

As prepared for delivery

Under-Secretary-General Stephen O'Brien

Briefing to all Member States on the World Humanitarian Summit
18 September 2015, Geneva

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all for being here today to discuss the World Humanitarian Summit. I would like to begin by affirming my personal commitment to delivering the World Humanitarian Summit. While the briefing today will cover an update on the WHS process, including the reports and the Global Consultation, I will mainly focus on the way forward.

The World Humanitarian Summit has two goals. First, as a historic moment, it should re-inspire and reinvigorate our commitment to humanity, and in particular to alleviate the suffering of the more than 100 million people that are risk of being left behind. Second, and building on this global commitment, it should initiate a set of concrete actions aimed at enabling us, countries and communities to better prepare for and respond to crises, and be more resilient to shocks.

The World Humanitarian Summit is thus not an end in itself. It is a departure point for changes that will ensure that global humanitarian action keeps pace with the new challenges and opportunities of our rapidly evolving world, and contributes to our global efforts to lift millions of people out of suffering and ensure that no-one is left behind.

The Summit itself will therefore be a platform for Heads of State and Government, and leaders from civil society, the private sector, crisis-affected communities and multilateral organizations, to announce their commitments to progress, and also to launch new initiatives and partnerships, and showcase innovative practices and ideas.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Between May 2014 and July 2015, eight regional consultations, dozens of stakeholder consultations, online dialogues and over 400 written submissions have called for collective action to enact an agenda for change, and collective responsibility to uphold humanity and dignity for all people. All in all, I am pleased to report that so far we have consulted more than 23,000 people.

This process has also been very transparent and has built the necessary trust to move forward. It has provided a “ground truthing” to the emerging recommendations. The final reports of all the

consultations, and the written submissions for the Synthesis Report, are all available on the World Humanitarian Summit website.

With the close of the consultations, there is now very intensive work being done on finalizing the Synthesis Report. The thematic teams meeting, generously hosted by Germany, in Berlin last week offered an opportunity to discuss the emerging draft report. The report will synthesize and present the major findings of the consultations and highlight proposed, emerging areas to make humanitarian action fit for the future. It will be a toolbox for progress. The Synthesis Report will be published by 1 October and will be framed around five major areas:

- Dignity: Humanitarian action that puts people at its heart; delivers equally for women and girls; reaches everyone; and empowers all people as the primary agents of their own response to cope and recover with dignity.
- Safety: Political and humanitarian action that puts the safety of affected people at the centre.
- Resilience: Collective action by humanitarian, development and other partners that builds people's resilience to crises, by investing in preparedness, managing risk, reducing vulnerability, finding durable solutions for protracted displacement, and adapting to cope with new threats.
- Partnerships: Transformed partnerships at all levels that allow humanitarian action to be principled and appropriate to the needs of each different context, and create a sustainable environment for innovation for the future.
- Finance: Adequate finance to build resilience, guarantee life and enable dignity when crises strike.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Synthesis Report will constitute the basis for the discussions at the Global Consultation that will take place here in Geneva later in October. The Global Consultation will be a defining moment: it is both an end and a beginning.

As the final step in the worldwide consultation, it is a moment for stakeholders to take ownership of and begin rallying around the areas proposed in the Synthesis Report. As the start of the next phase of the WHS process, it will give momentum to these important issues going forward.

I encourage all your Governments to take part.

The discussions in Geneva will also provide important thought to the Secretary-General's report, which we expect to be available in early 2016. The report will establish the Secretary-General's vision for the World Humanitarian Summit and will speak to the actions and commitments needed to effectively confront the humanitarian implications of some of the defining challenges of our time and challenges to humanity. These challenges are transnational, interconnected and go well beyond the systems of individual countries or humanitarian agencies. His report, together with the ideas and actions identified from the consultation process and Synthesis Report, will form the basis of the outcome at Istanbul and beyond.

In this respect, I would like to urge all of you to use the high level side event on the World Humanitarian Summit which will place on 30 September in New York in the presence of the

Secretary-General and the Turkish Prime Minister to express your support towards this important cause.

The success of the Summit requires your support, commitment and participation at the highest levels. It will be a critical stepping stone to reaffirm our shared responsibility for humanity and a first opportunity to ensure that we will not leave over 100 million of the most vulnerable behind in implementing the important achievements of the SDGs and the Agenda 2030.

I want to assure you that, we will continue to make close links with and build on the post-2015 processes; the Sendai framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the climate change conference; the peacekeeping and peacebuilding reviews; the 32nd International Conference of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement; and the High-Level Panels on Humanitarian Financing and on the Global Response to Health Crises. In this sense, the World Humanitarian Summit will be a continuation of the global change agenda aiming to put people back at the center of decision making.

Lastly, I am sure you are aware that Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, Chief of the WHS secretariat, will step down in November. I want to express my very deep gratitude for all her work, personal effort, commitment and conviction she has put into the Summit. Quite frankly, without her, we wouldn't be here today. I am grateful that she agreed to stay through the Global Consultation. In terms of the future leadership of the WHS secretariat, I want to reassure you that I am committed that there will be no gap in leadership nor loss of momentum.

Thank you.