

Statement by Estonia at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul 23-24 May

To be delivered by the Vice-Minister of Estonia Mr. Väino Reinart

Thank you Mr. Chair,

Estonia aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to make some additional remarks.

We welcome UN Secretary-General's timely initiative that gathers us here today at the first ever World Humanitarian Summit to address the global challenges that face the humanitarian system today. We thank Turkey for hosting it.

Estonia, as EU Member State welcomes the five core responsibility areas of Secretary-General's 'Agenda for Humanity' and the work of High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and Grand Bargain.

First allow me to stress that Estonia fully agrees with the Secretary-General's note that without a substantially higher political commitment to address the underlying causes of the humanitarian crises, the durable solution would not be possible. Today's crisis either natural or man-made cannot be solved by humanitarian means alone. Estonia stays committed to ensure better linkages with development, disaster risk reduction, climate change agendas. Nevertheless, is of utmost importance to emphasize that humanitarian activities should remain exclusively humanitarian in nature.

Secondly, Estonia supports the resilience approach in the development cooperation and humanitarian activities that would strengthen the self-reliance of both refugees and internally displaced people. We can do so by supporting the host communities through securing sustainable livelihoods and access to basic services, addressing vulnerability and risk, putting the needs of the affected people at the center, and respecting the gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. Moreover, children make up over half of populations affected by disasters and crisis. Allow me to reaffirm Estonia's commitment to leave no child unprotected and without education.

Thirdly, Estonia, among international community stays committed to the universality of the humanitarian principles and calls everyone to respect the norms that safeguard our humanity. Estonia shares the grave concern about the ongoing violations of International Humanitarian Law, impunity, diminishing humanitarian space and access. We will continue to advocate strongly and consistently for the respect of international law, especially respect for the Geneva Conventions.

Finally, allow me to confirm that Estonia stands accountable for its commitments. We are looking forward to the next steps after the Summit, recognizing that the success of it requires inclusive follow-up and involvement of all stakeholders.

Thank you.

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