
Amidst Pandemic, 661,000 People Forced To Flee Due To Armed Conflicts

By: Telesur
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At least 661,000 people have been forced to move because of armed conflicts around the world in the period from March 23 to May 15, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) said on Friday.

As stated in the report "Crossfire and Covid-19: double crisis for displaced civilians," armed conflict and violence are forcing hundreds of thousands to flee, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, a fact that places hundreds of families between a rock and a hard place.

"Conflict-affected countries are likely to be among the worst affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Violence in these countries has displaced millions of people, many of whom live in overcrowded and unsanitary conditions, which are fertile environments for viruses to spread," NCR Secretary-General Jan Egeland lamented.

Armed conflicts are still underway in 19 countries, despite the call for a global ceasefire in order to focus worldwide on a concerted attempt to combat the rapidly spreading pandemic made by United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres on March 23.

"Even in countries where warring parties have expressed support for the (...) ceasefire, the fighting has not stopped," explained Egeland. "In Yemen, the Saudi-led coalition announced on 9 April 2020 that they would implement a unilateral ceasefire. However, the coalition has not suspended its airstrikes and other parties to the conflict have continued armed operations, forcing 24,000 people to flee," said.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the most affected nation, for it represents nearly 75 percent of these displacements, with more than 480,000 people forced to escape. Yemen, Afghanistan, the Central African Region, Syria, Somalia, and Myanmar also show an alarming situation.

