

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**REMARKS AT HIGH LEVEL EVENT  
ON THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT:  
“PARTNERSHIPS IN A CHANGING HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE”  
New York, 26 September 2013**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome this important meeting.

The United Nations and humanitarian organizations now support around 100 million people each year.

Without the help of our nongovernmental partners, we could not provide the services these people so badly need.

In 2012, 28.8 million people were displaced by conflict and violence.

Global challenges like rapid population growth, persistent poverty and climate change mean that ever more people are vulnerable to humanitarian crises.

Demand is growing, but resources are limited.

No single organization can keep pace.

The only way to meet future needs is through effective and innovative partnerships with Governments, nongovernmental organizations, local communities, and new partners like the private sector and philanthropy.

That is why the action agenda I announced at the beginning of my second term proposed convening a World Humanitarian Summit.

The first ever World Humanitarian Summit will have four themes: humanitarian effectiveness; reducing vulnerability and managing risk; transformation through innovation; and serving the needs of people in conflict.

We ask for your help refining these themes over the next two years.

This is not an intergovernmental process. It is much broader.

We count on organizations across the humanitarian system to take this work forward.

We need to share best practices and find innovative ways to make humanitarian action more effective and inclusive.

For example, we need to seize the opportunities offered by technological advances including digital mapping, social media and greater access to mobile phones.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Many of you have asked where the Summit will be held.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the countries that offered to host this event, most notably Switzerland.

Switzerland, and particularly Geneva, plays – and will continue to play -- an important role in safeguarding the principles and values that underpin humanitarian work.

These are humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence

I hope Switzerland will play a central role in the preparations for the summit and that we can benefit from its experience and expertise.

But after careful consideration I decided to accept the Turkish Government's offer to host the Summit in Istanbul.

Turkey became the world's fourth largest humanitarian donor in 2012 and ranks third in generosity relative to Gross National Income.

More than 450,000 Syrian refugees have sought refuge in camps or local communities.

And, of course, the country has itself been affected by natural disasters.

We all recall the devastating earthquake that struck in Van in 2011.

So today I ask you join me in thanking Turkey for its generous offer to host the first World Humanitarian Summit.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Summit will be held in early 2016 to take full advantage of the various events scheduled between now and then – including the Hyogo Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the post-2015 MDG summit, the International Red Cross/Crescent conference and the high-level meeting on climate change that I am convening next year.

But the World Humanitarian Summit will be more than an event.

It will be a multi-year process, starting next year with regional consultations that will ask all actors to discuss how humanitarian work is conducted, how we can improve delivery for those in need.

We will also be guided by General Assembly resolution 46/182 on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance.

I have asked the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs led by Under Secretary-General Valerie Amos to facilitate the regional consultations and coordinate preparations for the Summit.

We count on the commitment of governments and all our partners to host consultations and to ensure that participation is as broad-based as possible.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I welcome the support that Member States have already expressed for this summit.

But as we look ahead, let us keep our eyes on immediate needs.

Too many crises remain underfunded.

Pakistan is still to fully recover from the repeated devastating floods.

The people of the Central African Republic are in dire need.

And a major humanitarian catastrophe continues to unfold in Syria.

Today I am announcing that I will be convening a follow-up pledging conference for Syria in January 2014.

I urge you to support this conference and consider all existing appeals for the many pressing crises around the world.

Only by putting resources where they are most needed can we help the most vulnerable.

I am now pleased to turn to Under Secretary-General Valerie Amos to moderate the session.

Due to time considerations, I ask you please to limit your interventions to a maximum of three minutes.

Thank you.