Key Messages: Advancing the Agenda for Humanity

The Agenda for Humanity

- The world is at a critical juncture. 130 million people around the world are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance and protection – the highest numbers since the Second World War. Millions more are affected by fragility, conflicts and vulnerability.
- This is why Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put forward a new **Agenda for Humanity**, calling on global leaders to stand up for our common humanity and reduce humanitarian suffering.
- The Agenda consists of **5 Core Responsibilities** and **24 transformations** that are needed to achieve progress to address and reduce humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.

The World Humanitarian Summit: a point of departure

- The World Humanitarian Summit (Istanbul, May 2016) was a pivotal moment for the global community. It generated momentum and political determination to move forward on the Agenda for Humanity and its five core responsibilities, and kick-started concrete changes in the way we address humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.
- At the Summit, 9,000 participants representing 180 Member States of the United Nations, over 700 local and international NGOs, the private sector and other stakeholders demonstrated overwhelming support for the transformations called for in the Agenda for Humanity.
- This support is evidenced by the nearly 3,000 commitments to action, and over 2,500 alignments with the core commitments and nearly 20 initiatives and partnerships that were launched to deliver the changes that are needed.
- Now the hard work of delivering these transformations and making lasting improvements for people caught up in crisis begins.

Advancing the Agenda for Humanity

- In his report to the 71st General Assembly on the outcomes of the WHS, the Secretary-General calls for all stakeholders to deliver on their commitments and continue to advance the Agenda for Humanity.
- He presents four key next steps:
  i. To sustain the spirit of collaboration, the Secretary-General launched an online **Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT)**. This platform will be a dynamic space to report on progress and showcase results, build engagement and create new partnerships.

ii. An **annual synthesis report** will be produced to assess collective progress and identify areas that may be lagging.

iii. A **high-level stocktaking meeting** within the next five years should assess progress against our goal of reducing humanitarian needs, risk and vulnerability, and identify gaps and new challenges.

iv. All stakeholders are encouraged to use relevant international, regional, national, and cross-cutting forums to **hold dialogue in support of taking forward the Agenda for Humanity**, turning the commitments into reality and making additional commitments.

- Delivering for people in humanitarian crises is a critical part of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and essential to our collective pledge to "leave no one behind."

The PACT: Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation

- The first phase of the online Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation (PACT) has been created at www.agendaforhumanity.org
- Currently, The PACT displays alignments with core commitments and individual and joint commitments that were received in writing by the World Humanitarian Summit secretariat. It also showcases some of the initiatives that were launched as part of the Summit process.
- In the next phase, stakeholders will be able to report on progress and showcase results, build engagement and create new partnerships.
- It will also serve as a dynamic advocacy and implementation tool for all stakeholders in their efforts to advance the Agenda for Humanity and the commitments made at the Summit and to foster new commitments and partnerships.
- For more information, visit www.agendaforhumanity.org or email pact@un.org

Agenda for Humanity transformations

- The Agenda for Humanity consists of 24 transformations that are necessary in order to achieve progress on the five Core Responsibilities.
- Together, they form a framework for action, change and mutual accountability against which we can collectively assess and review progress in order to reduce the suffering of millions of people, and address and reduce humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability.

Core Responsibility 1: Prevent and end conflicts

This Core Responsibility calls for political solutions, unity of purpose, and sustained leadership and investment in peaceful and inclusive societies.

a) **Demonstrate timely, coherent and decisive political leadership**:
- More determined and bold leadership is required to set aside differences entrenched in political positions and to guide national discourse and decision-making that supports the humanity of others. Leaders should use their positions to deliver better outcomes for people in need and to commit to sustained engagement.

b) **Act early**:
- National governments, regional and international organizations must be more proficient in identifying early signs of human rights violations and deteriorating situations and be willing to act before situations further deteriorate. The international community, including the UN Security Council, must demonstrate greater resolve to work quickly towards political unity to address tensions and de-escalate violence. Success stories on conflict prevention and resolution should be captured and promoted.

c) **Remain engaged and invest in stability**:
- Governments and the international community must invest in dedicated and sustained capacity to handle more than one crisis at a time. This must go along-side predictable and long-term political engagement and financial investment in promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, strengthening legitimate institutions and reactivating markets and economies.

d) **Develop solutions with and for people**:
- Robust engagement of people and civil society in political and governance processes is critical to sustained conflict prevention and resolution. Women and women's groups must be actively involved in decision-making. Young people part of developing and implementing solutions that create stability. Faith-based dialogue supported to promote stability, reconciliation and social cohesion. Knowledge, technology and influence of business leaders used to promote sustainable solutions to bring stability and dignity to people's lives.

Core Responsibility 2: Uphold the norms that safeguard humanity
This Core Responsibility reminds us that even wars have limits, and calls for strengthened compliance with international law to minimize human suffering and protect civilians.

a) **Respect and protect civilians and civilian objects in the conduct of hostilities**:
- State and non-State parties to armed conflict must comply with the international customary rules of distinction, proportionality and precautions. Schools, hospitals, places of worship and other critical civilian infrastructure must be spared from military force and military use. Constraint should be exercised in the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and political commitments made to this effect.

b) **Ensure full access to and the protection of humanitarian and medical missions**:
- Parties to armed conflict must ensure essential needs for food, water, medical care, shelter and protection are met. Where those needs are not being met, parties to armed conflict must allow and facilitate access for impartial humanitarian assistance. Access cannot be arbitrarily denied. All State and non-State parties have the responsibility to ensure humanitarian and medical health-care workers and facilities are protected and

that all necessary political, legal, social and safety measures are put in place and strictly adhered to in order to protect them.

c) **Speak out on violations**:
  - States, regional, national and international organizations must make use of every available tracking, investigative, reporting and decision-making mechanism to enhance compliance with international humanitarian law. Global leaders, governments, the United Nations and other institutions must speak out against violations, make the facts known and systematically condemn them.

d) **Take concrete steps to improve compliance and accountability**:
  - All States must use their political and economic leverage to ensure that parties to armed conflict comply with international humanitarian and human rights law. Governments need to combat impunity through enacting robust legislation, investigating violations and prosecuting perpetrators. Increased attention must be given to preventing and prosecuting gender-based violence. The UN Security Council should automatically meet and support timely and decisive action whenever serious violations of international humanitarian or human rights law are alleged and the protection of civilians is in jeopardy.

e) **Uphold the rules: a global campaign to affirm the norms that safeguard humanity**:
  - A global effort to mobilize States, civil society and other global leaders to demand greater compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law must be launched. All States should accede and implement core international humanitarian law and human rights instruments with regular meetings of States parties convened to discuss progress and challenges in implementation with the aim to strengthen mutual accountability. Other international and regional forums should be utilized to increase regular dialogue on compliance.

Core Responsibility 3: Leave no one behind
Honouring our commitment to leave no one behind requires reaching everyone in situations of conflict, disaster, vulnerability and risk.

a) **Reduce and address displacement**:
  - A new approach to addressing and reducing displacement is required through meeting immediate humanitarian needs and improving displaced persons and their host communities resilience and self-reliance. A measurable target of at least 50 per cent should be set to reduce new and protracted internal displacement by 2030 in a dignified and safe manner. States and the international community must also prepare for cross-border displacement owing to disasters and climate change. Countries and communities must receive adequate support to ensure displaced persons can receive better services and economic opportunities.

b) **Address the vulnerabilities of migrants and provide more regular and lawful opportunities for migration**:
   - A collective and comprehensive response to displacement, migration and mobility is required. States should provide more legal pathways for migration and provide humanitarian visas and protection for those who do not fall under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of refugees. The specific vulnerabilities of migrants should be integrated into humanitarian and other response plans. Effective cooperation to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling is critical.

c) **End statelessness in the next decade**:
   - States should commit to ending statelessness by 2024 through supporting the "I Belong" campaign and acceding and implementing the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

d) **Empower and protect women and girls**:
   - Full and equal participation by women and girls in civil, political, economic and social spheres and in decision-making must become the standard to which all actors are held accountable in their development and humanitarian programming and funding. Access to livelihoods opportunities must be scaled up and expanded. Priority must be given to providing women and adolescent girls with comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services without discrimination.

e) **Eliminate gaps in education for children, adolescents and young people**:
   - Sufficient domestic and international funding must be made available for quality education programmes, during and after crises. Education must be safe, inclusive, free of exploitation and protected from attacks and abuse by military groups. All education programmes should include secondary education and provide vocational opportunities. States should commit to providing education and certification for displaced persons, in line with national qualifications and standards.

f) **Enable adolescents and young people to be agents of positive transformation**:
   - Empower and promote the participation and leadership of young people in national, local and international conflict prevention and resolution responses and in the recovery of communities. Programmes that successfully integrate refugee youth into communities, provide education, vocational training and employment opportunities should be increased and supported.

g) **Address other groups or minorities in crisis settings**:
   - The needs and risks faced by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including women and girls, persons with disabilities, older persons, adolescents and ethnic minorities must be identified and prioritized. National and international organizations should put in place strategies and programmes with a specific focus on protecting and

respecting the rights of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged underpinned by comprehensive data analysis.

Core Responsibility 4: Change people's lives: from delivering aid to ending need

Ending need requires the reinforcement of local systems and the anticipation and transcendence of the humanitarian-development divide.

a) **Reinforce, do not replace, national and local systems**:
- International actors should enable people to be the central drivers in building resilience and be accountable to them through consistent community engagement and ensuring their involvement in decision-making. The international community should respect, support and strengthen local leadership and capacity in crises and not put in parallel structures that may undermine it.

b) **Anticipate, do not wait, for crises**:
- Strengthening local and national response in risk-prone countries outside of crises must be a priority. Investment in data and risk analysis should be increased and action taken early to prevent and mitigate crises.

c) **Deliver collective outcomes: transcend humanitarian-development divides**:
- Humanitarian and development actors need to move beyond traditional silos and work with a greater diversity of partners toward collective outcomes over multiple years that meet humanitarian needs and reduce people's risk and vulnerability in support of the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Core Responsibility 5: Invest in humanity

Accepting and acting upon our shared responsibilities for humanity requires political, institutional and financing investment.

a) **Invest in local capacities**:
- Local actors are the best placed to know the underlying risks and priorities of communities. Direct and predictable financing, where possible, should be provided to national and local actors along with long-term support to develop their capacity to prevent, respond and recover from crises.

b) **Invest according to risk**:
- The international community needs to invest more in crisis prevention and building up community resilience. National and international investments in sustainable development should be risk-informed. Commitments to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and other relevant international frameworks to increase support to countries vulnerable to disaster risks or the negative consequences of climate change should be implemented with urgency.

c) **Invest in stability**:
- Investment must increase in situations of fragility including a greater focus on strengthening national and local inclusive institutions. Investment in fragile situations also requires more sustained, intense and concerted political and financial investment to prevent and end conflicts.

d) **Finance outcomes, not fragmentation: shift from funding to financing**:
- A shift is required from funding short-term individual projects and activities to financing outcomes that meet needs and reduce vulnerability. Financing should be flexible, predictable and over multiple years so that actors can work toward outcomes in a sustainable manner.

e) **Diversify the resource base and increase cost-efficiency**:
- Resources for humanitarian action must be increased from a more diverse range of actors. At the same time efforts must be made to improve the cost-efficiency and transparency of humanitarian financing and response.