



Photo: World Humanitarian Summit



# CHAIR'S SUMMARY

BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL  
STANDING UP FOR HUMANITY: COMMITTING TO ACTION

The first World Humanitarian Summit, held on 23 and 24 May 2016 in Istanbul, convened 9,000 participants from 173 Member States, including 55 Heads of State and Government, hundreds of private sector representatives, and thousands of people from civil society and non-governmental organizations. In its 70 years, the United Nations has never come together at this scale, with this many different stakeholders, to discuss the pressing challenges that are resulting in so much suffering today. This is a recognition that today's challenges can only be adequately addressed through the collaboration of national governments, civil society, people affected by crises, the private sector, national and international organizations and others. The generosity and substantive contribution of the Government and the people of Turkey have been invaluable in facilitating and enabling this historic gathering.

Civil strife and conflicts are driving suffering and humanitarian need to unprecedented levels. Serious violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of international human rights law continue on an alarming scale, with entire populations left without the essential supplies they desperately need. Natural disasters, exacerbated by the effects of climate change, are



affecting greater numbers of women, men and children than ever before, eroding development gains and jeopardizing the stability of entire countries. At the same time, we have been unable to generate the resources to cope with these alarming trends, demonstrating the need for more direct, predictable humanitarian financing.

The Summit has brought to the forefront of global attention the scale of the changes required if we are to address the magnitude of challenges before us. The participants have made it emphatically clear that humanitarian assistance alone can neither adequately address nor sustainably reduce the needs of over 130 million of the world's most vulnerable people. A new and coherent approach is required based on addressing root causes, increasing political diplomacy for prevention and conflict resolution, and bringing humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts together.

The Summit's inclusive, open, comprehensive and multi-stakeholder nature has been essential to harness the skills, experience and resources required to respond to the magnitude of the challenges that confront us. Over the past three years, world leaders, civil society, international, national and regional organizations, NGOs, the private sector, academia, diaspora groups, technical experts and, most importantly, the people affected by crises were consulted. This Summit brought together the thousands of participants who responded to my Call to Action by making commitments and launching initiatives in the leaders' segment, seven high-level round tables, 15 special sessions, 132 side events and two days of plenary, as well as the exhibition fair and innovation market place. The commitments made at the Summit will also have a critical role in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change for the most vulnerable people.

Over the past two days, I have been moved by the stories I have heard, and the resilience, compassion and dedication I have witnessed. I am deeply grateful to those humanitarian workers who have travelled to Istanbul to share their experience and even more so to those who have remained to continue working on the front lines. This Summit has truly been a unique opportunity for the global community to take responsibility to place people first: to secure their safety, to uphold their dignity and to provide opportunities for a better future. Together we have taken steps to awaken the global conscience. We have given a glimmer of hope to millions of people suffering that they are not alone, that we stand in solidarity with them. Now our task is to transform that solidarity into action.

I am humbled and heartened by the support that has been generated towards the vision I laid out in my report One Humanity: Shared Responsibility and its annex, the Agenda for Humanity. I am encouraged by the strong commitments that have been expressed, including by many world leaders, to take the Agenda for Humanity and its five core responsibilities forward and to use them as a framework to improve our collective response to humanity. As we leave Istanbul, we know that the World Humanitarian Summit is only the beginning and not the end of a journey.

## **I. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP TO PREVENT AND END CONFLICT**

Global leaders recognized the centrality of political will to effectively prevent and end conflicts, to address root causes, reduce fragility and strengthen good governance. Preventing and resolving conflicts would be the biggest difference leaders could make to reduce overwhelming humanitarian needs. Humanitarian action cannot be a substitute for political



action. Leaders recognized this could only happen if words and good intentions were now replaced with united leadership, collective and decisive action and a genuine commitment to comply with the international frameworks countries had agreed on. A complementary approach to conflict prevention would be necessary, bringing together preventive diplomacy, sustainable development, climate change action, human rights and investments in inclusive societies.

- Leaders pledged to **increase the number of people, skills base and funding for work on conflict prevention and resolution** within national administrations and international and regional organizations.
- Countries affirmed their responsibility to prevent and end conflicts through greater efforts at prevention, including by a number of States making commitments to **take early action** to prevent potential crises from deteriorating into violent conflict by collecting, analysing, sharing and acting on early warning information.
- The Summit affirmed that more **political leadership** was required for mediation, peaceful resolution and conflict prevention, and to working collaboratively at the regional and international levels. Commitments were made to strengthen the UN's **mediation efforts**, and some participants called for the Security Council to take a more proactive role by reinstating situational awareness briefings, including through the more active use of Articles 34 and 99 of the UN Charter.
- The Summit overwhelmingly affirmed that there must be greater attention to **address root causes of conflict**, and to **reduce fragility** by greater **investment in inclusive and peaceful societies**. Participants called for an approach that **truly engaged communities, civil society and youth**, and for the **equal participation of women** in leadership roles and peacebuilding processes.
- States and regional organizations that had successfully resolved conflicts committed to work with others in **sharing best practices**. Proposals were made to host preparations for the World Prevention Forum focused on capturing and consolidating lessons learned.

## II. UPHOLD THE NORMS THAT SAFEGUARD HUMANITY

Enhancing the protection of civilians in armed conflict was at the very heart of the Summit, recognizing that the fundamental norms embodied in international humanitarian and human rights law provide a universal safeguard to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict. State, civil society, faith-based organizations and humanitarian leaders repeatedly stated that international humanitarian and human rights law are more relevant than ever: they are the last protection against barbarity.

Many leaders agreed to champion international humanitarian law and human rights law and uphold them, even when others erode them. Many State leaders and representatives of civil society expressed support for a robust global effort to enhance respect for international humanitarian and human rights law.

- Global leaders announced significant commitments to enhance **compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law** through a spectrum of concrete measures, including by training armed forces, adopting national legislation, ratifying core international treaties, advocating their universalization, as well as increasing education and awareness-raising. A number of participants pledged national measures to enhance the **protection of women and girls against sexual and gender-based**



**violence.** Some leaders expressed support for improved monitoring and reporting of violations, as well as for the intergovernmental process on strengthening respect for international humanitarian law, facilitated by Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Various participants pledged to continue to train non-State armed groups to adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law and monitor their implementation.

- Participants recognized the urgent need for **concrete measures to reduce civilian casualties in the conduct of hostilities.** A number of leaders pledged to continue to support the collection of data on the harm to civilians caused by the **use of explosive weapons in populated areas,** and on good practices and lessons learned in minimizing impacts on civilians when using such weapons in populated areas. Some participants also announced commitments to strengthen **mine action,** both during and after conflict. Leaders also pledged to promote the **Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict,** as well as the **Safe Schools Declaration.** A number of participants expressed support for the **UN Plan of Action for the Protection of Journalists** and called for the creation of national mechanisms to monitor threats against them.
- Participants underscored that the denial of humanitarian access prevents an effective response to humanitarian needs and deprives people of human dignity. Unfettered humanitarian access is imperative, and humanitarian principles must be upheld and promoted with the utmost urgency. A number of participants called for more systematic approaches to **monitoring and responding to access constraints.** Civil society shared practical examples of how to overcome impediments to principled humanitarian relief operations. **Faith-based organizations** pledged their support to use their influence and networks to raise awareness and advocate for compliance with international humanitarian law.
- Leaders, civil society and humanitarian organizations expressed outrage at attacks committed against hospitals, patients, and medical and humanitarian workers who risk their lives to bring relief and care to people in need. Participants pledged to **raise awareness of the duty to protect and build trust in health-care personnel.** In addition, a similar declaration to the Safe Schools Declaration was proposed to spare medical facilities from military use.
- National legislation to implement the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, mutual legal assistance to hold perpetrators accountable for the most serious crimes, and increased access to justice for victims of sexual violence were among the commitments announced as important practical steps being taken to **strengthen accountability and bring an end to impunity.** A number of participants expressed support for the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, and for restraint in exercising Security Council veto power where a mass atrocity has been ascertained. There was wide agreement that unless we hold perpetrators to account, there will be no stopping a downward spiral.

### III. LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

The Summit demonstrated the international community's resolve to live up to the pledge to leave no one behind in the quest for sustainable development for all. World leaders and people from all segments of society agreed to "reach the furthest behind", including the more than 60 million displaced people, and women, children and other groups in crisis situations, and to provide the global attention, support and resources they deserve to live in safety and dignity and with opportunities to thrive.



- Participants praised the leadership and generosity of countries and communities hosting large numbers of refugees, but they recognized that addressing global displacement is a shared responsibility. Many agreed on the need to better share responsibilities to **address large movements of refugees**. Participants noted the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees on 19 September 2016 as a critical opportunity to take this forward.
- Participants resolved to pursue a **new approach to address the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees** that would meet immediate humanitarian needs and longer-term development outcomes to enhance the self-reliance of refugees, IDPs and host communities. To bring this vision into action, a number of participants pledged to create livelihood and education opportunities for displaced people and committed more predictable and multi-year funding. A private organization committed to develop financial services tailored to the needs of displaced people and to waive transaction fees for people in crisis. Displacement in the context of disasters and climate change was also recognized as a growing threat. A number of participants called for the development of an **international mechanism and legal framework for the protection of people displaced by the adverse impacts of climate change**. A Platform on Disaster Displacement was also launched.
- Participants reaffirmed their commitment to **uphold and respect international protection standards**. Participants provided details on commitments to strengthen national legislation and policies to protect IDPs, as well as to foster the implementation of the Kampala Convention. Together these efforts will be a first step towards meeting the ambitious target of **reducing internal displacement by 50 per cent**, put forward in the Agenda for Humanity. A number of countries also committed to support a **comprehensive framework for refugees**.
- There were widespread calls for **gender equality, women's empowerment and women's rights to become pillars of humanitarian action**. Participants committed to increased programming to enable women and girls to take on roles as leaders and decision makers. New methods and new financial support for creating accountability to gender-equality programming were announced. Plans to end tolerance of gender-based violence against women and girls were launched, and commitments were made to ensure the right to sexual and reproductive health care is fulfilled for all women and adolescent girls in crisis settings.
- **Education Cannot Wait - a Fund for Education in Emergencies** was launched at the Summit to support the delivery of quality education to all children in emergencies and protracted crises by 2030. Education Cannot Wait galvanized an initial commitment of \$90 million from donors and the private sector, with greater commitments expected in the lead up to the seventy-first session of the UN General Assembly. The Global Business Coalition for Education announced its intentions to mobilize \$100 million for this fund in financial and in-kind contributions.
- Multi-stakeholder groups launched the first-ever **Charter on Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action and a Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action**. Participants stressed that the **specific vulnerabilities of migrants** must be considered in humanitarian response, and their particular protection, human rights and assistance needs must be addressed. Hundreds of other commitments were made to focus efforts on people at risk of being left behind, including older people and other groups who can be among the most vulnerable in crises.



## IV. CHANGE PEOPLE'S LIVES: FROM DELIVERING AID TO ENDING NEED

The Summit reinforced support from all stakeholders to go beyond meeting humanitarian needs. Principled humanitarian action must be reliably delivered in contexts of active conflict and sudden-onset crisis. However, global leaders recognized that humanitarian need can no longer be viewed in isolation from broader sustainable development efforts that tackle the root causes of prolonged and recurrent need and agreed that we must commit to a new way of working that not only meets people's needs but reduces them by reducing people's risks and vulnerabilities. Summit commitments give impetus to the new way of working put forward in the Agenda for Humanity. Based on their comparative advantage, all actors must work together towards collective outcomes that reduce need, vulnerability and risk, in support of national and local efforts, while ensuring respect for humanitarian principles.

- Participants at the Summit recognized the need to ensure people affected by crises are not only informed and consulted, but put at the centre of the decision-making processes. **People affected by crisis should be treated as partners**, not beneficiaries. Numerous commitments were made towards addressing this shift by donors, UN agencies and NGOs, including through the adoption of the Core Humanitarian Standard.
- There was widespread commitment to **reinforce the coping strategies of the affected communities. Participants also acknowledged the need to recognize and prioritize the development of national and local capacity** to lead and respond to crises. Additionally, Summit participants pledged to give more **funds directly to local actors**, where possible.
- The **Regional Organisations Humanitarian Action Network** was launched to strengthen capacities and collaboration within and between regional organizations that have been increasingly complementing national and international response-and-preparedness efforts.
- Participants were clear about reinforcing the importance of humanitarian actors being able to **deliver predictable and flexible life-saving assistance** according to humanitarian principles.
- The **Global Preparedness Partnership** was launched by the Vulnerable 20 Group of Finance Ministers, the UN and the World Bank to help an initial set of 20 of the most at-risk countries achieve a minimum level of readiness to future shocks by 2020. The **One Billion Coalition for Resilience** will be driven forward to strengthen the safety, health and well-being of vulnerable people everywhere by mobilizing 1 billion people to better support community resilience over the next 10 years. A number of countries also called for increased attention to the **security dimensions of climate change** and several proposed a special representative be appointed to take this forward.
- Member States committed to improve practices around **data collection, analysis and early warning**, including the establishment of a global risk platform. The Secretary-General committed to making all United Nations plans and programmes risk informed. These efforts would not only greatly assist in responding better to crises, but would also lead to more predictable finance to allow early action, such as through risk finance and insurance.
- Two alliances were launched to forge partnerships with a wider array of actors: The **Global Alliance for Urban Crises** will strengthen prevention, preparedness and



response in increasingly precarious urban settings, particularly with local municipal actors, while the **Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation** will accelerate transformative improvements in humanitarian action by creating a shared space for the development of innovative tools, approaches and processes. Many participants called for a transformational change in the approach to protecting and promoting the health of the millions of crisis-affected people, and health partners endorsed a new global undertaking for **health action in crises**.

- The **Connecting Business Initiative** was launched committing to better link private sector skills and resources before, during and after emergencies, and bringing together 11 national private sector networks representing hundreds of companies worldwide with broad multi-stakeholder support. Satellite and mobile industries launched charters that will dramatically increase connectivity for affected people.
- The Summit achieved significant commitments to **transcend the humanitarian-development divide** while reinforcing the importance of respecting humanitarian principles and space. In recognizing the need to change, a breakthrough **Commitment to Action on collaborating in a New Way of Working** was signed by the UN Secretary-General and eight United Nations agencies and endorsed by the World Bank and the International Organization for Migration. This will lead to strengthening the United Nations ability to meet needs, reduce vulnerabilities and manage risk better by working together towards collective outcomes over multi-year time frames and based on comparative advantage in each context.

## V. INVEST IN HUMANITY

Leaders and participants acknowledged that the commitments made against the five core responsibilities can only be achieved with sustained political and financial resources. The Summit reinforced the crucial role of financing as the key enabling and catalytic factor towards meeting and reducing needs. Building on the High-Level Panel for Humanitarian Financing, as well as the Agenda for Humanity, participants made commitments that will help ensure that over 130 million people in need worldwide have increased access to life-saving humanitarian assistance and protection, and to make existing funds go further. More specifically, there was recognition that financing needs to be able to support the new way of working. At the same time, it was clear that there remained a need to increase direct, timely and predictable humanitarian financing.

- Participants emphasized that humanitarian needs must be met by **adequate and predictable financing**. Commitments were made to increase resources and widen the donor base, including through expanding financing streams and mechanisms, ramping up risk insurance, greater support to country-based pooled-financing mechanisms, including UN country-based pooled funds, and mobilization of Islamic Social Finance. There was broad support from Member States to increase the Central Emergency Response Fund to \$1 billion. This included a 25 per cent increase by one country, a pledge to provide \$149 million over five years, as well as an initiative to use risk financing, backed by a fund to help pay the premium, to establish an innovative financing mechanism linked to risk insurance.
- Donors and humanitarian partners announced agreement on a **Grand Bargain** that will help get more means into the hands of people in need by saving incrementally up to \$1 billion in efficiency savings to humanitarian action over the next five years. Included was a commitment to channel 25 per cent of **financing to national and local responders as directly as possible** by 2020. This was embodied by an ambitious set



of commitments signed by 27 international NGOs and endorsed by more than 125 national NGOs from 37 countries in the Charter4Change, as well as others coming from the newly established Network for Empowered Aid Response, and existing NGO networks such as ICVA, InterAction, Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response and ACT Alliance.

- **New innovative partnerships** were announced between humanitarians and private sector financial and technology companies. They will lend their expertise in digital payments, mobile money and other areas to help meet people's needs more quickly and efficiently.
- On behalf of seven multilateral development banks, the World Bank and the European Investment Bank committed to close collaboration among the group in order to **generate more evidence and data** to guide solutions in fragile States with an objective of promoting **economic resilience**. In particular, the World Bank announced the establishment of a **Global Financing Response Platform** that would provide long-term, extremely low-interest development projects to address fragility. The Summit also saw several concrete commitments for scaling up the use of **cash transfers** in conjunction with national social-protection schemes.

## VI. WAY FORWARD

The World Humanitarian Summit has been a wake-up call for action for humanity. It has generated global momentum and political will to move forward on the Agenda for Humanity and the five core responsibilities to deliver better for people across the globe. The strong commitments made against this Agenda, including the core commitments, individual and joint commitments, are a first important step towards achieving this. Now is the time to act. We must honour our commitments and champion them, pursuing this Agenda collectively and with resolve and urgency over the coming months and years. In this respect, the United Nations ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment on 27-29 June 2016 and the United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on Addressing Large Movements of Refugees on 19 September 2016 will be important opportunities.

All the alignments that have been made with the core commitments, and the individual and joint commitments made at the Summit, will be reflected in a Commitment to Action platform. This platform will be publicly accessible and allow us to hold ourselves accountable for the commitments we have made. I am committed to building on the global momentum this first World Humanitarian Summit has generated, and to working in partnership with all stakeholders to make the vision of the Agenda for Humanity a transformational reality to deliver on its five core responsibilities. In September, I will report to the United Nations General Assembly on the achievements of this Summit. I will propose ways on how to take commitments forward, including through intergovernmental and inter-agency avenues, and the many initiatives, platforms and partnerships launched at the Summit. An annual update will review progress made in taking forward and implementing all that has been achieved at this Summit and committed against the Agenda for Humanity.

The Summit is a point of departure to act, but there must also be a destination—a point where our action will have helped to transform the lives of millions of people around the world. We should collectively assess progress made in taking forward the Agenda for Humanity and the commitments we have made at this Summit by 2020. We owe it to all people affected by crises, and we owe it to ourselves in the name of our common humanity and our shared responsibility. Let us now turn the Agenda for Humanity into an instrument of global transformation.