I. Background:

On July 12 - 13 2006, the first dialogue to explore ways of enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian response brought together 40 leaders of UN humanitarian organizations, NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the IOM and World Bank in Geneva, Switzerland.

The meeting constituted one of the most representative meetings of three equal humanitarian partners, the United Nations, the NGO community and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The meeting was co-chaired by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, and Elizabeth Ferris, from the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response, representing the non-UN organizations.

At the country level, the meeting agreed to establish Humanitarian Community Partnership Teams to seek ways of strengthening collaborative work at the field level as well as strengthening the NGO consortia.

At the global level, participants agreed to convene a meeting of a new global humanitarian platform to be jointly planned by the UN, NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. This platform will meet annually for three years, in conjunction with the IASC principals meeting, to provide a forum for strategic dialogue on urgent humanitarian issues.

To support and guide this process, a Steering Committee has been established with representatives from the UN, NGOs and Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to plan the next meeting of the Global Humanitarian Platform.

II. Steering Committee Organization and Work Plan Activities

2.1 The Steering Committee

On October 12, the first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in Geneva, co-Chaired by the ERC Jan Egeland and Elizabeth Ferris of the SCHR.

The meeting established a Working Level Group (WLG) consisting of, and co-Chaired by UN and non-UN organizations to support the Steering Committee's work on carrying forward the objectives of the Global Platform. The WLG will meet periodically and report to the Steering Committee.

Sri Lanka, Uganda and Colombia were selected as countries for testing a set of Principles of Partnership, to be drafted by the Working Level Group, as well as the Humanitarian Community Partnership Teams.

The Steering Committee affirmed its commitment to increase the participation of Southern and Eastern NGOs in the Global Platform, as these play a pivotal role in the humanitarian response.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will take place in April 2007. However, participants agreed to communicate on an ad hoc basis, receiving up-dates on the progress of the Working Level Group.
2.2 The Working Level Group

The Steering Committee agreed on the following activities for the WLG to include:

- Develop *Principles of Partnership (PoP)* to reflect a common set of principles around which the UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the NGOs agree to work.
- Draft a *Statement on Issues of Common Concerns*, which will serve as a common advocacy platform by the humanitarian community.
- Develop a power point presentation or similar tool to ensure identical messages are delivered by all platform members with regards to the objective and scope of the Global Humanitarian Platform when they inform their (field-based) colleagues of the platform initiative.
- Clarify links between the Global Platform and the IASC.
- Investigate the possibility of organizing sub-regional meetings for representatives from the South and East to enable their more effective representation in the Global Platform meeting.
- Develop a draft agenda and list of participants for the next meeting of the Global Platform, scheduled to take place in Geneva in July 2007;
- Work on how capacity building and accountability to beneficiaries can be developed as central strategic themes for the July meeting.

The first meeting of the WLG is scheduled for 6 November. The meeting will be co-Chaired by Mr. Kasidis Rochanakorn, Director of OCHA Geneva, and Ms. Eva von Oelreich, SCHR, on behalf of the non-UN organizations.

At this meeting, the WLG will agree on a work plan for the period until July 2007, detailing responsibilities for taking forward the outlined tasks, including the designation of leads under specific topics.

This includes to:

- Decide on how to broaden UN participation to ensure wider buy-in.
- Decide on process for developing an information tool to ensure coherence in information dissemination on the Global Platform.
- Decide on how to develop the Principles of Partnership.
- Decide on process for endorsement from the relevant actors in the three countries - Sri Lanka, Uganda and Colombia - as well as clarifying how the process will move forward in practice;
- Define elements of a consultation strategy, including target audiences and key elements for consultation;
- Decide on the process for developing a communication strategy for the Humanitarian Platform;
- Select WLG members to draft a Statement of Common Concerns to be ready by March 2007;
- Decide on a process for planning the next Global Humanitarian Platform meeting.

One donor has expressed interest in supporting the initiative to build capacity of Eastern and Southern NGOs to enhance their participation in the Global Humanitarian Platform.
The IASC will be included in both the communication and consultation strategies of the Working Level Group, to ensure complementarity and information exchange on all matters of mutual relevance.

The Steering Committee and Working Level Group will work in collaboration with the IASC to ensure consistency with IASC decisions and cross-fertilization of all issues pertaining to their respective agendas.

III. Proposed Action by the IASC Working Group

1. The IASC WG agrees to endorse this initiative and will keep the Steering Committee informed of developments and matters regarding humanitarian reform, and to collaborate with it on issues related to the strengthening of partnerships in support of the humanitarian reform process.

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