

World Humanitarian Summit 2016

JOINT DIASPORA COMMITMENTS STATEMENT

The world faces unprecedented humanitarian suffering: 125 million people devastated by wars and natural disasters, including 60 million forced from their homes. Recognizing the enormity of these challenges, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki Moon called for the first ever World Humanitarian Summit to rally global support for concrete actions and commitments to a global agenda for humanity, to better serve the most vulnerable people in the world.

When crises erupt, diaspora initiatives and organisations often are first-line responders, quickly sending relief aid, money and volunteers directly to affected communities and support local structures. Due to their ties and networks in their countries of origin, diasporas have access to knowledge of when a crisis is about to occur, are able to assist during the crisis in areas with limited access to conventional actors, and continue providing support as the crisis stage moves to rehabilitation and recovery. Through this statement and our participation at the WHS in Istanbul, undersigned diaspora organisations involved in humanitarian assistance affirm our commitment to support vulnerable people and communities.

Against the aspirational framing of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity, we make the following commitments in pursuit of efficient, inclusive and people-centered humanitarian action. While not all commitments are relevant to the operations of each signatory, we stand together in a spirit of shared analysis of the commitments required for a more efficient humanitarian response. Following the WHS, we will strive to realize these principle commitments within the varying frameworks of our humanitarian interventions.

Therefore we, the diaspora, commit to:

CORE RESPONSIBILITY ONE - Political Leadership to End and Prevent Conflicts

- Complement our humanitarian response with advocating towards political leadership to address structural root causes of conflict.
- Actively contribute with relevant (local) knowledge towards comprehensive, shared frameworks for conflict and risk analysis, including warning systems at the local, national and international level.

CORE RESPONSIBILITY TWO - Uphold Norms that Safeguard Humanity

- Align our humanitarian action with the core humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence and humanity.
- Include gender-based violence prevention and mitigation interventions in our humanitarian action.

CORE RESPONSIBILITY THREE - Leave No One Behind

- Continue engaging in inclusive and needs-based humanitarian action incorporating people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups (women, children, the elderly, the sick, socially marginalised, ethnic minorities, indigenous people, and people in remote areas).
- Communicate and deliver our humanitarian responses jargon free, in local language (where possible) and with full acknowledgement and respect for the local cultural context.

CORE RESPONSIBILITY FOUR - Changing People's Lives: From Delivering Aid to Ending Needs

- Utilize our local, national and international networks to channel information to and from affected communities, aiming to ensure that the voices of affected communities influence decision-making processes within humanitarian programming.
- Jointly support the establishment of an independent diaspora coordination body that facilitates concrete cooperation between diaspora organisations and the wider humanitarian community, to further enable diaspora contributions to joint needs assessment and coordinated humanitarian response. The body will also facilitate joint efforts to document and render transparent diaspora responses and best practices.
- Working in close cooperation with local partners in order to reinforce, not replace, national response systems.
- Looking within the local economy first when providing aid rather than shipping goods in country where it is possible to purchase in country.

CORE RESPONSIBILITY FIVE - Invest in Humanity

- Strengthen and formalize, if possible, the relationship with local partners and authorities, affirm and endorse principled partnerships between national and international actors and humanitarian donors, and endorse the empowerment of local and national actors to play a central role in programming and delivering principled and coordinated humanitarian assistance.
- Support all efforts that seek to ensure the inclusion of front-line responders in collective coordination platforms and response processes, thereby promoting stronger partnerships and increased direct access of local, national and diaspora front-line responders to humanitarian funding.
- Ensure that our humanitarian action aims to protect people's safety and dignity and adheres to the principle of do no harm.
- Provide transparent financial tracking and reporting.
- Engage in research and other activities aimed at producing documented knowledge that qualifies humanitarian programming and response and influences policy.
- Incorporate applicable SDGs in our work and encourage all partners to do the same, to enable a response that can provide lasting sustainable growth and recovery.
- Ensuring the involvement and knowledge development of diaspora youth to encourage continued engagement within humanitarian response activities of subsequent diaspora generations.

The following organisations have endorsed the commitments:

Afhansk Kulturforening, AFFORD, African Community Association of Bolton, AYAD, Barada Syrienhilfe, CEO Associates, Danish Human Appeal, DAN-TA QOYS-KA (The Family), Diaspora African Women's Network, Deutsch Syrisches forum e.V., Engayde, Federation of Ghanaian diaspora in Europe, From Street to School, Gender Education & Enterprise Development for Africa (GEEDA), Girl Child Network Sierra Leone, Hand in Hand for Syria, Heads Up (Africa), Heaven Homes and Children's Centres, HIRDA DK, HIRDA UK, Homes League Abroad, Hope 4 Ebola Orphans Sierra Leone, HRA (Haiti Renewal Alliance), IDAY-UK, Katib Cultural Association, Kindeslaecheln, LGBT Christians in Exiles, Lepont UK, LunchBoxGift, Movimento degli Africani, Nakuru Environmental and Cultural Trust, OFROSOM, Sawa foundation UK, SHF -Syrian Humanity Forum e.V., Shabaka Social Enterprise, SLUKDERT, South People's Projects-Soppro, SSPDO, Organization of Sierra Leone Healthcare professionals abroad (TOSHPA), Union of Kurdish Students in Syria and Germany (UKSSD e. V.), Verband Deutsch-Syrischer Hilfsvereine e.V., Youth With A Global Vision, Watan