



GLOBAL CONSULTATION

GENEVA, 14-16 OCTOBER 2015

CO-CHAIRS' SUMMARY

Given the growing scale of humanitarian needs around the world and an ever more complex humanitarian landscape, the Secretary-General called for the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which will be held in Istanbul, Turkey on 23 and 24 May 2016. As a culmination of an inclusive multi-stakeholder process over eighteen months and engaging more than 23,000 people in over 151 countries, the Global Consultation was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 14 to 16 October 2015. The Government of Switzerland hosted the Global Consultation and co-chaired it with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

The key objectives of the Global Consultation were to lay the basis for a successful World Humanitarian Summit by providing an opportunity for different stakeholders to discuss and refine the proposals outlined in the Synthesis Report and capture additional ideas. It marked the next phase of preparation and served as a springboard for the Summit. The goal was to contribute to an emerging vision for the Summit and build common understanding on the process leading to Istanbul.

The meeting brought together 1,194 participants from 153 countries, representing governments, regional organizations, United Nations agencies, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, local, national and regional civil society, non-governmental and international organizations, affected communities, diaspora networks, the private sector, civil-military, peacekeeping and peacebuilding actors, and academia. The consultation was preceded on 13 October 2015 by dialogues with Member States and preparatory sessions for non-governmental organizations and civil society including academia, youth, and diaspora networks, as well as the private sector.

Outcome of the Global Consultation

The Global Consultation reaffirmed the values and aspirations of the Charter of the United Nations as well as obligations under international law, and reiterated the call for change to support the most vulnerable people. For the global community to deliver on its pledge to leave no one behind and to reach those furthest behind first, all stakeholders will have to commit to addressing humanitarian needs, and preventing and resolving crises. The Summit is therefore a historic opportunity to provide people with hope for a life of safety, dignity and resilience, and to reaffirm the centrality of humanity in global decision-making concerning peace and security, development and humanitarian action. The Summit will also serve as a platform for all stakeholders to announce concrete initiatives and share innovations for improved humanitarian action.

The Global Consultation broadly validated the findings of the Synthesis Report, while also identifying some gaps and further opportunities. The five action areas - dignity, safety, resilience, partnerships and finance - were supported, and there was recognition that they are overlapping and interdependent. There was a strong call for the Synthesis Report and wider consultation process to inform the Secretary-General's report.

During the consultation, participants from different stakeholder groups expressed their ongoing commitment to the World Humanitarian Summit process and shared their views on how the process could be carried forward. As a next step, a roadmap to Istanbul and beyond will be developed.

Underlining the entire consultation was the recognition of the common value of humanity and the strong call for the reaffirmation of the universality of the humanitarian principles and upholding international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. There was a clear call to put affected people at the heart of humanitarian action. Emphasizing that humanitarian action can never replace political solutions to crises, responsible action by global leaders is urgently required to prevent and solve crises and address root causes.

The following are some of the leading recommendations from the Global Consultation. Participants called for strong commitments to act on them in the lead up to, during and after the Summit.

Dignity

Putting people at the heart of humanitarian action. Those impacted by crises need to be empowered to control their own immediate situation and destinies. Humanitarian actors should consider affected people as equal partners and support them in maintaining their dignity and restoring self-reliance and a path out of dependency. This requires the right combination of incentives to ensure that people are given voice and choice in determining and evaluating the type and quality of protection and assistance. This must be reinforced by enhanced accountability, transparency and communication.

Making humanitarian action work for women and girls. Concerted action is necessary to close the gender gap and generate concrete steps that trigger accountability for the inclusion and leadership of women and girls in humanitarian action. Donors are urged to pledge increased funds to women's groups and end funding of programs that cannot demonstrate meeting the needs of women and girls. To prevent and respond to gender-based violence, a coordinated global approach needs to be implemented by expanding the Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence and its corresponding roadmap to a much wider coalition, with emphasis on local actors and developing countries. To hold leaders accountable for closing the gender gap in humanitarian action, women and girls' access to protection, services, including sexual and reproductive health care, and participation should be monitored by a newly established independent panel of diverse women leaders.

Including the most vulnerable in humanitarian action. Children must be guaranteed protection and access to safe and quality education from the outset of a crisis, including through domestic and international finance. A more substantive recognition of the contribution and enhanced engagement of young people is required in all phases of humanitarian action, which can be reinforced through national and global networks. There is also the need to develop further global standards, guidelines and coordination arrangements to correct the neglect of older people and persons with disabilities in humanitarian action.

Safety

Fulfilling responsibilities and obligations. States have to respect, ensure respect for, and promote international humanitarian law, as well as human rights law. This requires: ratifying and implementing international humanitarian law instruments in national legislation and in doctrine, training and education of armed and security forces; strengthening dialogue and international cooperation and exchanging best practices and technical assistance; monitoring the application of IHL and holding perpetrators of violations to account through national or international mechanisms; addressing the growing crisis of internal displacement, including by ensuring protection and assistance to internally displaced persons and establishing further regional conventions based on human rights and humanitarian laws; and re-committing to the protection of all aspects of healthcare. Non-state parties to armed conflict are also required to take measures to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including the protection of all aspects of health care.

Reinforcing the centrality of protection. The priorities of people in crisis are safety, dignity and hope. Governments have the primary responsibility and accounta-

bility for protection. In addition, humanitarian leaders globally and at country level, both within and outside the United Nations system, need to take responsibility for defining and delivering protection outcomes, including through enhanced monitoring tools, stronger advocacy, common standards, and aligned donor finance. This should also draw on the findings of the Independent Whole of System Review of Protection in the Context of Humanitarian Action and the Brookings-London School of Economics' review: 'Ten Years After Humanitarian Reform: How Have IDPs Fared?'

Operational safety, security and proximity. Access to people in need, and the obligation of parties to armed conflict to ensure and facilitate rapid and unimpeded access, is a prerequisite for effective humanitarian action. Humanitarian actors must operate in closer proximity with affected communities, which requires building acceptance and trust, notably with armed forces and armed groups through dialogue and negotiation, and the development of policies of engagement with them. All humanitarian actors should also strengthen the capacity of operational staff, including those in partner organizations, in negotiations, IHL, security, and analysis to enhance the conflict and context sensitivity of programs.

Resilience

Creating a co-operation framework for protracted and recurrent crises amongst all actors - humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding – to address immediate life-saving needs alongside underlying causes. Humanitarian action must be part of delivering the sustainable development goals and other commitments, including on disaster risk reduction and climate change, and development programming must prioritize reducing vulnerability and managing risk to build people's resilience to shocks. This requires political will, programming strategies, incentives and tools, including shared analysis and outcome-oriented planning, at global and national levels to deliver joint action tailored to each context. This includes generating preparedness agreements between governments and the international community for disaster response, including better preparedness of national and regional health systems. These agreements should be supported by greater use of risk financing and social protection, making it the norm for the longer-term provision of assistance, looking especially at the challenges faced in urban settings and protracted conflict-related crises. Particular attention must be given to the increasing number of displaced people and their hosts, including the protection and assistance of internally displaced, and those displaced in the context of disasters and other impacts of climate change. There is also a need to focus on new and colliding humanitarian threats, particularly those arising from the interface between conflict, climate change and displacement. Only collective action will truly ensure that no one is left behind.

Generating global support for hosting refugees to help tackle the global refugee crisis. This could be in the form of an arrangement that includes: recognizing host countries' contributions; generating new and more effective partnerships to support host communities and refugees to their mutual benefit; committing to longer term, sustainable financial support for host countries, with particular attention to the terms of development finance in middle income countries; giving refugees self-reliance through access to education and livelihood opportunities; creating more equitable arrangements for their resettlement, including their safe passage; and supporting their safe and voluntary return.

New urban crisis agenda. Specific attention needs to be given to prevent, prepare and better respond to rising urban crises. New frameworks, mechanisms, coordination, and new actors, including local authorities, urban professionals, the private sector, and humanitarian and development actors are needed to address urban specific challenges. An urban crisis alliance will set a new agenda for the most at risk cities, and provide a platform for these actors to generate policy and operational practices that will change the way urban crises are responded to, which will be reinforced by Habitat III in 2016.

Partnerships

Humanitarian governance needs to respond to the demand to make localized humanitarian action the default response wherever possible, while recognizing the particular challenges in conflict situations. There is a need for more predictable and effective response mechanisms and for strengthening national and local response capacities, building on the complementarity and comparative advantage of different actors and in accordance with humanitarian principles. This could be supported by a review of the current international humanitarian system and architecture to ensure response is directed to where it is most needed. In addition, stronger partnerships between different actors, more context-specific, evidence-based and flexible response mechanisms, and the means to verify needs are required. There is also a need to promote national public education programs to promote practical and consistent implementation of humanitarian principles, accompanied by expanded volunteering schemes.

Promoting new partnerships to leverage the capacity of diverse actors in meeting humanitarian need. This requires scaling up and further strengthening deployable capacities, particularly in developing countries, supported by a network of crisis management centers; establishing a dedicated platform for dialogue between humanitarian and military actors to create common situational awareness; and strengthening private sector partnerships by forming a global network built on local and regional initiatives.

Investing in innovation. The right environment, incentives and capacities must be put in place to ensure humanitarian action continues to innovate and adapt when tackling new challenges, and improving the way current needs are met. This should be reinforced by developing a global alliance that will set an agenda for humanitarian innovation by bringing together public, private and non-governmental actors to stimulate new and ethical approaches, and investment for solving critical problems.

Finance

Generating sufficient humanitarian funding to guarantee the essential requirements to preserve life and dignity, and build resilience. Building on the emerging thinking of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing, this could set out what all stakeholders should do to build greater trust, co-operation and clarity of responsibility for achieving this goal. This would include: using the optimum blend of finance instruments for different contexts; greater transparency of finance flows and operational costs; diversifying finance, including through stronger links with Islamic Social Finance; increasing direct finance to local actors, including through a pooled fund for and managed by Southern non-governmental organizations; re-

laxing the regulations and transaction costs of remittance in crisis situations; safeguarding remittances and humanitarian funding from the negative implications of counter-terrorism measures; significantly scaling up cash assistance; and an independent analytical capacity to help deliver more effective and efficient finance in support of action addressing humanitarian need.

Way Forward

The World Humanitarian Summit is a once-in-a generation opportunity to revitalize collective action to deliver better for the millions of people affected by crises, renew commitment to principled humanitarian action and reaffirm our common responsibility for humanity. Addressing ever-growing humanitarian needs requires a constant search for more effective and efficient ways of working by all actors to build a more global, inclusive, accountable and robust humanitarian system. The Summit should lead to this change, which will need to be delivered by all stakeholders, including Governments and the United Nations system. For this reason, the Secretary-General has called for leadership and participation at the highest level, in particular from Heads of State and Government.

The Summit will be a multiplier of global processes in 2015. It will build on the new sustainable development framework, Agenda 2030, to ensure that we include the most marginalized among us in our drive to 'leave no one behind' and ensure coherence and coordination with peace and security, development and human rights. It will also build on the outcomes of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, the Climate Change Conference (COP 21), the United Nations Women, Peace and Security Agenda, the review of the UN peacebuilding architecture and the High Level Independent Panel on UN Peace Operations, the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and the High Level Panel on Global Health Crises.

The deliberations in Geneva will guide the Secretary-General in his report which will convey his vision for the Summit and beyond and set the tone and ambition for a global agenda for humanity. The report, which will be issued in early 2016, will also lay out the actions and commitments needed to realize this vision.

Between now and the Summit, there is a need to develop further and rally around specific initiatives and recommendations stemming from the consultation process, which will become part of a new 'humanitarian toolbox' for the future.

Through various avenues of engagement, the organization, result and follow-up of the Summit, and the expectations of key constituencies will be clearly communicated. All stakeholders will continue to be engaged and informed, particularly Member States, on the vision and recommendations of the Secretary-General and the Summit arrangements.

All stakeholders need now to step up concerted efforts to mobilize the political will at the Summit to deliver the change needed to enable affected people, communities, humanitarian and development organizations, countries and other stakeholders to better prepare for and respond to crises and be more resilient to shocks. There is also a need to bring the voices of affected people to Istanbul, to engage the younger generations, and to showcase new initiatives and innovation for humanitarian action.

The time to act is now. Through global political leadership and will at the highest levels, we must forge a clear perspective for the next generation on how to address and end, collectively, the suffering of millions of people affected by conflict and natural disasters, including the effects of climate change, chronic inequality and poverty, both now and in the future.

We thank all stakeholders for their contribution and participation throughout the consultative process. We thank the Government of Turkey for their generosity and leadership by hosting the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul.