



**Statement**

**By**

**TURKEY**

**at the**

**ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment**

**General Discussion**

**New York, June 2020**

**Mr. President,**

**I would like to start by thanking you for convening the Humanitarian Affairs Segment this year despite challenges posed by COVID-19. The theme of the meeting reflects the wide span of the humanitarian work.**

**Projections were already depicting 2020 as one of the worst humanitarian crises since World War II. Millions were already on the brink of survival due to protracted conflicts.**

**Now, while we mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, world's most vulnerable populations face new waves of pain and suffering due to COVID-19.**

**Millions of civilians who suffer from massacres and atrocities in conflict areas now confront severe economic and social consequences of the pandemic.**

**In some parts of the world, COVID-19 is used as a pretext to discriminate against vulnerable groups.**

**At the end of last year, UN estimated that a record 168 million people worldwide would need humanitarian and protection in 2020. Funding requirements of 29 billion US Dollars for humanitarian needs already increased to 37 billion US Dollars in the first half of 2020.**

**Mr. President,**

**Four years ago, the World Humanitarian Summit, held in Istanbul, gathered for the first time in the history of the United Nations, Member States, civil society and private sector to collectively commit to end human suffering.**

**Last December, the first-ever Global Refugee Forum, organized under the co-chairmanship of Turkey, sent a strong message for a more equitable response to refugee crises through responsibility sharing.**

**Now, we reaffirm once again that the only way to design a better world for the most vulnerable is to live up to these commitments.**

**Our action in addressing humanitarian needs should go beyond humanitarian assistance and focus more on a multi-year agenda for change and transformation.**

**While doing so, emerging trends and risks must also be duly taken into account. Climate change is increasing the challenges faced by vulnerable groups. At the same time, COVID-19 reminded the existing challenges put forward by broken health systems and lack of access to vaccinations.**

**On the other hand, respect for international law and international humanitarian law is in decline. We need to make use of the existing tools, in particular accountability mechanisms, to better collect data and report on such violations.**

**Mr. President,**

**With the changing nature of emergencies, the humanitarian system must be able to evolve to better respond to those in need.**

**The World Humanitarian Summit put forward innovative solutions, such as cash-based programming and more direct funding.**

**The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and Country-Based Pooled Funds (CBPF) which were designed to offer the easiest and most effective ways to address the urgent needs continue to be the powerful tools available to the international community.**

**It is particularly important that national policies include innovative ways to assist the most vulnerable. As the largest refugee hosting country with around 4 million Syrians living in Turkey, in addition to free wide range of services, we continue to provide monthly cash transfer for Syrians through the Emergency Social Safety Net Programme.**

**The cash assistance provided through the Syria Humanitarian Fund is also critical for Syrian people to survive in an economy crushed by the regime's destructive war.**

**Mr. President,**

**Turkey, as a major global humanitarian actor, advocates for human-centered policies in the conduct of international diplomacy.**

**While we strive to provide shelter to those who take refuge in our homeland, we also deliver humanitarian assistance in many parts of the world with the participation of a variety of humanitarian and development stakeholders.**

**In Syria, we provide care and protection to people who are right across our border and victims of brutal violence and indiscriminate attacks.**

**Since 2014, all the needs of civilians in northwest Syria have been addressed through the UN cross-border humanitarian mechanism via Turkey. These lifeline services need to continue unabated, with rapid and unimpeded access. Delivering humanitarian aid is our collective responsibility.**

**In Yemen, Turkish Red Crescent and our development agency TİKA channel assistance to those in need with their staff permanently stationed in the country. Civil society and municipalities also contribute to these efforts within various cooperation schemes.**

**The New Way of Working initiative, one of the achievements of the World Humanitarian Summit, has been materialized through our cooperation with Somalia in a wide spectrum of fields from health to education, from both humanitarian and development sectors.**

**In Myanmar, our agencies maintain aid programmes for Rohingya Muslims and others in need. In March last year, we participated in the Partnership Mission by OCHA to Cox's Bazar/Bangladesh, which paved the way for mobilization of further assistance for specific humanitarian needs.**

**In the aftermath of Cyclone Idai last year, we have promptly joined the international efforts to address the urgent humanitarian needs by participating in the search and rescue operations and providing in-kind assistance to disaster-hit areas.**

**In addition, we mobilized our resources and channelled emergency aid to 125 countries since the start of COVID-19.**

**While implementing our comprehensive humanitarian programmes, we have the pleasure to work with UN humanitarian personnel and our other partners in the field in order to reach millions of people. We commend their bravery and commitment.**

**Mr. President,**

**Many millions in need are beyond our reach and funding continues to fall short. Therefore, we should focus our joint efforts on inclusion, on accessing the most vulnerable and those left behind.**

**COVID-19 has been a stark reminder of the need for strengthening multilateralism, solidarity and cooperation across the borders. Now is the time to assume our collective responsibility for collective achievements.**

**Thank you.**