Note to IASC Principals

UPDATE ON THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT

1. As agreed in our last meeting, I am pleased to provide you with an update on plans for the World Humanitarian Summit (WHS).

2. A three-year planning document outlining the purpose of the conference, four themes for consultation and structure to support the work was shared with the IASC Working Group, Member States and on our public website. The executive summary of the plan is enclosed. The WHS secretariat has been established and should be almost fully staffed by the end of February.

3. We have shared with the IASC working group a set of suggestions on specific ways that the IASC and its member organizations can engage in the summit preparations. They include a request to IASC Principals to help raise awareness of the summit. The attached Key Messages, Frequently Asked Questions and powerpoint presentation have been prepared to assist you in your outreach to your respective headquarters, regional and country offices as well as with your strategic and operational partners.

4. Communicating the importance and urgency of this initiative to your staff and partners worldwide is important to encourage support and diverse participation in the regional consultations and regional steering groups preparing for the consultations.

5. The first in a series of regional consultations will take place in West Africa in June 2014. These consultations will culminate with a global event in November 2015 in Geneva. A preliminary calendar is attached for your reference. Steering groups are being established in each region to guide the planning and implementation of these regional consultations. IASC representatives will be invited to be members of the regional steering groups, to lead thematic discussions at the regional level, and to participate in regional consultations.

6. We will also invite IASC Principals to deliver keynote or closing remarks at each regional consultation. I hope I can count on your support.

7. Online consultations will capture views on the four themes from a broader range of humanitarian stakeholders through an interactive web platform similar to the one UNDP developed for the post-2015 ‘World We Want’ campaign. We will count on IASC members to contribute to e-discussions and moderate thematic or regional discussions related to their work, as well as upload relevant studies and reports on the website. We also ask that IASC organizations integrate references and links to the WHS and its website on their respective websites at HQ, regional and national levels to ensure
outreach to your respective networks.

8. We have been in close discussion with UNDP on how best to capitalize on the post-2015 process and build on the knowledge, networks and infrastructure from consultations already underway. We are also partnering with UNDP to manage administrative services to support the WHS secretariat, as well as to build the interactive web platform, so would like to thank Helen Clark and UNDP for their ongoing collaboration and support.

9. The success of the summit will depend on our collective efforts and we look to you to help us achieve broader participation from your respective organizations.

10. The WHS Secretariat and I will continue to brief IASC members regularly on the initiative and the outcomes of the consultations.

Valerie Amos
Emergency Relief Coordinator
17 January 2014

cc: OCHA SMT Members