

# UN chief moots summit to tackle Amazon fires

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Reforestation needs to follow the extinguishing of the fires, said Guterres

The head of the United Nations Thursday mooted a meeting of key countries to drum up support to tackle the devastating Amazon forest fires, which he called a "very serious situation."

Speaking on the sidelines of an African development conference in Yokohama, Antonio Guterres urged the international community to do more to quell the more than 83,000 fires set this year, more than half of which are raging in the massive Amazon basin.

"We are strongly appealing for the mobilisation of resources and we have been in contact with countries to see whether, during the high level session of the General Assembly, there could be a meeting devoted to the mobilisation of support to the Amazon," Guterres told reporters.

World leaders are expected to gather in New York for the annual UN General Assembly from September 23 to 30.

The UN chief's comments came after Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro signed a decree on Wednesday to ban burning throughout the country for two months, amid global outrage over the fires.

The blazes have engulfed parts of the world's largest rainforest—which is crucial for maintaining a stable global [climate](#)—and Guterres said the Amazon was "a fundamental resource for all us."

"I believe that the [international community](#) needs to be strongly mobilised to support the Amazon countries to do those things: stop the fires as quickly as possible with all means possible and then have a consistent reforestation policy," said the UN chief.

"Until now, we have not done enough, we need to do all together more than we have done in the past," he stressed.

As well as triggering global fury, the fires have sparked a spat between Brazil and Europe that has threatened to torpedo a major trade deal.

Fires are also ravaging neighboring Bolivia where President Evo Morales

and his rival in upcoming elections have suspended campaigning to deal with the blazes.

Guterres was speaking after a high-level panel on the effects of climate change on African countries in Yokohama, near Tokyo.

"The Africans practically do not contribute to climate change—the level of emissions in Africa is extremely low compared to other parts of the world—but Africa is in the first line of suffering the devastating impact of the consequences of climate change," he said.

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