Ebola is an extreme and unprecedented crisis, and a collective challenge on a scale we have rarely seen.

We know the headline figures, but the human toll cannot be summarized easily.

The livelihoods of millions of people have been totally disrupted. Unemployment has soared. Food stocks are depleted and health systems have collapsed. Some 16,000 children are without one or both parents. Malnutrition cases are projected to reach 60,000 by the end of the year. Children across the region have missed months of school. And as in every crisis, women and girls have been disproportionately affected.

I would like to pay tribute to humanitarian agencies and our partners, and particularly to the national and international staff who have provided life-saving support, distributed food, maintained and improved water and sewage systems, mobilized financial support and set up systems to manage information and coordination. I also thank the private sector partners who worked so closely with us in the areas of communications and transportation for relief items. They are among the many heroes of this epidemic.

OCHA is now reinforcing its presence in Guinea and Sierra Leone and will take on a more strategic role in integrating response efforts into the recovery.

We will do this in two ways.

First, while eliminating Ebola remains a top priority, OCHA will address the broader impact of the outbreak on health, education and food security.

Second, we will integrate the coordination mechanisms we have established into nationally-run systems to provide basic services.

More broadly, humanitarian agencies and our partners will build on the in-depth, community-based experience we have gained during the response to help guide the recovery. The hardest-to-reach communities are the most fragile and vulnerable, and community engagement will be crucial as we move into the recovery phase.
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

This outbreak has revealed both our global connectivity, and our collective fragility. We can only reduce our exposure to such epidemics by building the resilience of communities and investing in sustainable recovery and development.

Thank you for your support.