

Annotated Agenda of the Global Humanitarian Platform Strengthening Partnerships to Improve Humanitarian Action

PARTICIPATION IS BY INVITATION ONLY

2-3 Feb. 2010, Geneva

Tuesday, 2 February 2010

(World Health Organisation)

18:30-19:00	Registration
19:00-21:00	<p>Session 1: Reception hosted by WHO</p> <p>◆ Welcome, WHO and Co-chairs of the Global Humanitarian Platform</p> <p>Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General of WHO will open the meeting by reflecting on the changes we are facing in the humanitarian landscape and how partnership can improve how we have responded as a humanitarian community.</p> <p>Ms. Barbara Stocking, Chief Executive Oxfam GB and Mr. John Holmes, USG and ERC, co-chairs of the GHP will provide short introductory remarks, and presentation on possible options for the future of the GHP.</p>

Wednesday, 3 February 2010

(Auditorium, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 17 chemin des Crêts, Geneva)

09:00-11:00	<p>Opening Remarks and Expectations</p> <p>◆ Mr. Bekele Geleta, Secretary General, IFRC will welcome the participants, outline the current trends confronting humanitarian organizations and underline the necessity of working together while respecting diversity.</p> <p>◆ Ms. Barbara Stocking, Chief Executive Oxfam GB and Mr. John Holmes, USG and ERC, co-chairs of the GHP will look at progress/challenges to partnership since the last GHP meeting and suggest ways forward</p> <p>Session 2: Preservation and Expansion of Humanitarian Space Contexts such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, Sri Lanka, DRC, Sudan (Darfur) all illustrate limitations of access to affected populations. Security challenges, the host governments' attitude vis-à-vis international humanitarian action, the international community's strategies and the actions and decisions of individual humanitarian actors can all ultimately impede humanitarian action. The humanitarian community increasingly needs to identify ways to work in areas where humanitarian space is challenged.</p> <p>This may need refining of the shared understanding of humanitarian principles and a heightened awareness of the consequences of the positions taken by humanitarian organizations vis-à-vis interaction with government, military,</p>
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	<p>integrated missions etc. In turn, this will inform how humanitarian organisations working together, even with differing mandates, can complement each other, bridge gaps between the international response mechanisms and national partners and ultimately lead to more effective humanitarian response.</p> <p>Perceptions of humanitarian action and actors by stakeholders in a humanitarian crisis, including national authorities, armed groups and affected populations, can impinge significantly on safe access of humanitarian actors to those in need. The humanitarian community should identify strategies to prevent or manage negative perceptions in order to ensure access.</p> <p>The humanitarian community whilst recognising differing mandates, must continue to work in partnership to address challenges and to preserve humanitarian space,</p> <p>Mr. Antonio Guterres, High Commissioner UNHCR, Mr. Angelo Gnaediger, Director General, ICRC and Elisabeth Rasmusson, Secretary General, NRC will open the debate by highlighting the challenges of preserving humanitarian space, in order to provoke discussion on how humanitarians can work better and with safer access to those in need.</p> <p><i>Outcomes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Identify the nature and sources of humanitarian space challenges and ways to overcome them; ◆ Identify the causes of negative perceptions of the humanitarian community and ways to address this; ◆ Identify the priority areas in which we should work jointly to address humanitarian space issues; ◆ Identify practical operational approaches that can preserve and expand humanitarian space.
11:00-11:30	<i>Coffee/Tea</i>
11:30-12:30	<p>Session 3: Humanitarian-Military Relationships</p> <p>For a variety of reasons the military forces of some traditional donor states are becoming increasingly involved in humanitarian and development activities, traditionally the responsibility of civilian branches of government. “Hearts and minds” strategies, which include development and humanitarian programs in areas of conflict, have spawned hybrid military/civilian teams such as the PRTs. NATO, in some cases alongside the US military, has also been involved in providing humanitarian relief in contexts such as in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Georgia with a similar counterinsurgency agenda.</p> <p>Funds from military budgets are being routed through civilian agencies to pay for programs intended to forestall terrorism and other strategic threats in “phase zero” pre-emptive initiatives. In addition, many governments are using the military to “show the flag” when there is a strategic/political motive to humanitarian response, e.g. the United States in Georgia and European governments in the Balkans.</p> <p>The expanding role of the military in the US and the development of European crisis management and military operations outside the EU, have blurred the lines between military and humanitarian activities and actors in the perception</p>

	<p>of local populations. The presence of UN peacekeeping forces in several humanitarian crises countries represents another challenge. Some NGOs have contributed to the confusion by consciously working with the military as implementing partners. Others have discovered that projects they thought they were implementing for civilian agencies actually were financed by the military. In very insecure areas some UN and NGO personnel have become visibly dependent on the military for their physical protection. Whether actually convinced that UN and NGO personnel are collaborating with the military forces they oppose, or exploiting popular confusion about relationships between the military and humanitarians, militants have increasingly cited the relationship as justification for targeting humanitarians.</p> <p>The expanding role of the military is a shared concern among GHP members but has not provoked a serious dialogue across sectoral boundaries. In addition to achievement of a common policy in the form of the Voluntary Guidelines in the IASC Reference Paper, there is also discussion about the possible establishment of an informal group that can look at civil-military issues. A number of GHP participants have engaged in re-examinations of their policies and formulated guidelines that may be of broad interest to other GHP members. This debate should naturally link up with the debate on humanitarian space.</p> <p>Mr. Sam Worthington, President and CEO, InterAction; Mr Wolf Eberwein, President, VOICE and Hansjoerg Strohmeyer, Head Policy and Development Studies Branch UN OCHA will present on the common challenges with regard to humanitarian military relationships and what guidelines/ approaches have been put in place beyond the Oslo and MCDA guidelines¹ and to what end?</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ For all GHP participants to gain a clearer understanding of organizations and mandates and to understand where humanitarian organizations differ in position; ◆ Clearer understanding on how various guidelines that have been developed can come to better use; ◆ Identify to what extent humanitarian organisations can limit the ‘humanitarian agenda’ being subscribed into military concepts and doctrines.
12:30-14:15	<i>Lunch</i>
14:15-16:00	<p>Session 4: A New Business Model: Focusing on building local capacity and regional and international readiness to address cross border humanitarian issues.</p> <p>Global challenges including the dramatic increase in natural disasters due to climate change and the pressures brought to bear by the current financial crisis have brought the question of the efficiency and the cost effectiveness of deployment of international organizations in an emergency situation. This has raised questions of the current international <i>modus operandi</i>.</p>

¹ Guidelines on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief (the ‘revised Oslo Guidelines’ of November 2006) and the Guidelines on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets to Support UN Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies (MCDA Guidelines, 2003)

In parallel, humanitarian contexts such as North Kivu, Darfur, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Gaza Strip and the cyclone Nargis in Myanmar although extremely diverse, have all faced the similar issue, albeit for different reasons, of limited access of international humanitarian organizations and the need to depend on local and national capacity.

As a result, in the response to both natural disasters and complex emergencies, humanitarian action has not been as efficient or as targeted as otherwise could have been possible. And although national and local organisations emerge as the critical element in the provision of humanitarian assistance, the current international response can actually be on occasion to the detriment of national and local actors.

Global challenges including increasing cost of food, high energy prices, increased production of bio-fuels, climate change (post Copenhagen) and resulting natural disasters have brought even further into prominence the need for new ways of responding to humanitarian emergencies by increasing national and local capacity. This will include reinforcing efforts to identify gaps at the country level in response capacity and as a result of these assessments, investing resources in preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

Given that the theme of a “new business model” is quite a broad one, only two components will be addressed with a particular focus around partnership: building local capacity and regional and international readiness to address cross border humanitarian issues.

Outcomes:

- ◆ Generate a debate on how humanitarian organisations need to broaden engagement and/or support to better address humanitarian needs;
- ◆ Identify where the focus of investment and effort needs to be made to support local capacity;
- ◆ Identify ways the humanitarian community can strengthen operational approach in order to ensure the most appropriate and timely response to humanitarian needs.

Ms. Hilde Johnson, Deputy Executive Director UNICEF raised the concept of the ‘new business model’ at the GHP in 2008, and will recall the discussion and highlight progress made in rethinking the paradigm of international, regional, and national humanitarian support. **Mr. Robert Mister**, an independent consultant formerly with IFRC, UNDP and several NGOs will present on two of aspects of the ‘new business model’ in more detail, notably strengthening national and local capacities, and engaging in cross-border humanitarian action. **Mr. Manzoor Awan, Director of Operations, Sungi Development Foundation (SDF) Pakistan** and **Mr. Steven Muncy, Executive Director, Community and Family Services International (CFSI) Philippines** will be providing country level perspectives.

16:00-16:30	<i>Coffee/Tea</i>
16:30-17:30	<i>Conclusions and Next Steps Closing Remarks, Co-Chairs</i>