

World Humanitarian Summit

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Mr. President,

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to address the Announcements Plenary.

Academics are here in Istanbul for the first World Humanitarian Summit because they have sensed the importance of the Member States of the United Nations, of civil society and business getting together to discuss issues that are challenges to humanity in its entirety and the action that separately or together they should carry out to address them. Academics, including myself, are committed to work in the aftermath of this World Humanitarian Summit, in research, in supporting technical cooperation and in policy advice, on the issues that are considered of humanitarian nature and on the action undertaken or needed to respond to them. The diversity of interests of academics and their multiple and critical approaches are the best guarantee of enriching debates and shedding light on the different aspects of humanitarian issues and action. The contrasting and complementary perspectives of academics from the global north and the global south are the means of integrating the field of humanitarian studies and, I dare say more

importantly, of ensuring the integration of the international system in the current times of globalization.

In my perspective, the need for the Humanitarian Summit, and for humanitarian studies, derives from the realization that the international system as a whole and its central actors, the nation-states, have enormous difficulties in facing up to problems that are increasingly recognized as their common responsibility. Nation-states, especially in the global south, are not in a position, economically, technically and politically, to face up to problems that beset them. These problems are of two types, natural and human-made, that often feed on each other, such in climate change. Desertification, earthquakes and rising sea levels are natural disasters that require different types of interventions to address their varied causes, and action to remedy their diverse consequences.

Human-made disasters are also of many kinds and forms. In today's world, civil strifes and conflicts produce ravages in the countries that are plagued by them, such as, particularly, in the Middle East and Africa, the two regions to which I belong. These conflicts generate millions of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), destroy economic environments and demolish possibilities of civic and political coexistence. More often than not, in addition to national, these conflicts have regional and international causes. Their consequences, such as refugees, affect their immediate regional environment and overflow to neighboring regions and to the international system in its entirety. That neighboring countries and regions are affected is the best evidence that such human-made disasters require innovative responses that "Humanity" needs to devise to preserve its "humanity" and the international system supposed to represent it.

A final world about the expanding scope of issues of humanitarian nature. Economic policies also produce poverty and misery that cannot be ignored by the international system under the

pretense that they are the responsibility of each state separately. Widespread and broadening poverty and misery are issues of humanitarian nature that require humanitarian interventions at the level of policies and of international cooperation.

The need for knowledge and debate about “Humanitarianism”, as a concept and derived policies and action, is immense. Academia pledges to do its part. Academia in developing countries of the global south is determined to enrich it.

Thank you for your attention.