Key Messages

World Humanitarian Day (WHD) 2015

- WHD 2015 aims to inspire and empower people all around the world to get involved in demanding and creating a **more humane world** where there is a stronger commitment to **life-saving humanitarian action**.
- The world is becoming an ever more volatile place and there is an urgent need to realize a **greater sense of responsibility** to each other and to develop a **greater sense of global citizenship**.
- The world has never been smaller. With the internet and mobile phones demolishing barriers and flattening hierarchies, **anyone is empowered** to organize, communicate and **take a stand**. This WHD has to address the deficit in humanity we face as a global community. It has to open people’s eyes to the suffering. It has to inspire us all to take action, to make it clear that we stand in solidarity against death, torture, forced displacement, the bombing of schools and hospitals, the looting of aid convoys, the denial of assistance – all aimed at deliberately harming innocent people.
- WHD 2015 is about **mobilizing** people to advocate for a more peaceful and humane world, and to create **widespread support for humanitarian action**.

Why do we want to INSPIRE THE WORLD’S HUMANITY?

- The world is changing fast, and year on year humanitarian needs are outstripping our capacity and the resources made available to respond to the tens of millions of people in countries around the world facing life-threatening humanitarian crises.
- The number of people at risk is growing, especially as conflicts and protracted crises engulf whole regions as they threaten the most vulnerable civilian populations. At present, **78 million people** in **31 countries** need humanitarian assistance of some form to survive.
- The number of people affected by conflict has reached levels not seen since the Second World War. Some **51 million** women, men, and children are now displaced from their homes – the highest figure since 1945. And these trends show no sign of reversing.
- We are now routinely called on to meet humanitarian needs in a world in which civilians living in densely populated towns and cities are in the direct line of fire; in which for millions, chronic drought is the norm, not the exception; in which terrorist networks operate effectively across continents; and in which a displaced person will remain, on average, displaced for **17 years**.
- Natural disasters are occurring with greater frequency and intensity around the world, often recurring before communities and countries have time to rebuild. By 2050, we estimate that up to **one billion** people around the world could be displaced by the impact of climate change.
- Global economic losses from natural disasters are now around **$300 billion** annually, and are projected to increase dramatically. Humanitarian crises halt or even reverse development progress, meaning that millions of the world’s most vulnerable people get left behind.
- Many people languish for years in protracted, often man-made humanitarian crises, in a world which is not doing enough to protect their lives, their rights and to give them a chance to get their lives back.
World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) - May 2016

- This WHD Campaign aims to leverage its public support to create a build up to the World Humanitarian Summit. The first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, set to take place in Istanbul on 26-27 May 2016, is a call to action by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and will be an opportunity to address the great humanitarian challenges of today and tomorrow.

- The WHS will be a platform for Heads of State and Government, together with global leaders from civil society, the private sector, crisis-affected communities and multilateral organizations, to announce their commitment to a new vision for humanitarian action, and set in motion an agenda for change.

- There is an unprecedented strain on the international humanitarian system. With global trends like climate change, population growth and urbanization, humanitarian needs are set to keep rising. WHS is a unique opportunity to combine our skills, resources, tools and technology to design game-changing approaches.

- To meet the growing challenges and demands of the 21st century, we must integrate new actors and new technologies into our work, create new models of preparedness and risk mitigation, improve the effectiveness of humanitarian action, and find new ways of serving the needs of people in conflicts.

- The WHS is a key opportunity to align major global commitments to the world’s most vulnerable people by building on the March 2015 conference on disaster risk reduction, the September 2015 summit on the Sustainable Development Goals and the December 2015 conference on climate change.

- The WHS and the consultations leading up to it aim to build a more inclusive, diverse and truly global humanitarian system.

World Humanitarian Day Background

- August 19 marks the anniversary of the UN Headquarters bombing in Baghdad when 22 people lost their lives. In an effort to raise public awareness of humanitarian assistance worldwide - and the people who risk their lives in order to provide it - the United Nations General Assembly designated August 19 as World Humanitarian Day in 2008.

- The WHD campaign has gone from its inception as a day to recognise humanitarian personnel and those who have lost their lives working for humanitarian causes into a global campaign celebrating the spirit of humanitarianism.

- The theme has advanced with each year. In 2010, the focus was on the work and achievements of humanitarian workers in the field, with the theme, We are Humanitarian Workers. The 2011 campaign, People Helping People was about inspiring the spirit of aid work in everyone. The 2012 I Was Here campaign with Beyoncé was a ground-breaking campaign for the UN and reached one billion people on social media. The 2013 The World Needs More campaign sought to turn well-meaning words of support into action in the form of fundraising for humanitarian crises with the support of David Guetta. In 2014, the Humanitarian Heroes campaign shifted its focus back to telling the stories of humanitarian workers around the world and calling for greater protection of aid workers due to the record number of fatalities in 2013/14.