It is important that we support such initiatives and all efforts to enable women and girls fleeing ISIL to return home without stigma and shame,” she said.

The Special Representative also met with German officials and commended them on the assistance being provided to the girls and to Syrian refugees in general.

“The leadership of Germany in this, and in accepting refugees from Syria in general, is an example of solidarity and humanity that I hope other countries will follow.”

Countries urged to submit climate action plans ahead of UN conference in Paris

17 September - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is eager to get countries to submit as soon as possible their action plans that will form the basis of the new universal climate change agreement to be adopted in December in Paris, a senior United Nations official dealing with the issue said today.

Janos Pasztor, Assistant Secretary-General on Climate Change, told a press conference at United Nations Headquarters that, to date, 62 out of 194 parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have submitted their Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC).

The Secretary-General is “eager” to get all countries to submit their climate action plans, Mr. Pasztor said, adding “the earlier we get them the better.”
According to the UNFCCC, the Paris agreement will come into effect in 2020, empowering all countries to act to prevent average global temperatures rising above 2 degrees Celsius and to reap the many opportunities that arise from a necessary global transformation to clean and sustainable development.

Mr. Pasztor described as “remarkable” the submissions that have been put forward so far, drawing attention to the fact the plans are based on what countries are prepared to do in response to climate change. Countries have agreed that there will be no back-tracking in these national climate plans, meaning that the level of ambition to reduce emissions will increase over time.

He added that the Secretary-General hopes the visit to the UN by Pope Francis during next week’s General Assembly session devoted to adopting a new global development agenda will bolster support for action on climate change.

The UN expects 154 Heads of State or Government and 30 ministers for the Sustainable Development Summit, which will be held from 25 to 27 September.

On Wednesday, Mr. Ban voiced his concerns at a press conference that not enough is being done to keep temperature rise under the 2-degree Celsius threshold and urged world leaders “to raise ambition – and then match ambition with action.”

Against the backdrop of unprecedented population movements confronting the world today and in response to a question about whether climate change was a cause that forced people to be on the move, Mr. Pasztor said that there is “increasing evidence” that climate change is a factor.

“Climate change is a threat multiplier,” he said, adding that if there are already conditions that are prompting people to be on the move, the effects of climate change are making them worse.

“The facts are clear on the ground,” said Mr. Pasztor.

He also noted that there is “no silver bullet in reducing emissions,” and advocated for investing in substantive research for new technologies in the long-term battle against climate change.

“We are in this game for a long time,” he said.

**With eye on security transition, Security Council extends UN mission in Liberia for another year**

17 September - The Security Council today extended the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2016, and authorized a reduction in the number of its personnel, as preparations continue for the security transition to the country’s authorities next year.

The Council “affirms its expectation that the Government of Liberia will assume fully its complete security responsibilities from UNMIL no later than 30 June 2016 and encourages Member States and multilateral organizations to continue to provide financial, technical and other assistance to the Government of Liberia in this regard…,” said a resolution that was unanimously adopted by the 15-member body.

In his latest report on UNMIL, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon noted that it will be a “historic moment” when the Government of Liberia assumes all its security responsibilities from the Mission. “It will be an important milestone, a demonstration of confidence that the country has turned the corner from conflict, disorder and dependence to a future of sustained peace, unity and independence,” he wrote.

While welcoming the important progress made to date by the Government, with support from UNMIL and other partners, Mr. Ban noted that challenges remain that will require additional assistance on all fronts in order to complete the transition by 30 June 2016.
“All stakeholders must sustain their focus on implementing the ambitious transition plan developed by the Government and also on the national reconciliation and continuing political reforms that are essential for consolidating peace,” he stated.

By today’s resolution, the Council also decided that the mandate of UNMIL will be the protection of civilians; reform of justice and security institutions; human rights promotion and protection; and protection of UN personnel. It also decided that UNMIL shall put “renewed focus” on supporting the Government to achieve a successful security transition.

Further, it was decided that the Mission’s authorized military and police strength will be decreased, by 30 June 2016, by nearly 3,260 personnel.

The Council also affirmed its intention to consider the possible withdrawal of UNMIL and transition to a future UN presence to continue to assist the Government to consolidate peace and, in this regard, requested the Secretary-General to conduct an assessment mission in order to provide recommendations to the Council by 15 November 2016.

**UN and Kenya team up to end AIDS epidemic by 2030**

17 September - The United Nations programme that works to combat HIV/AIDS is working with the Government of Kenya in a bid to end the AIDS epidemic in the country by 2030, through the creation of a new data-collecting tool to track progress in current HIV programming.

The new “Kenya HIV Situation Room” will collect data on logistics and service delivery to produce a comprehensive understanding of the scope of the epidemic, according to an announcement by the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) today.

“High velocity data is critical for insights into a more effective and efficient response to HIV,” said UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibé.

“President [Uhuru] Kenyatta’s leadership will help Africa accelerate progress towards ending the AIDS epidemic as part of the Sustainable Development Goals,” he added, referring to the new global agenda that world leaders are expected to adopt next week in New York.

The Situation Room, developed by the National AIDS Control Council and the Kenyan Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNAIDS, with support from the Government of Japan, brings together data from four separate sources: the Kenya Medical Supply Agency; Kenya’s HIV estimates; the District Health Information System; and data from the National AIDS Control Council on programme implementers and service delivery.

Current data shows that there are approximately 800,000 people receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS in Kenya. New HIV infections in the country have fallen by 77 per cent from their peak in 1993, and AIDS-related deaths have been reduced by 74 per cent from their peak in 2003, as access to antiretroviral treatment was scaled up.

In 2014, around 57 per cent of adults living with HIV in Kenya had access to lifesaving medicines, while 67 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV had access to medicine to prevent transmission of the virus to their children. New HIV infections in children, as a result, have dropped by 70 per cent since their peak in 1994.

President Kenyatta reported progress made in reaching adolescents with HIV services, and announced that Kenya would be launching a new campaign against stigma and discrimination.

“Our Constitution guarantees every child a right to education, the highest available standard of health and protection from all forms of discrimination,” he stated. “We cannot change anyone’s HIV status but we can change our attitude. Let us stop stigma and let us stop it right now.”