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Closing Remarks at the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) Regional Consultation for South and Central Asia

Dushanbe, Tajikistan; 30 July 2015

Excellencies,
Deputy Minister Shamsiddinzoda, of our very generous host government, Tajikistan,
Minister Baloch,
Ambassador Pesnani,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking you all. You have all worked incredibly hard and harmoniously over the past three days to make this final regional consultation a success.

I've been honoured to be part of some of the truly engaging panel discussions over the past few days, which have highlighted the diversity and the passion of the many stakeholders that have participated in this regional consultation. I think we all wish we had more time for these discussions, and we do – as we now look forward to the global consultation in mid-October.

My thanks to the many representatives of national governments, affected communities, regional organizations, humanitarian and development partners, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector who have been a part of this process, both here in the room, but also – and perhaps more importantly – in the lead up to this consultation. Your commitment to the World Humanitarian Summit has meant that we started our discussions on the basis of a very strong analysis of regional perspectives. And I assure you that we took these views very seriously and hope you will agree that we have honoured your efforts with further discussions.

We have a solid list of regional recommendations that will now move forward to the global synthesis report and the global consultation, which will be the basis of the Secretary-General's report going into the Summit itself. Most of these address new or underserved areas from previous regional consultations. As we agreed at the start of our meeting, we have also taken note and endorsed previous regional recommendations where relevant.

We have heard back from the major stakeholder groups on their support for and areas of concern regarding the series of recommendations that have been proposed. These points will be reviewed by the Co-Chairs of the regional consultation. The final version of the Co-Chairs' Summary will be issued in the coming days.

The results of this consultation have already been broadcast live via the webcast, and will also be captured in the final report and taken forward to the global level. I hope to see some of you in a couple months at the global consultation in Geneva in October, as well as, of course, at the Summit itself in Istanbul in 2016.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Humanitarian action by definition is done in difficult circumstances. It is never easy. The World Humanitarian Summit process is aimed at making it function as well as it possibly can. Together, we must and can show the political will and professional expertise and excellence to overcome the political, institutional and behavioural obstacles in achieving that goal. So thank you for coming together to demonstrate that political will, excellence and expertise.

My most sincere thanks are due to our host, the Government of Tajikistan – and this at a time when it is dealing with a very serious natural disaster caused by the melting of glaciers. Thanks also to the Aga Khan Development Network, as well as the lovely staff and volunteers of the Ismaili Centre Dushanbe, who have taken such good care of us this week.

Thank you also to the Minister of States and Frontier Regions from Pakistan for his insightful and heartfelt remarks at today's closing ceremony.

And of course, a big thank you as well to the members of the Regional Steering Group – may I see your hands raised please; this group deserves a big round of applause. I have seen how hard they have worked over the past few days and months, and with good cheer and humour. And thanks also to Oliver Lacey-Hall and his team from the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, and to Marvel Vaessen and his team from the Regional Office for the Caucasus, Central Asia and Ukraine for their hard work. And to Jemilah Mahmood and her team at the World Humanitarian Summit secretariat.

And finally and most importantly I want us to remember the people who are caught up in crisis even as we speak, who show such strength, courage and determination in surviving and recovering. The World Humanitarian Summit will only be a success if we deliver improvements in how we collectively respond to their needs and aspirations and so do in ways that reinforce their dignity and resilience.

Thank you once again very much for your participation and contribution, and for your abiding commitment to the humanitarian imperative.

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