



GLOBAL  
HUMANITARIAN  
POLICY FORUM



2021

## ATTENDEES' BRIEFING PACK

### 2021 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN POLICY FORUM

*Where to from Here? Humanitarian Action  
Between Rising Needs And Distant Solutions*

*Thursday, December 9, 2021 | 9:00 am – 12:45 pm*

*Friday, December 10, 2021 | 9:00 am – 11:45 am*

Virtual Meeting Registration (for all events):

[https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg](https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg)

Website: <https://www.unocha.org/2021-humanitarian-policy-forum>



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## CONCEPT NOTE - 2021 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN POLICY FORUM

### *WHERE TO FROM HERE? HUMANITARIAN ACTION BETWEEN RISING NEEDS AND DISTANT SOLUTIONS*

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On **9-10 December 2021**, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in partnership with the United Nations Foundation, will convene the tenth Global Humanitarian Policy Forum (GHPF). This year's GHPF will assess the current landscape through a series of thematic, interactive panel discussions including the growing humanitarian climate crisis, persistent challenges around access and humanitarian negotiations, increasing cyber threats impacting humanitarian action, and the linkages between COVID-19 and conflict and the importance of vaccines in humanitarian settings. Discussions will be held virtually on Zoom.

2021 was marked by great uncertainty around global socio-economic recovery following unprecedented disruptions worldwide in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, threatening to eliminate hard-won gains towards the Sustainable Development Goals. And a clear end of the pandemic is not in sight. While a number of developed countries with unrestricted access to vaccines struggle with vaccine hesitancy and social distrust, we see a near total lack of accessibility to vaccines in other parts of the world. Many countries with Humanitarian Response Plans are not expected to have sufficient coverage of their population until mid-2022 or later.

At the same time, the climate crisis is threatening to inundate national and international support systems, leading to more vulnerability and fragility worldwide. Continued and resurgent outbreaks of conflict remained the main driver of humanitarian needs. Growing geopolitical tensions and political division are increasing competition and preventing effective collaboration in many places. Increasing using of data and new and emerging technologies provide an abundance of opportunities but also the threat posed by adverse cyber operations. Terrorism, religious extremism, and organized crime continue to exploit weak institutions and power vacuums to undermine state authority. The GHPF will look at these evolving trends and key challenges that continue to shape the operating environment of humanitarian response

Since 2012, the Forum has convened members of the humanitarian community and experts from other fields to anticipate future trends, launch new policy ideas and explore the practical challenges and opportunities of shifting policy to practice in crisis contexts. Over the past nine years, the GHPF has been at the forefront of shaping the international humanitarian community's policy agenda.

A summary report on the GHPF's key strategic conclusions and recommendations will be posted on the event's [website](#) in January and shared with participants.



## AGENDA – 2021 GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN POLICY FORUM

### DAY 1 - 9 DECEMBER 2021

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

#### High-level Opening - Risks, Threats and Challenges: The Growing Global Demand for Humanitarian Action

Moderator:

**Ms. Femi Oke**, Journalist and Broadcaster

Panellists:

- **Mr. Martin Griffiths**, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- **Dr. Ayoade Olatunbosun-Alakija**, Co-Chair, African Union's Africa Vaccine Delivery Alliance
- **Ms. Rachel Kyte**, Dean of The Fletcher School at Tufts University

**Video message by H.E. Abdullah Shahid**, President of the 76<sup>th</sup> United Nations General Assembly

10:00 AM - 10:15 AM

Break

10:15 AM – 11:30 AM

#### From Checkpoints to High Politics: Humanitarian Access Negotiations in Action

Moderator:

**Mr. Rob Grace**, Researcher and Affiliated Fellow, Brown University, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies

Panellists:

- **Dr. Fiona Terry**, Head of Operational Research, International Committee of the Red Cross.
- **Mr. Charles Petrie**, Human Securities Consultant and former ASG
- **Mr. Tom Gregg**, Senior Advisor to the United Nations
- **Ms. Ghada Hatim Eltahir**, Deputy Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, OCHA

11:30 AM - 11:45 AM

Break



11:45 AM – 12:45 PM

## Sparks on the Horizon: COVID-19 and Fragility

Moderator:

**Mr. Raj Kumar**, President and Editor in Chief, DEVEX

Panellists:

- **Mr. Thomas Wright**, author of “Aftershocks: Pandemic Politics and the End of the International Order”, Brookings Institute
- **Ms. Vera Songwe**, Under-Secretary-General, Economic Commission for Africa
- **Ms. Mireia Villar Forner**, UN Resident Coordinator, Colombia
- **Ms. Sarah Charles**, Assistant to the Administrator of USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)

### *DAY 2 - 10 DECEMBER 2021*

9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

## No Return to Normal: Realities and Opportunities of the Growing Humanitarian Climate Crisis

Moderator:

**Ms. Koko Warner**, Manager, Adaptation Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Panelists:

- **Mr. Selwin Hart**, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Action and Assistant Secretary-General for the Climate Action Team
- **Ms. Valerie Guarnieri**, Assistant Executive, Director, World Food Programme
- **Mr. Saleemul Huq**, Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh
- **Mr. Melchor Mergal**, Municipal Mayor, Salcedo, Eastern Samar, the Philippines

10:15 AM - 10:30 AM

Break



10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

## The Humanitarian Implications of Cyber Threats

Moderator:

**Ms. Kristen Eichensehr**, Director, National Security Law Center,  
University of Virginia

Panelists:

- **Mr. Nemanja Malisevic**, Director of Digital Diplomacy at Microsoft
- **Ms. Delphine van Solinge**, Adviser on Digital Risks for Populations in Armed Conflicts, Protection Division, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- **Ms. Sara Wahedi**, CEO & Founder of Ehtesab, Afghanistan
- **Mr. Robert Young**, Legal Counsel at Global Affairs Canada
- **Mr. Jonas Belina**, PhD, Diplomatic Officer, Humanitarian Diplomacy



## CONCEPT NOTE - HIGH-LEVEL OPENING PANEL

### *RISKS, THREATS AND CHALLENGES: THE GROWING GLOBAL DEMAND FOR HUMANITARIAN ACTION*

*Thursday, 9 December 2021 | 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM EST*

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#### **Overview:**

At the close of a year marked by great uncertainty and increasing divergence around socio-economic recovery following the unprecedented disruptions worldwide starting in 2020, a clear end of the COVID-19 pandemic is still not in sight. While many developed countries with access to vaccines struggle with vaccine hesitancy and social distrust, we see a near total lack of accessibility to vaccines in other parts of the world. Despite an increased vaccine supply, many countries with Humanitarian Response Plans are not expected to have sufficient coverage of their population until mid-2022 or later.

The impacts of COVID-19 on top of existing and compounding crises meant humanitarian needs were higher and further reaching than ever, with record numbers of displaced people and people in need of humanitarian assistance worldwide. The number of countries in protracted crises has doubled over the last six years.

The growing climate crisis is threatening to inundate national and international support systems and is increasingly turning into a global humanitarian crisis. On the frontlines of climate change, in many of those already most vulnerable countries, humanitarian workers witness, every day and everywhere, how the climate crisis is exacerbating vulnerabilities, is serving as a force multiplier for other global challenges and is creating new humanitarian “hotspots” where the humanitarian system was traditionally not or less active.

Continued and resurgent outbreaks of conflict remain the main driver of humanitarian needs worldwide. In this regard, humanitarian access continues to be a challenge in several crises and is increasingly used as a bargaining chip, with a devastating impact on populations in need. Terrorism, religious extremism, and organized crime are exploiting weak institutions and power vacuums to undermine state authority.

Opening the Forum and providing the global context for the following thematic discussions, panellist will share their perspectives on the current global landscape, marked by the climate crisis, the COVID 19 pandemic and lack of access to vaccines, the risks and fall out of rising geopolitical tensions and divisions, growing inequalities across countries including the debt crisis of many middle income and lower middle-income countries. The discussions will help relay a realistic picture and better understanding of the global environment ahead of us (the magnitude of challenges of developing countries; the compounding effects of multiple intersecting global challenges on communities vulnerability and needs; prospects and projections) and the regional and global landscapes international aid organizations and financial institutions, local Governments and civil society, and private sector partners need to collaborate in.



## Guiding Questions:

- What are the key intersecting health, geopolitical, social-economic and security challenges shaping the current global landscape, and how are they impacting the humanitarian operating environment?
- What are the key implications of these challenges – climate change, pandemic, growing inequalities – for the humanitarian system, their partners, and their ways of working?
- How are the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic with its immediate health and secondary impacts intersecting with other global challenges, and changing the face of vulnerability of people in need?
- In light of ever-increasing needs and increasingly compounding crises, what are the key lessons learned around strategic crisis preparedness, and what are the necessary cross-sectoral partnerships to create synergies and more systematic cooperation between diverse actors?
- In the current geopolitical context, how do we lift ambition to support vulnerable countries and communities?

## Panellists:

**Femi Oke** - Moderator

### ***Journalist and Broadcaster***

Femi Oke is an award-winning international journalist, broadcaster, professional moderator and cofounder of the diverse moderator's bureau "Moderate the Panel." Femi's reporting has been recognized by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Communications Agency and InterAction. Since the 1980s, she has worked for BBC television and radio, Sky TV, myriad U.K. television networks, CNN and U.S. public radio. As a professional moderator, Femi has presided over world class events including European Development Days, NBA Africa Celebratory Luncheon for the U.S. National Basketball Association, and the historic Barbershop Conference at the United Nations Headquarters.

### **Martin Griffiths**

#### ***Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)***

Since 2018 Mr. Griffiths has served as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Yemen. Between 2014 and 2018, he served as the first Executive Director of the European Institute of Peace. Between 2012 and 2014, he served as an adviser to all three Special Envoys of the Secretary-General for Syria, and Deputy Head of the United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS). From 1999 to 2010, Mr. Griffiths was the founding Director of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue in Geneva. He also worked in the British diplomatic service and for various international humanitarian organizations, including UNICEF, Save the Children and ActionAid. In 1994 he became the Director of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs in Geneva and, and from 1998 to 1999, he served as Deputy to the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator in New York. He has also served as United Nations Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes and in the Balkans.



## **Ayoade Olatunbosun-Alakija**

### ***Co-Chair AU Africa Vaccine Delivery Alliance***

Dr Ayoade Olatunbosun-Alakija is Co-Chair of the African Union, African Vaccine Delivery Alliance and Founder of the Emergency Coordination Centre, Nigeria (ECC), as well as the former Chief Humanitarian Coordinator for Nigeria. With a background in medicine, public health and policy, Ayoade is a recognised Pan-African strategist and analytical thinker who brings creative and innovative solutions to complex situations. Ayoade has long standing relationships and networks with leaders across governments, multilateral agencies, NGOs, civil society, and the private sector. She has successfully delivered initiatives ranging across health, development, humanitarian crisis and education in countries across Africa and globally. In addition to this, she served as a Board Member at George Washington University, Africa Centre for Peace and Human Security. Ayoade is passionate about achieving equitable outcomes in all aspects of life especially health, education and achieving social justice globally. In addition to this, she is currently spearheading an initiative to create Safe Learning and Teaching Environments in Nigeria (The CASTLE Initiative).

## **Rachel Kyte**

### ***Dean of The Fletcher School***

Rachel Kyte is the 14th dean of The Fletcher School at Tufts University. A 2002 graduate of Fletcher's Global Master of Arts Program (GMAP) and a professor of practice at the school since 2012, Kyte is the first woman to lead the nation's oldest graduate-only school of international affairs. Prior to joining Fletcher, Kyte served as special representative of the UN Secretary-General and CEO of Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL). She previously was the World Bank Group vice president and special envoy for climate change, leading the run-up to the Paris Agreement. She was also vice president at the International Finance Corporation responsible for ESG risk and business advisory services. Kyte is a member of the U.N. Secretary-General's high-level Advisory Group on Climate Action and an advisor to the UK government for the U.N. Climate Talks, COP26. Kyte is co-chair of the Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative (VCMI), chair of the FONERWA, the Rwanda Green Fund, and chair of the ESG Committee of the Private Infrastructure Development Group.

## **Abdulla Shahid**

### ***President of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly***

H.E. Abdulla Shahid is widely recognized as an exceptional politician and a seasoned diplomat, with a long and distinguished career serving in both the Government and legislature of Maldives. Since his appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2018, for the second time, Mr. Shahid has worked incessantly to reposition Maldives as a responsible and respected member of the international community. Amid the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, Mr. Shahid has been one of the leading voices in the international arena highlighting the devastation caused by the global health crisis on the economies and societies of small island developing States. Mr. Shahid began his professional career as a foreign service officer in 1983 and his parliamentary career spanned 25 years, during which time he participated in, and oversaw, major legislative progress and reform. During his career, he held positions as Executive Secretary to the President, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Member of Parliament for five consecutive terms, and Speaker of the People's Majlis, among others.



## CONCEPT NOTE - Interactive Discussion

### *FROM CHECKPOINTS TO HIGH POLITICS: HUMANITARIAN ACCESS NEGOTIATIONS IN ACTION*

Thursday, 9 December 2021 | 10:15 AM - 11:30 AM EST

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#### **Overview:**

From Syria to Afghanistan and elsewhere, the “politics of humanitarian access” have become a feature of today’s armed conflicts and humanitarian emergencies. Humanitarian access has been increasingly used as a bargaining chip, with a devastating impact on populations in need. Provision of humanitarian assistance and protection requires engagement with a variety of stakeholders including government, armed groups and community members. However, this engagement has become more challenging with the politicization of humanitarian access, the proliferation and fragmentation of Non-State Armed Groups (NSAG) or the complex web of counter-terrorism measures and legislations.

Drawing on experiences in multiple crisis, this panel will look at the politics affecting humanitarian access. Panellists will reflect on ways to manage those politics to yield positive humanitarian outcomes; and share their views on the on ways to further professionalize the humanitarian approach to access negotiations. They will look at the perception of humanitarian organizations by political actors and armed actors and how to build trust and acceptance with those interlocutors.

They will discuss various forms of negotiations and advocacy and assess their effectiveness to convince parties to conflict and key stakeholders. They will share good practices, such as joined-up initiatives negotiated by humanitarian actors with parties to the conflict (e.g. humanitarian pauses or corridors); or the use of a coordinated and joined-up public and private advocacy.

#### **Guiding Questions:**

- How do “big politics” impact on humanitarian access negotiations? What are the trends? Is this impact greater or lesser today than it used to be? What kind of dilemma does that create for humanitarian organisations?
- What are some the current challenges, best practices and lessons learned in navigating humanitarian dilemmas and negotiating access?
- Are humanitarians equipped to navigate the politics of access? Do they have the necessary expertise and networks to lead negotiations and influence those blocking access?
- What are the tools available to negotiate access and how can relief organizations gain and maintain “acceptance”? Is there a need to re-think humanitarian negotiations?
- How can we use non-conventional actors to help mediate humanitarian negotiations? Who are they? And how to safeguard the humanitarian character of negotiations?
- How to better coordinate negotiation efforts and enhanced the interplay between in-country, regional and global negotiations?



## **Background Notes:**

- [ICRC, \*The Roots of Restraint in War\*](#)
- [OCHA, \*Manual on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups\*](#)
- [OCHA, NRC, JSIA, \*Presence and Proximity\*](#)

## **Panellists:**

**Rob Grace** - Moderator

***Researcher and Affiliated Fellow, Brown University, Center for Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies***

Rob Grace's Ph.D. research at Brown University focuses on the politics of humanitarian action, with a particular emphasis on humanitarian access. He is also a Senior Associate at the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative (HHI), where he leads a research project on humanitarian negotiation for the Advanced Training Program on Humanitarian Action. Previously at HHI, he served as the lead drafter for the Advanced Practitioner's Handbook on Commissions of Inquiry. His writing has been published by the Journal of Conflict & Security Law, World Health & Population, the European Society of International Law, Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection, the Foreign Policy Association, and Foreign Policy in Focus. He holds an MA in Politics from New York University and a BA from Vassar College.

**Fiona Terry**

***Head of Operational Research, International Committee of the Red Cross***

Fiona Terry is a scholar-practitioner with over three decades of field and management experience in humanitarian affairs, including assignments for Médecins Sans Frontières, the ICRC and UNHCR in Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia, Sudan, Myanmar, Nepal, Afghanistan and Tanzania. Dr. Terry has a Ph.D. in International Relations from the Australian National University and has made significant scholarly contributions to understanding humanitarian policies and politics. Her book *Condemned to Repeat: The Paradox of Humanitarian Action* (Cornell University Press, 2002) won the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order and remains highly cited.

**Charles Petrie**

***Human Securities Consultant and former ASG***

Charles Petrie is a former senior UN official, who rose to the rank of Assistant Secretary-General. Over the twenty-year career at the United Nations, he assumed senior level operational and policy roles in Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gaza and the Palestinian Territories, Myanmar/Burma, Rwanda (during the 1994 Genocide), Somalia and the Sudan. In 2012, he was appointed by the UN Secretary-General to lead an internal review of the UN's actions in Sri Lanka during the last phase of the conflict. Charles Petrie is providing mentoring support to a number of newly appointed UN Resident Coordinators. In addition to work he continues to undertake for the UN, Charles Petrie has also been invited to provide policy guidance to various governments on, for example, questions relating to Myanmar and Syria.



## **Tom Gregg**

### ***Senior Advisor to the United Nations***

Following service with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations in Afghanistan, Tom Gregg has focused his career on negotiating to secure access for health workers in some of the most protracted conflicts around the globe. As Director of Global Projects at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD Centre), Tom led the effort to secure access for polio vaccinators as well as the HD Centre's COVID-19 response. Tom is a former Fellow and Associate Director of New York University's Center for International Cooperation.

## **Ghada Hatim Eltahir**

### ***Deputy Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, OCHA***

Ms. Eltahir holds over 24 years of progressive experience in international humanitarian and not-for-profit organizations. During this time, she served as the Executive Director of a regional office, Head of Mission/Country Representative, Communication Director, Emergency Coordinator, and Humanitarian Advisor in many international organizations. Ms. Eltahir has extensive experience in programs and humanitarian aid operations in conflict contexts as she worked in Sudan, South Sudan, Yemen, Syria, Libya, Iraq and Nigeria. Ms. Eltahir built a wide network with different stakeholders at government level, diplomatic missions, UN agencies and leading international NGOs, and with local humanitarian and charitable groups, policy research foundations, international donors, media networks, universities, and research centers.



## CONCEPT NOTE - Interactive Discussion

### *SPARKS ON THE HORIZON: COVID-19 AND FRAGILITY*

Thursday, 9 December 2021 | 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM EST

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#### **Overview:**

In 2021, countries with humanitarian crises have suffered far more COVID-19 infections and deaths than in 2020. The lack of vaccine availability, the rapid spread of the delta variant, and the necessary relaxation of lockdowns have all contributed to this. However, the devastation wrought by the pandemic for the poorest people in the world has been much more profound than simply the impact on health. It has stalled economies, created unprecedented unemployment, and disrupted education. Governments' ability to provide basic services have been further weakened. The pandemic has fueled deeply held grievances and opened political vacuums, presenting opportunities for armed groups to capitalize.

Latest forecasts using the University of Denver's International Futures model, show COVID-19 could either spark new or restart up to 15 armed conflicts before 2023, an increase from previous projections earlier in the pandemic. The model indicates that COVID-19 has exacerbated the social, political and economic conditions that make increased conflict far more likely. Without the international community making different choices and rapidly scaling up support to the most vulnerable people, our world is likely to become more violent and dangerous escalating suffering and humanitarian need.

Slow economic growth in poor countries will likely be a primary driving force behind these new conflicts. In October, the IMF further downgraded its growth forecast for low-income countries, pointing to slow rollout of vaccines as the main factor dragging down their recovery. Two-thirds of countries with humanitarian emergencies do not have enough vaccines for even 10 per cent of their population. As a result, in half of countries with humanitarian emergencies, per capita income is not expected to return to pre-pandemic levels until at least 2024 and for many beyond 2026.

In 2021, the World Bank estimates that 97 million additional people will live in poverty due to the pandemic. Without income and food, people are put into desperate situations, forced to look to whatever source of income or support they can find, including joining armed groups. A UNDP study found over half of people voluntarily joining armed groups express frustration at their economic conditions, with employment cited as the most frequent need at the time of joining. Unemployment is also pushing people to work in and purchase from illicit economies. In 2020, there were record levels of coca cultivation and cocaine production in Colombia and Peru.

Government mistrust, no income, limited access to services and burgeoning food insecurity are all triggers for social unrest. In 2020, civil unrest rose by 10 per cent and has continued to increase this year and will likely get worse. Research by the IMF on past pandemics shows civil unrest peaks two years from initial outbreaks. This will compound with other triggers of civil unrest. Between October and end of 2022, almost a quarter of countries with humanitarian emergencies will hold elections – often a flash point for violence and instability.



The pandemic has escalated an education crisis creating opportunities for armed groups. In a third of countries with humanitarian emergencies, schools have been closed for more weeks this past academic year than in the first six months of the pandemic. Even where schools have re-opened, not all children have returned. Children out of school are more likely to be exploited, lured into or forced by necessity to join gangs and armed groups. Economies and whole societies for decades to come as lack of education turns into fewer opportunities and income.

While the pandemic has raged, existing conflicts and violence has not stood still. Armed groups have used the opportunity to seize more power, to attack citizens or a weakened state, or to gain legitimacy with populations.

So far, the global response to the pandemic has been inadequate and short-sighted. There is still time, but 2022 will be a critical year to shift the trajectory. The international community must focus political attention, cooperation and ambition around three objectives:

1. Getting vaccines into the arms of the most vulnerable. We need more than 1.4 billion doses to vaccinate 70 per cent of the population in countries with humanitarian crises.
2. Ambitious and coordinated international effort to stabilize the economies of the poorest countries, including through a reallocation of Special Drawing Rights and sustainable debt restructuring.
3. Sustain and increase basic service delivery in humanitarian settings.

### **Guiding Questions:**

- How has COVID-19 exacerbated the geopolitical, socio-economic and political conditions that make increased conflict and humanitarian need more likely in the coming years?
- Will reaching the WHO goal of 70 per cent of populations vaccinated in humanitarian emergencies in 2022 mitigate conflict risks? And where are the dangers – how could vaccines be politicized and potentially further fuel instability?
- Beside vaccines, what are the other options for improving economic recovery in countries with humanitarian emergencies?
- In the current geopolitical context, how do we lift ambition to support vulnerable countries?

### **Background Notes:**

- [Martin Griffiths, Opinion: G-20 must do more to fight instability, says Martin Griffiths](#)

### **Panellists:**

**Raj Kumar** - Moderator

**President and Editor in Chief, DEVEX**

Raj Kumar is the founding President and Editor-in-Chief of Devex, the media platform for the global development community. A social enterprise dedicated to ensuring global development efforts do more good for more people, Devex was born in 2000 when Raj was a graduate student at the Harvard Kennedy



School. Today, there are 100+ Devexers around the world serving a global audience of more than one million aid workers and development professionals. Beginning as a kid in Kerala, India, Raj has witnessed firsthand determined and courageous development work in over 50 countries - it's what drives the Devex mission to Do Good. Do It Well. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Save the Children Board of Trustees, a media leader and former humanitarian council chair for the World Economic Forum and has interviewed on-camera and on-stage hundreds of global luminaries on the most important challenges of our time. Raj is the author of the book *The Business of Changing the World*, a go-to primer on the ideas, people, and technology disrupting the aid industry.

### Thomas Wright

**Author of “Aftershocks: Pandemic Politics and the End of the International Order”, Brookings Institute**

Thomas Wright is the director of the Center on the United States and Europe and a senior fellow in the Project on International Order and Strategy at the Brookings Institution. He is also a contributing writer for The Atlantic and a nonresident fellow at the Lowy Institute for International Policy. He is the author of *Aftershocks: Pandemic Politics and the End of the Old International Order*. Wright has a doctorate from Georgetown University, a Master of Philosophy from Cambridge University, and a bachelor's and master's from University College Dublin. He has also held a pre-doctoral fellowship at Harvard University's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and a post-doctoral fellowship at Princeton University. He was previously executive director of studies at the Chicago Council on Global Affairs and a lecturer at the University of Chicago's Harris School for Public Policy.

### Vera Songwe

**Under-Secretary-General, Economic Commission for Africa**

Vera Songwe is the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Upon her appointment, she became the first woman to lead the institution in its 60-year history. As Executive Secretary, Songwe's reforms have focused on developing and implementing “ideas for a prosperous Africa”. They have emphasized the critical importance of macroeconomic stability, innovative finance, private sector participation, the digital transformation, trade and competitiveness in fostering growth and improving livelihoods. She was listed as one of Africa's 50 most powerful women by Forbes in 2020 and named as one of the ‘100 Most Influential Africans’ by Jeune Afrique in 2019. In 2017, New African Magazine listed her as one of the ‘100 Most Influential Africans’ and the FT named her one of the ‘25 African to watch’ in 2015. Songwe is acknowledged for her long-standing track record of providing policy advice and her wealth of experience in delivering development results for Africa. She has written extensively on development and economic issues including on debt, infrastructure development, fiscal and governance issues. She is well published and contributes to the development debate across a broad spectrum of platforms including in the Financial Times. Prior to ECA, she held a number of senior leadership roles with the International Finance Corporation and World Bank.

### Mireia Villar Forner

**UN Resident Coordinator, Colombia**

Mireia has served in the United Nations for 25 years. Before her appointment in Colombia she was the UN Resident Coordinator in Uruguay where she led the UN development system's efforts to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. She started her career in UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States, and from 1999 to 2002 she led the Programme Section of the Electricity Network Rehabilitation Programme in Northern Iraq, the largest UNDP programme at that time. From 2002 to 2004 she was the focal point for



Latin America and the Caribbean and the Arab States in UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. She served in the Liaison Office in Brussels from 2007 to 2015, strengthening the UN/UNDP partnership with the European Union on crisis and fragility and supporting the post-2015 dialogue with EU institutions. Mireia was UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Iraq during the country's political transition (2004-2006) and in Bolivia from 2015 to 2017. Prior to joining the UN System in 1996, she worked in the financial sector in Spain. She obtained her master's degree in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and a bachelor's degree in Economics from the University of Barcelona.

## **Sarah Charles**

### ***Assistant to the Administrator of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)***

Sarah Charles is the Assistant to the Administrator of USAID's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the U.S. Government lead for international disaster response. Prior to BHA, Ms. Charles was the Senior Director for Policy and Advocacy for the International Rescue Committee, where she led efforts to reform the humanitarian aid system and promote policies to improve the lives of refugees and other conflict-affected people. She also staffed the National Security Council (NSC) at the White House, first as the Director for Humanitarian Affairs and then as the Director and Acting Senior Director for Strategic Planning. Before the NSC, Ms. Charles covered the Middle East for USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, the United States government's primary political transition and post-conflict assistance instrument. She led USAID's post-Arab Spring efforts to strengthen democracy, promote space for democratic dialogue, support stabilization and encourage civic participation in the Middle East. Ms. Charles also helped start the International Rescue Committee's emergency response in Darfur and led multi-country refugee repatriation efforts following the signing of the Sudanese Comprehensive Peace Agreement.



### CONCEPT NOTE - Interactive Discussion

#### *NO RETURN TO NORMAL: REALITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF THE GROWING HUMANITARIAN CLIMATE CRISIS*

Friday, 10 December 2021 | 9:00 AM - 10:15 AM EST

Virtual Meeting Registration (for all events):

[https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg](https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg)

#### **Overview:**

The climate crisis is a humanitarian crisis. It is not a distant problem for 2030 or 2050. It is unfolding right NOW on the humanitarian frontlines worldwide and threatening to grow in unprecedented proportions. Climate change is not just another global challenge; it is an existential crisis for tens of millions of people TODAY, threatening their lives and livelihoods and creating exponentially growing needs and compounded vulnerability in existing vulnerable and affected contexts and in new climate hotspots. In a world that is currently 1.2 degrees warmer, humanitarian actors are struggling to keep pace with the rising number of climate-related disasters and the dramatic rise in humanitarian needs. A 1.5-degree temperature increase would test the current humanitarian system to its limits, and worse, a rise of 2.7 degrees or above would lead to a runaway global humanitarian crisis, the sheer magnitude of which would seriously threaten the system's collapse.

The growing urgency of the climate crisis requires a new level of integrated action in order to address growing and burgeoning humanitarian needs while helping communities prepare for, adapt to, and respond to the cascading impacts of climate extremes. Bold shifts in mindsets and approaches are needed, as a 'return to normal' is no longer realistic. Organized as a virtual session, the discussions at this panel will consider ***how the humanitarian system, its donors, and partners can be more effective in adapting and responding to the wide-ranging impacts of the climate crisis*** and its secondary and overlapping consequences. The panel will also identify concrete steps on the way forward in examining ***how to position humanitarian action more decidedly as part of adaptation efforts through strengthening the resilience of communities ahead of future shocks***.

Following a brief presentation of the key messages of OCHA's forthcoming report 'No Return to Normal', a panel discussion will follow. Guided by a session facilitator, panellists and participants are encouraged to draw from their professional and operational expertise to engage in an open and lively discussion. The session's conclusions will help guide the co-organizers' ongoing policy work and help inform and crystallize the recommendations and findings of OCHA's forthcoming study.

#### **Guiding Questions:**

- How can humanitarian action contribute to climate change adaptation and strengthen communities' resilience to future climate impacts? What are some concrete examples?
- How can we best address critical gaps in climate financing, particularly adaptation, and what role can humanitarian actors play in ensuring climate financing reaches the most vulnerable?



- What is the role of humanitarian action in climate justice? What are steps to mainstream equity and inclusion in climate action and ensure that existing inequalities are not exacerbated?
- How can we best boost and raise understanding and awareness of climate change shocks and impact attributions at the local, national, and international levels?
- How can we best close critical gaps in disaggregated data and address research gaps at the intersection of risk, impact, and humanitarian need?

### **Background Notes:**

- [OCHA, \*No Return to Normal: Climate Change and the Threat of a Global Humanitarian Crisis\*](#)

### **Panellists:**

**Koko Warner** - Moderator

#### ***Manager, Adaptation Programme, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change***

Dr. Koko Warner manages UNFCCC's Vulnerability Subdivision, where she guides the adaptation knowledge hub, scaling up adaptation action, and the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform. She chairs an impact advisory group on resilient futures. She is a Perry World visiting fellow at the University of Pennsylvania focusing on climate change and migration. Warner is an IPCC lead author for the 6th Assessment cycle Special Report on Climate Change and Land, and 5th Assessment Report on climate impacts, adaptation and vulnerability. Previously at UNFCCC, she supervised the loss and damage workstream, including guiding the Warsaw Economic Mechanism Executive Committee's five-year rolling workplan. Prior to 2016, Koko founded and was Executive Director of the Munich Climate Insurance Initiative, including trailblazing work with the private and public sector including with the G7/G20 InsuResilience Initiative.

#### **Selwin Hart**

#### ***Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Action and Assistant Secretary-General for the Climate Action Team***

Mr. Hart is currently the Executive Director for the Caribbean region at the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). He was previously the Ambassador to the United States and the Organization of American States for Barbados and Director of the Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team, leading the team's delivery of the 2014 Climate Summit and the Secretary-General's engagement in the process leading to the signing of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Throughout his career, Mr. Hart has served in several climate change leadership positions, including as a Climate Adviser for the Caribbean Development Bank, Chief Climate Change Negotiator for Barbados as well as the Coordinator and Lead Negotiator on Finance for the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS). He was a member of the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund Board from 2009 to 2010 and was elected by the United Nations General Assembly to serve as Vice-Chairman of the 2nd Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (Economic and Financial) during its 60th Session.



## **Valerie Guarnieri**

### ***Assistant Executive, Director, World Food Programme***

Ms. Guarnieri has been WFP Assistant Executive Director since January 2018. In this role, she leads cutting-edge programme and policy development towards ending hunger, spear heading WFP efforts to ensure protection and inclusion, expand school meals and nutrition programmes, empower women, build resilient food systems and support cash transfers and social protection. Prior to this appointment, she served as WFP Regional Director for East and Central Africa providing supervision, strategic guidance and support for some of WFP's largest and most complex country operations, as WFP's global Programme Director, and in a variety of country office, regional and headquarter positions since August 2000. Before WFP, she worked in the U.S. Government, at the National Security Council and the US Agency for International Development (USAID), as part of dedicated, inter-disciplinary teams to save lives and help create conditions for sustainable peace, with particular focus in Africa. Ms. Guarnieri holds a Master of Arts from the School of International Service of American University in Washington, D.C.

## **Saleemul Huq**

### ***Director, International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), Bangladesh***

Saleemul Huq is the director of the International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) in Bangladesh and is an expert on the links between climate change and sustainable development, particularly from the perspective of developing countries. He was the lead author of the chapter on Adaptation and Sustainable Development in the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and was the lead author of the chapter on Adaptation and Mitigation in the IPCC's fourth assessment report.

## **Melchor Mergal**

### ***Municipal Mayor, Salcedo, Eastern Samar, the Philippines***

Mr. Mergal is the Municipal Mayor with nearly 8 years of being the Local Chief Executive of the Municipality of Salcedo. He brought recognition to the Municipality as a 4-time Seal of Good Local Governance (SGLG) awardee. He institutionalized partnerships with NGO's and INGO's to help him accomplish relevant basic services in all areas of local government operations. He introduced as DRR Champion, Health Champion, Education Champion, and Environment Champion by agencies of the government. His municipality is modeling an adaptive, resilient, and disaster ready communities. He is instrumental in enacting Women Economic Empowerment and Care Ordinance that demonstrates commitment for increase investment in care related services, improving water facilities; provision of time labor saving equipment to reduce arduous tasks of unpaid care work; and include unpaid care in the annual investment programs.



### CONCEPT NOTE - Interactive Discussion

#### *THE HUMANITARIAN IMPLICATIONS OF CYBER THREATS*

*Friday, 10 December 2021 | 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM EST*

Virtual Meeting Registration (for all events):

[https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg](https://pm1pro.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_paC1Vy-hT1-MIX52xVzxZg)

#### **Overview:**

Harmful cyber operations ('cyber-attacks') have become a critical security threat. As the global digital transformation forges ahead, so too do the risks associated with our ever-more interconnected and digitised world. Along with much of the rest of the world, humanitarian functions are moving into the digital space, and in doing so are helping to unlock the societal and economic benefits of modern information technologies. But humanitarian operations are increasingly coming under cyber-attack, and evidence suggests that they are not adequately prepared to meet many of the cyber threats of today – let alone tomorrow. From disabling ransomware attacks on hospitals to shutdowns of electrical grids, electoral interference campaigns, and the stoking of geopolitical tensions through targeted human influence operations, the impacts of harmful cyber operations, can be devastating.

For humanitarians, cyber threats come in three contexts: to critical infrastructure that serve our communities, in the political and social environment where we work, and in the context of our own organization readiness and preparedness for attacks. The opportunities of new technologies and the growing digitalization of essential services is accompanied by a stark rise in cyberthreats against critical infrastructure sectors that provide services to the public, such as energy, power generation, water and sanitation, education, commercial and financial services, transportation, telecommunications, and electoral processes.

While vulnerabilities are growing, cybersecurity preparedness, organizational readiness and digital literacy remain limited. Poor 'cyber hygiene' continues to characterize many institutions active in the humanitarian space, ranging from NGOs to government agencies, and IT professionals across sectors are becoming increasingly pessimistic about their organizations' cyber resilience. Meanwhile, global divides in cybersecurity maturity levels risk placing vulnerable populations at even greater exposure to the damaging impacts of cyber threats.

The panel will consider how the humanitarian system can more effectively combat cyber threats. Experts from across sectors and disciplines will discuss the myriad of threats posed by today's cyber landscape to humanitarians, their organizations and operations, and to people affected by humanitarian crises. They will reflect on the avenues pursued by various actors to build trust and stability in cyberspace. And they will highlight gaps and possible ways forward for the humanitarian sector to mitigate and respond to cyber threats, including legal, technical, organizational, capacity-building and cooperation measures.

#### **Guiding Questions:**

- What are the main cyber threats to humanitarian action, and what is their impact?
- How prepared are humanitarian organizations to face cyber-security challenges?



- How has the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to the cyberthreat landscape for humanitarian action?
- How can humanitarians mitigate and respond to cyber threats more effectively?

### **Panellists:**

**Kristen Eichensehr** - Moderator

**Director, National Security Law Center, University of Virginia**

Kristen Eichensehr writes and teaches about cybersecurity, foreign relations, international law and national security law. She received the 2018 Mike Lewis Prize for National Security Law Scholarship for her article, Courts, Congress, and the Conduct of Foreign Relations, published in the University of Chicago Law Review. In 2021 she became director of UVA Law's National Security Law Center. Eichensehr clerked for Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Sonia Sotomayor of the Supreme Court of the United States and for Judge Merrick B. Garland of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. She also served as special assistant to the legal adviser of the U.S. Department of State and practiced at Covington & Burling in Washington, D.C., where she specialized in appellate litigation and international and national security law, including cybersecurity issues.

**Nemanja (Neno) Malisevic,**

**Director of Digital Diplomacy at Microsoft**

Nemanja Malisevic joined Microsoft in 2014. Until the Spring of 2018 he led the work of the Digital Diplomacy Team in Germany. Then, with the launch of Microsoft Defending Democracy Program (DDP) in 2018, he was responsible for the program's international engagements. Since joining the company, Mr. Malisevic has always been actively involved in Microsoft efforts related to cyber security norms but in 2020 he re-focused his attention on driving these efforts. Prior to joining Microsoft, Mr. Malisevic worked more than 10 years for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), where he was the Organization's first Cyber Security Officer. In this capacity he was deeply involved in the elaboration and negotiation of the first set of OSCE cyber/ICT security related confidence building measures (CBMs), adopted in December 2013. Before that, he led the Organization's efforts dealing with combating terrorist use of the Internet.

**Delphine van Solinge**

**Adviser on Digital Risks for Populations in Armed Conflicts, Protection Division, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)**

Delphine van Solinge has worked as Adviser on Digital Risks for Populations in Armed Conflicts in the Protection Division in Geneva since February 2018. Before that, she joined the ICRC in 2004 and worked as Protection Coordinator in Chad, the Philippines, Afghanistan and Colombia and as Head of Unit OP\_PROT\_GLOB in Geneva. Prior to joining the ICRC she worked with different NGOs in Africa. Delphine holds a Master in International Relations and Diplomacy from SOAS University (UK), a Master in International Humanitarian Assistance from the University of Aix-en-Provence (France) and a Master in International Migration and Human Rights from the University of Kent in Canterbury (UK).

**Sara Wahedi**

**CEO & Founder of Ehtesab, Afghanistan**

Sara Wahedi is the CEO and Founder of Ehtesab, Afghanistan's first civic technology startup. Ehtesab's first project, the "Ehtesab App" has been providing near real-time security and city service alerts to Kabul residents since June 2020, and is expanding to three major cities across the country. She was also featured



as TIME Magazine's "Next Generation Leader" for the class of 2021, for her work in democratizing access to information for Afghans. Sara previously worked at the Office of the President of Afghanistan, Dr. Ashraf Ghani, focusing on social development projects funded by IOM and the World Bank. She is currently pursuing her studies in Data Science and Human Rights at Columbia University.

## **Robert Young**

### ***Legal Counsel at Global Affairs, Canada***

Robert Young is an international lawyer and veteran humanitarian professional with focus on cyber, digital and Internet and international law issues, in the Criminal, Security and Diplomatic Law Division in the Legal Affairs Bureau, Global Affairs Canada. Rob leads and advises on Government of Canada legal positions on international cyber issues. In 2016-2017 he was legal adviser to the Canadian Expert on the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on cyber and security. Since 2018 Rob has served as the Coordinator of the Data and Jurisdiction Contact Group of the multi-stakeholder Internet and Jurisdiction Policy Network, leading to the launch of the Data and Jurisdiction toolkit in March this year. Robert worked for many years with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), including in Ethiopia, Colombia, Geneva, and as Regional Legal Adviser in Central Europe and ex-Yugoslavia, and in West and Central Africa. He was the ICRC's Deputy Permanent Observer and Legal Adviser at the UN in New York.

## **Jonas Belina**

### ***PhD, Diplomatic Officer, Humanitarian Diplomacy***

Dr. Jonas Belina is a diplomat at the Peace and Human Rights Division at the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA). He works on humanitarian policies with a focus on the application of new technologies to the protection of civilians and humanitarian action. At the FDFA, he leads the Humanitarian Data and Trust Initiative, a multi-stakeholder initiative for the protection and responsible use of humanitarian data, launched by Switzerland, the ICRC and the OCHA Centre for Humanitarian Data in 2020. Furthermore, Jonas is involved in designing system-level solutions for the search for missing persons and restoring family links. Previously, he was posted in Argentina and the U.S. Jonas holds master's degrees in physics and philosophy from the University of Bern and LSE and a PhD in neuroscience from Yale University.