Humanitarian action has changed in recent years. Humanitarian needs have grown, but our resources have not. They will not be able to increase at the same rate to meet these needs and challenges unless we take action. The humanitarian response system has become increasingly diverse and complex, and technological advances are changing the nature of assistance and how it is delivered.

We have made progress in improving how we work, learning from big emergencies, such as in Haiti. But more needs to be done to share best practices and ensure that the system is more inclusive and that humanitarian actors can work more easily with development and other partners.

Establishing effective, innovative and inclusive partnerships with governments, civil society, the private sector and others is essential to help address these challenges.

**What is the Summit about?**
- Setting an agenda to address future humanitarian challenges. This agenda will explore the diversity in the humanitarian response system, reinforce our commitment to humanitarian principles, develop stronger partnerships and seek innovative solutions to persistent and new challenges.

**When and where will it be held?**
- It will be held in early 2016 in Istanbul, Turkey. The main stakeholders will participate in consultative meetings leading up to the Summit.
- Key events scheduled in the run-up to the summit—such as the Hyogo Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals Summit, the International Red Cross and Crescent conference and the high-level meeting on climate change—will provide opportunities to explain the purpose of the summit and enable issues to be fed into the consultations.

**Who will participate?**
- Community responders (including affected people and their local and community organizations).
- Member States and regional organizations (including affected countries and donors, and emerging and interested partners).
- Partners (including military and private-sector actors, charities and foundations).
- The international network of humanitarian organizations and experts (including UN agencies, IASC members, think-tanks and academia, and civil-society organizations at international, regional and national levels).

**What issues will be discussed?**
- Four themes will be discussed in consultative meetings leading up to the summit and at the summit:
  1. Humanitarian effectiveness
  2. Reducing vulnerability and managing risk
  3. Transformation through innovation
  4. Serving the needs of people in conflict
- These themes are based on issues identified through preliminary consultations, which will shape the future of humanitarian action. They will be discussed and refined in the lead-up to the summit. Thematic teams will research and develop each theme.

**How will these themes connect with the post-2015 development agenda?**

- The agendas for the humanitarian and development sectors are being developed in parallel.
- There are many shared priorities. The “reducing vulnerability and managing risks” theme focuses on joining-up humanitarian and development strategies and funding where appropriate. The other three themes also have clear links with the evolution of development policy.
- Thematic research, think pieces and the outcomes of consultation meetings leading up to the summit will inform the post-2015 development agenda and vice versa. Key documents will be publicly available on the WHS website and shared in the lead-up to the summit.
- The WHS secretariat will ensure that preparations and consultations for the summit are linked with the post-2015 development agenda, the post-2015 disaster risk reduction framework and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent policy agendas.

**What outcomes are expected?**

- The summit aims to set the agenda for future humanitarian action.
- In the lead-up to the event, there will be consultative meetings on four themes: Humanitarian Effectiveness; Reducing Vulnerability and Managing Risk; Transformation through Innovation; and Serving the Needs of People in Conflict. In late 2015, the Secretary-General will issue a report including the findings and recommendations from consultations around the world. The report will be presented to participants for discussion and agreement on recommendations at the summit.

**How will the preparatory process work?**

- Extensive consultations are a vital part of the preparatory process. Starting in 2014, regional and other meetings and technical policy consultations will provide input to the preparatory process.
- Meetings will be held in a number of different countries, including in the Global South, in countries that have responded to humanitarian emergencies and in countries which have supported humanitarian actions, e.g. donors. Several Member States have expressed an interest in hosting events. The key findings from regional and other consultations will be included in the final report of the Secretary-General that will provide recommendations to and set the summit agenda.
- Consultations will engage a broad range of partners, including affected people, humanitarian actors, technical experts and the public through the WHS website (www.worldhumanitariansummit.org).
- The consultations will make use of ongoing events in countries and regions to develop discussions on each theme. This will help to bring together initiatives already underway in the humanitarian community. The WHS secretariat, with OCHA and partners, will identify ways to link agendas.
- Thematic teams of 8-10 experts from across the humanitarian community will be established to research and develop each theme.

**What is OCHA’s role?**

- The Secretary-General asked OCHA and the Under-Secretary-General to coordinate the preparations for the Summit and facilitate regional and other consultations during 2014 and 2015.
- The summit will be one of OCHA’s corporate priorities for the next two years. It is already one of OCHA’s three advocacy priorities for 2014 to 2017, along with resilience and protection of civilians.
A WHS secretariat is being established to facilitate regional and thematic consultations, starting in 2014. It will plan and facilitate consultations, coordinate engagement with partners, align a calendar of events and organise for the summit.

The secretariat will be based in New York, with dedicated capacity in Geneva.

A director will be appointed to lead the secretariat. Recruitment for this role and for other vacant positions, from JPO to P5 level, is underway. Some roles will be filled through secondments supported by governments, agencies and other partners.

OCHA will work with UNDP to provide administrative support to the WHS secretariat (on human resources, procurement, administration of funds and other technical functions). OCHA is responsible for managing the secretariat and is accountable for its work.

OCHA regional offices, country offices and liaison offices will be asked to participate in planning and implementing regional consultations.

**How can Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, affected communities and the private sector get involved?**

- OCHA has sought feedback on the themes and concept from many organizations. The WHS secretariat will continue to do this.

- Partners can contribute to an inclusive preparatory process by:
  - Supporting the **WHS secretariat** through secondments and financial contributions.
  - Partnering with governments to co-host **regional and other consultations**. Co-hosts and sponsors are needed to firm up the calendar of regional consultations.
  - Active participation in the meetings in each country/region and **helping to identify national and regional experts**, particularly using in-country networks.
  - Ensuring the active participation of NGOs in the consultative process to ensure civil society views are represented. Raising partners’ awareness and encouraging the need for their engagement.
  - Contributing experts and inputs to the work of the **thematic teams**.
  - Ensuring that the four themes are discussed in forums between 2014 and 2015.
  - Advising the secretariat of key events in their regions that can be used to contribute to the preparation process.
  - Contributing to e-moderated discussions on the web platform.

**How and when can the public be involved?**

- The public will be invited to share opinions and ideas through the WHS website in the thematic discussion forums from the second half of 2014 ([www.worldhumanitariansummit.org](http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org)). News and other information will be regularly posted on the website.

- The WHS secretariat outreach team will launch social media discussions prior to regional consultations in partnership with local media.

**Where can I find more information and learn how to get involved?**

- All preparatory documents, from the concept papers to the consultation outcomes, will be available on the WHS website ([www.worldhumanitariansummit.org](http://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org)). It will be updated regularly with news and information for the public as preparations get under way and it will have sections for discussion and opinion sharing.

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