



Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

*As prepared for delivery*

**Assistant-Secretary-General Kyung-Wha Kang**

**Remarks to the Side Event on  
"Curbing the Threat of Boko Haram and Building Stability in Affected Countries"  
New York, 26 September 2015**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The humanitarian situation in the area affected by the Boko Haram insurgency is serious, and it is deteriorating. More than 2.5 million people including 1.4 million children have been displaced; this is Africa's fastest-growing displacement crisis and it poses some very specific problems for our emergency response.

First, groups of people are on the move and the pattern of displacement is complex. Some people have fled several times in search of security; others have crossed international boundaries as refugees or as returnees seeking refuge in their countries of origin.

Our response strategies must therefore be flexible enough to deal with this fluid situation.

Second, one of the most concerning aspects of this displacement is its effect on host communities, who have shown generosity and leadership in sharing what little they have with their guests. This is undermining their own coping mechanisms and reducing their resilience to future shocks.

We need to target these communities and support them in rebuilding their resources. We must work through governments, local authorities and civil society groups to reinforce existing structures and institutions and strengthen basic social services like schools and clinics, so that humanitarian aid has a lasting impact.

Third, our humanitarian response must take into account the widespread use of gender-based violence against women, girls and boys. The freedom of movement of girls and women in many areas has been constrained, making it even more difficult for them to earn a living. This is leading to chronic food insecurity and dependency on humanitarian aid. Our programming must take this into account; we must direct resources to specific activities and plans tailored to take gender needs into account.

Fourth, our partners in the Governments of the affected countries can help us by making sure we have unimpeded access to reach everyone in need. Governments have primary

responsibility for responding to the needs of affected people, but international agencies can advise and coordinate this complex operation. National and international actors must come together to mobilize support and to create conditions for the safe return of internally displaced people, refugees and returnees.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Humanitarian agencies and their partners are already making a difference in the affected countries.

In Nigeria, for example, humanitarian partners and UN agencies have reached some 380,000 people with food assistance so far this year, and supported nearly 600,000 people with emergency shelter and household items.

In Niger, we have provided food assistance to more than 100,000 people and treated some 13,000 children suffering from severe acute malnutrition in 2015.

This month alone in Chad, 16,000 internally displaced people have received emergency relief.

But we must step up these activities if we are to secure a peaceful and stable future for the millions of young people at risk.

Lasting solutions will mean addressing the political, social and economic drivers of the crisis. Engaging with communities and listening to what people, particularly women and girls, tell us is essential. We must work with governments and development partners to provide durable, multi-year solutions.

I hope this has given you an idea of the humanitarian response and what more remains to be done to respond to this crisis.

Thank you.