Humanitarian conditions in Iraq continue to deteriorate and 5.2 million people are now in need of assistance throughout the country. Several hundred thousand people were displaced in Anbar Governorate at the start of the year. The number of IDPs is now over 2 million across the country and the rate of displacement continues to rise. In the past ten weeks alone, over 200,000 more people have been forced from their homes by violence in Anbar, Ninewa, Sala al Din, Kirkuk and Diyala governorates. Over 100,000 Iraqis have been registered as refugees in neighboring countries so far this year.

In addition to the 2 million displaced, there are also 1.5 million people from host communities, 1.4 million people who live in active areas of conflict where access to basic services is minimal, and 220,000 refugees who have fled Syria; all in urgent need of assistance.

Every governorate in Iraq is now hosting displaced people. Over 900,000 men, women and children have found refuge in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The rest are spread across the country, including some 400,000 in Anbar and 150,000 in the southern governorates.

The crisis in Iraq is first and foremost a protection crisis with intense violence and brutality being meted out on civilians from all religious and ethnic backgrounds. As the High Commissioner for Human Rights already outlined, women have been specifically targeted with daily reports of kidnapped women and girls from Yezidi and other communities being sold into marriage and sexual servitude to militants. While ISIL bears responsibility for the majority of these atrocities, they are by not the only perpetrators of human rights abuses. Armed groups including militias affiliated with the Government continue to carry out brutal acts of violence against civilians. Entire communities have been uprooted resulting in a significant humanitarian impact. And around half of all those displaced are children. Many are deeply traumatized. Their schooling has been disrupted, their families torn apart. Up to 700 children are believed to have been killed or maimed in Iraq so far this year, including in summary executions.
Mr. President,

The UN and its partners quickly scaled up their response thanks to a generous contribution of USD 500 million from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and support from other donors early on in the crisis. Hundreds of staff were deployed to the governorates most affected in the north and are now also in other areas of the country including Basra.

This early infusion of donor funds had tangible results. Over 1.4 million Iraqis have received food assistance this year, in all 18 governorates. Emergency health interventions have ensured access to essential medical services for at least 1 million people. Around 1.5 million people have been provided water, latrines, bathing facilities and hygiene materials. 1.2 million IDPs have received emergency shelter and essential relief items, including tents, mattresses, blankets and stoves. Nearly 100,000 displaced Iraqi children have received psychosocial counselling, and 82,000 have received assistance which enabled them to continue with their education.

But despite this, much more help is urgently required. With the onset of winter 450,000 people are still in need of warm clothing; 300,000 people need blankets, stoves, and other non-food item support; 100,000 people require urgent help with water and sanitation and over one million people, mainly children, need health assistance to deal with acute respiratory infection and other chronic illnesses. Over 660,000 children require measles vaccination.

Mr. President,

Ongoing insecurity and fighting prevents us from reaching all those who need assistance. There are currently 3.6 million Iraqis living in areas under the control of ISIL and affiliated armed groups. 2.2 million of them are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. And despite acute needs, including for shelter, health and food in areas most impacted by the conflict, only meagre amounts of assistance have been delivered to areas under ISIL control to date.

Every day the humanitarian community faces considerable operational challenges in our effort to deliver aid. And every day difficult decisions have to be made about who will receive assistance, given the scarcity of resources.

Mr. President,

$173 million in winterization funding is urgently required in order to meet the needs of IDPs in the Kurdistan region and elsewhere. These needs are time sensitive and there is little room for delay. If WFP does not receive $85 million in the next few days, then food cannot be procured or shipped and distributions will be severely disrupted in January for around 2 million people.

The Government of Iraq has provided USD 50 million for construction of camps and other support to the displaced in Dohuk Governorate, with additional funds promised for Erbil and Suleymaniya governorates. These funds helped the relocation of IDPs from all secondary school in Dohuk governorate. The Ministry of Displacement and Migration has also begun construction of a camp with 1,000 prefabricated shelters in Diyala Governorate.
I am pleased that salaries are to be paid to all civil servants. The national health and food distribution systems need to be maintained throughout the country, and kerosene for heating and cooking needs to be subsidized for displaced people during the winter. Current unsubsidized fuel prices mean that humanitarian organizations are able to provide fuel for heating and cooking for less than half of the 80,000 vulnerable families who need it in the Kurdistan region for the next two months.

Mr. President,

This is not the first time Iraq has experienced a humanitarian crisis. Iraqis are already weary of the decades of sectarian violence and war which destroyed the country’s institution. One million are IDPs from previous Gulf wars.

Mr. President,

This is not just Iraq’s crisis. It is part of a regional catastrophe which we have a collective responsibility to address. The humanitarian needs in Iraq are real, they are urgent – and they are growing each month. Millions of Iraqis face an uncertain future with years spent in camps or unfit dwellings. It is urgent that security be re-established and that the protection of civilians remains at the heart of national and international political, military and other efforts.

As is always the case in these crises, it is the ordinary people who suffer the most.

Thank you.