Excellencies, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

As humanitarian workers, we have long been aware that the global climate crisis poses an existential threat to humanity.

We have long known that the most vulnerable people are feeling this crisis first and worst. They feel it with every drought. Every flood. Every superstorm.

And we have long been concerned about how this crisis disproportionately affects the countries that are the least responsible for it. As a matter of fact, 12 of the 15 countries most at risk and least ready to adapt to climate change are in Africa. Last year, we supported efforts to provide life-saving needs in nine of them. Places where humanitarian relief makes the difference between life and death.

Excellencies, colleagues,

What we are seeing on the ground – from Somalia to the Maldives, and from Afghanistan to Mozambique – is in line with the recent warning from the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, as we have heard from my colleague, that there would be limits to how we adapt to a changing climate.

The IPCC talks about two types of adaptation limits.

There are "soft" adaptation limits, where people can cope but are unable to because they lack the resources to do so. This is where we have often stepped in with adaptation support, such as early warning systems that protect lives. Anticipatory action can cushion the blow.
Then there are "hard" adaptation limits when the damage caused by climate change is permanent. Distinguished speakers from small island countries can talk about this more authoritatively. Their people are already losing the land they live on to rising sea levels.

In both cases, what these vulnerable countries need is more resources, because what already exists is not enough. Yes, current climate-finance mechanisms fund mitigation, adaptation and possibly some elements of averting loss and damage.

And yes, the OCHA-run Central Emergency Response Fund and the Country-Based Pooled Funds can complement the climate funds with speed and agility, especially in fragile places. The pooled funds have backed our scalable pilot activities on anticipatory action. Through them we have eased the predictable suffering of more than 2.5 million people before the onset of floods and drought.

However, all of this is not enough. Ultimately no single form of loss-and-damage financing will fit everyone's needs. We need many different players to come together, and we need MORE funding.

The way forward is clear:

We need to invest in anticipatory action and early warning systems.

We need to invest in flexible funding to support early action.

More importantly, we need to invest in people and communities – help them to adapt.

We are up against a crisis of unfathomable proportions. No one and I underline no one can walk this path alone. And no one should be left behind.

We have to walk this path together.

Thank you.