

**Statement by the Republic of Poland at the Humanitarian Affairs Segment of the UN
Economic and Social Council (HAS ECOSOC)
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*Honourable Chair and Vice-President of the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment,
Honourable Vice-President of the ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment,
Honourable Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies, Distinguished participants,*

Global development and humanitarian challenges are among the most crucial issues to be addressed by international state and non-state policy makers. More and more people are being affected by humanitarian crises, which last longer and require more resources. As a result, the gap between humanitarian needs and the response to them is widening, and the demand to increase the efficiency and promptness of our actions becomes more urgent.

The world is nowadays facing additional challenge that we must respond to in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

When considering the impact of COVID-19 on humanitarian landscape, we would like to thank the UN and the WHO for their leading role in the global response. We also express our deepest appreciation for the work and dedication of medical staff around the world.

Poland actively participates in the global efforts to combat the pandemic. We have made donations in-kind, we have sent our medical teams to Italy, Kyrgyzstan, and the United States.

As the global goal for the coming future is to find an effective drug and vaccine against COVID-19, equally accessible and affordable making sure that no one is left behind, we have pledged funds for the WHO project the *ACT Accelerator*.

In face of the pressing crises, what gives a hope to cope with them is only a joined effort and constant cooperation on different levels among multiple global actors. At the 75th anniversary of the United Nations we now believe more than ever in multilateralism as a power able to envision and exercise a coherent vision of world's development that leaves no one behind. We are convinced that it is vital to ensure a better coordination between governments, non-governmental agencies, charities, foundations, media and the private entities. International humanitarian and development conferences play especially important role in this process and help achieve feasible solutions to global problems.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Many times we face situation in which a country or a region, affected by certain crisis, is unable to cope on its own. Therefore it is important to provide functioning and continuous improvement of international relief and civil protection systems. In particular UN OCHA, INSARAG groups, Union Civil Protection Mechanism and NATO's Euroatlantic Response Coordination Centre should be mentioned here.

Poland attaches great importance to humanitarian and rescue aid operations conducted in crisis situations. Last example of our such activities was assistance provided to the Balkan states and Belarus during the pandemic.

Furthermore, Poland supports international disaster preparedness and response efforts, undertaken also within the INSARAG network. Next year Poland will host the 3rd INSARAG Global Meeting, which we consider as a milestone in improving efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of urban search and rescue capacity building and response.

Mr. Chair,

Although Poland is a relatively new donor of development assistance including humanitarian aid, last year only we devoted approx. USD 684,46 million to this end. We managed to specialize in some areas and can share our knowledge and experience in child protection, support to people with disabilities and other groups at risk of exclusion.

As a member of the European Union, the UN and the OECD we are involved in actions undertaken by international community in order to implement Sustainable Development Goals, fighting poverty, advancing social development, supporting communities suffering from military conflicts and security. Humanitarian affairs were one of our priorities during Polish non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council and Poland particularly put emphasise on practical measures to protect civilians during conflict focusing on people with disabilities and children in armed conflict.

Mr. Chair,

Poland, as a long-term and reliable partner to international multilateral organizations has been providing humanitarian assistance on different levels. As a member of the ODSG since 2012 and devoted ICRC partner, which bond was further strengthened by signing a Memorandum of Understanding in 2018, we are active in many places in the world where live people in need.

In the Middle East we provide necessary support to the countries which receive most of migrants – victims of conflicts in the region. We focus our aid on the Syrian civilian population and hosting communities in Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. Due to the ongoing crisis in Eastern Ukraine and our serious concern about the dire humanitarian situation, especially in non-government controlled areas (NGCA), Poland focuses on Ukraine in its activities in humanitarian aid. Last but not least Africa has been a prioritized continent for Polish development aid for more than decade now.

In recent years, humanitarian partnerships involving private sector are on the rise, with initiatives emerging all over the world. Our companies are more and more interested in being involved in humanitarian aid projects. In response to this, in 2019, Poland organized Warsaw Humanitarian Expo, an international event and first of its kind in Central Europe, under Responsible Business for Humanitarian Emergencies motto.

This year, in the light of the dramatic scale of the global pandemic, Poland decided to contribute special funds to fight it. We are aware that the current situation requires urgent actions to mitigate the devastating consequences for both the public health and the economy worldwide, in both developed and developing world. With this in mind Poland reviewed its 2020 development cooperation plan, including humanitarian aid response, focusing mostly on those aspects that will help to fight COVID-19 and its potential consequences.

In closing, as we are witnessing even more complex and unprecedented challenges of our times, we believe that we can still handle it only by uniting our efforts and commitments in a spirit of global solidarity and trust.

I thank you.