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Pope Leo XIV attends the ceremony marking the 80th anniversary of World Food Day at the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome Oct. 16. (AP/Gregorio Borgia)

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Rome — October 16, 2025

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Pope Leo XIV on Oct. 15 called on world leaders to show responsibility as he urged the international community to focus on the multitudes across the globe who face hunger, wars and misery.

Addressing the World Food Day global ceremony that also marked the 80th anniversary of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization at its headquarters in Rome, the U.S.-born pontiff urged the international community not to look the other way when faced with world food emergencies.

The pope named the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza, along with Haiti, Afghanistan, Mali, the Central African Republic, Yemen and South Sudan. Leo cited U.N. data showing that about 673 million people do not eat enough each day.

> 'In a time when science has lengthened life expectancy, allowing millions of human beings to live, and die, struck by hunger is a collective failure, an ethical derailment, an historic offense.'
> —Pope Leo XIV
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"We can no longer delude ourselves by thinking that the consequences of our failures impact only those who are hidden out of sight," he said. "The hungry faces of so many who still suffer challenge us and invite us to reexamine our lifestyles, our priorities and our overall way of living in today's world."

"We must make their suffering our own," he concluded in English, after delivering most of his speech in Spanish.

Leo also condemned the use of hunger as a weapon of war, but didn't name any specific conflict or region.

"In a time when science has lengthened life expectancy, allowing millions of human beings to live, and die, struck by hunger is a collective failure, an ethical derailment, an historic offense," he said.

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Leo's warning comes as U.N. food aid agencies face severe funding cuts from their top donors that risk hurting their operations in key countries and forcing millions of people into emergency levels of hunger.

The World Food Program, traditionally the U.N.'s most-funded agency, said in a new report Oct. 15 that its funding this year "has never been more challenged" — largely due to slashed outlays from the U.S. under the Trump administration and other leading Western donors.

It warned that 13.7 million of its food aid recipients could be forced into emergency levels of hunger as funding is cut. The countries facing "major disruptions" are Afghanistan, Congo, Haiti, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan.