



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 December 2015

Excellency,

I refer to my letter dated 6 November 2015, through which I informed you of the informal meeting of the General Assembly on 19 November to consider ways to advance a comprehensive response to the global humanitarian and refugee crisis.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my sincere gratitude for your support to this informal meeting, and I am pleased to share with you the Chair's Summary of the event.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Mogens Lykketoft

Encl: 6 pages

To All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Informal Meeting of the General Assembly to Consider Ways to Advance a Comprehensive Response to the Global Humanitarian and Refugee Crisis

3-6 pm, Thursday 19 November 2015

Chair's Summary

Opening Segment:

H.E. Mogens Lykketoft, the President of the General Assembly:

- Over 60 million of our world's most vulnerable people, more than half of whom children, are in desperate need of assistance and thus far the response from the international community has been ad-hoc and inadequate.
- The international community have collectively failed to summon the political courage and provide the financial resources needed to meet our moral obligations to these people.
- Recent terrorist attacks do not reduce the moral and legal obligations of the international community towards displaced people, on the contrary, the international community must not fail them, for a second time.

H.E. Jan Eliasson, the Deputy Secretary General:

- Most effective response to the recent terrorist attacks is to stand even firmer in our humanistic and humanitarian resolve and ensure openness and protection to those in desperate need.
- The Secretary General has established a High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing whose recommendations should help bridge the gap between needs and funding.
- The World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul next year should catalyze efforts to shape the broader global humanitarian agenda.
- The challenge will not be met by sealing borders, building fences, or taking a strict security approach to the movement of refugees and migrants, instead, the international community must expand safe and legal paths to safety that put middlemen and traffickers out of business.

Mr Antonio Guterres, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees:

- There is a staggering escalation of humanitarian needs and the growing gap between the needs and resources in the recent past.
- Today the international community does not have the capacity to respond to the basic needs of the displaced people, the funding level for Syria appeals are around % 50, in the Central African Republic is % 20 and UNHCR's operations in Africa are dramatically underfunded.

- % 80 of the refugees are in developing countries and there is a need for a new compact on responsibility sharing namely increasing support to refugee hosting countries, increasing resettlement of refugees, reviving visa policies and increasing family reunification.

-Humanitarian and development actors should work in close coordination from the beginning of the conflict. Furthermore development cooperation policies need a fundamental review in order to assist refugee hosting countries.

Panel-I: Providing Protection Including Through Third Country Resettlement and Other Legal Avenues

Mr David Miliband, President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee:

-The importance of mindset for humanitarian progress in addition to adequate funding: mindset in respect to accountability of belligerents in crisis and war, mindset in respect to how refugees are seen or not seen, mindset in respect to refugee resettlement as part of the humanitarian response.

-Resettlement cannot be the whole answer but it is a vital show of solidarity with the neighboring countries. The choice is between regulated and documented refugee flows and undocumented and illegal refugee flows.

-Three priorities: i)The need to defend the status of refugees in international law and defend the need of their resettlement in rising numbers ii)Additional protection needs of women and girls iii) %43 of extreme poor live in conflict and fragile states and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) make little mention of particular needs of this category. However, the World Humanitarian Summit provides an opportunity to link the debate started by the SDG's to the daily needs of the % 43 of the world's extreme poor.

Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict:

-Children are the most vulnerable among the vulnerable and also they are the majority of the displaced people.

-States have obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Children to uphold rights of children without discrimination within their jurisdiction.

-The importance of sustained pressure to all parties to conflict to abide by their obligations under the international law to protect civilians and end grave violations against children

-The two key areas where action is needed to guarantee the rights of displaced children particularly those effected by conflict: i) Protection: Comprehensive response requires protection of those forcibly displaced. Violations do not cease even after they escape conflict. Camps must ensure protected environment for children. Increasing number of unaccompanied or separated

children is of particular concern ii) Safeguarding right to education must be an integral part of our response to the crisis. The international community must prioritize provision of education for displaced and refugee children.

Member States, UN Agencies and Other Stakeholders:

-The global resettlement quota is a record low. It is around 126,000 compared to more than one million resettlement opportunities a decade ago and there is a need to scale up the global resettlement quota for refugees.

-The first priority should be to save lives of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people.

-Fight against criminal networks should be intensified.

-The Member States are encouraged to increase the level of flexible funding and also to contribute to humanitarian pooled funds.

-Refugees are escaping from conflict and war and therefore they cannot be considered as migrants. The international community has failed to uphold the principles of humanity and non-discrimination and it is regretful that the very tenets that underpin refugee protection regime have been ignored.

Panel-II: Ensuring Predictable and Adequate Financing for Humanitarian Action and Increasing the Impact of Humanitarian Response

H.E. Kristalina Georgieva, Vice President of the EU Commission and Co-Chair of the High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing:

i) More significant development resources should be provided on situations of fragility since development is the best resilience builder ii) The international development association should review its criteria and provide soft loan and grant to countries that are hosting large number of refugees such as Jordan and Lebanon iii) Support review of peace building architecture to put % 1 of core funding from assessed contributions into the UN Peace Building Fund.

-Traditional donors would do more but there is a need to look at untapped resources: i) Private sector ii) Islamic social finance iii) New donors iv) Financial innovation v) Fiscal space for domestic buffer creation

-The existing funds need to be used more efficiently since today only %45 of the humanitarian fund is going to the end beneficiary.

-In order to increase the efficiency of humanitarian funding a grand bargain between donors and the humanitarian organizations is needed: i) Donors should harmonize their reporting requirements ii) Provide multi-year financing for multi-year crisis iii) Have less earmarking iv) Strengthen donor coordination v) More funding to local organizations.

Mr Stephen O'Brien, Under Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator:

-The forced displacement is the defining challenge of our times and vast majority of who flee violence and disaster are internally displaced.

-Beside conflict, climate change is also a major cause of displacement and last year alone at least 19,3 million people were displaced due to disasters.

-There should be a debate of world leaders at the World Humanitarian Summit about how we deal of migration and forced displacement in a coherent and coordinated way.

-Humanitarian financing is undergoing its own crisis and main reason of this is rising humanitarian needs: the number of people targeted for humanitarian assistance is doubled from 38 million in 2004 to 76 million in 2014.

-The two interlinked processes of the Secretary General should help us to rise to the challenge: i) High Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing ii) The World Humanitarian Summit

-Following steps need to be taken in addition to increasing funding for humanitarian action: i) Reducing demand for humanitarian assistance ii) Long term finance packages for refugee hosting countries iii) Increasing the efficiency of humanitarian agencies iv) Aid system need to leverage diverse funding sources

Member States, UN Agencies and Other Stakeholders:

-In addition to traditional and emerging donors, increasing use of innovative and flexible financial instruments, broadening of funding basis and contribution of private sector are important.

-Continuation of business as usual is not an option and there is a need for a change in humanitarian system in view of realities on the ground.

-Multi-year planning and financing is essential taking into account protracted nature of crisis.

- Enhanced donor coordination can be helpful in minimizing gaps in humanitarian funding. Donors should better use instruments such as Good Humanitarian Donorship Initiative.

-Forceful return of refugees would develop a sense of hate against the developed world and increase radicalization.

-Displacement should be seen as development challenge. There is a need for close alignment between humanitarian and development actions.

-Increased development assistance to fragile states will increase resilience and reduce demand for humanitarian need in the long term.

-The World Humanitarian Summit provides an opportunity to set a new vision for humanitarian action. The Summit should provide a road map for long term development oriented solutions for protracted displacement.

Panel-III: Increasing Support to Receiving Countries That Are Bearing the Greatest Burden

Ms Helen Clark, Administrator of the UNDP:

- Resilience base approach is important to deal with humanitarian and refugee crisis.
- There is a need for simultaneous operation of humanitarian and development actors from the early stage of the crisis.
- The international community should focus on ways to reduce the demand for humanitarian assistance by using resilience and development base approach.
- The work of the UNDP have impacted over 4,5 million people inside Syria directly and indirectly over the past two years.
- UNDP and other UN agencies and stakeholders working together to increase the resilience of refugees and host communities through provision of primary health care, drinking water, access to schooling, job creation and skills training.
- Combined relief and resilience response regarding Syria can serve as a model for other protracted crisis.

Mr Mahmoud Mohieldin, Corporate Secretary and Special Envoy of the President of the World Bank Group:

- Effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda would serve as preventive measures.
- Three important issues: i) Policy: Crisis can be the outcome of bad policies, bad governance and bad institutions and absence of leadership, ii) Financing: Provision of more grants and issuance of guarantees for refugee hosting countries iii) Partnership: Security, humanitarian and development domains are closely linked with each other. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen coherence to deal with crisis and to break silos without compromising specialization.
- The partnership of the World Bank and the British Government on development zones in refugee hosting countries.

Member States, UN Agencies and Other Stakeholders:

- Humanitarian and development nexus needs to be strengthened. There is a need for a shift toward development and resilience building approach.
- Supporting refugee hosting countries is crucial. Majority of those countries are developing countries and pillars of security and stability in their respective regions.

- It is concerning that growing proportion of official development assistance is diverted by some countries to address the needs of asylum seekers at home. Resources allocated for asylum seekers should not come at the expense of development assistance.

-There is a need for an early warning mechanisms to better prepare for the crisis. However an early warning mechanism would not be sufficient itself unless it is supported with necessary institutions and capacities.

-It is important to uphold universal values in times of terror and fear.

Closing Segment:

H.E. Mogens Lykketoft, the President of the General Assembly:

- On protection, the issue of third country resettlement and other legal avenues require further deliberations.

- On financing, it was encouraging to hear a commitment from across the board to support people in need of assistance.

-On supporting refugee hosting countries, a number of measures were proposed and particularly possible support by international financial institutions.