On 20 September 2017, we hosted a high-level meeting to draw international attention to the escalating humanitarian crisis in South Sudan with participation from United Nations Member States, regional organizations, UN partners and members of the civil society.

We recognized that humanitarian needs will only continue to grow until the fighting stops, and therefore urged all parties to agree to a ceasefire and to reaffirm their commitment to find an inclusive political solution to the crisis to ultimately end humanitarian need.

We applauded the early warning and collective efforts by humanitarian partners to ease famine conditions in South Sudan earlier this year and to prevent famine from taking hold elsewhere. Yet we expressed alarm that a record-high 6 million people were now facing acute hunger in South Sudan, including 1.7 million people on the brink of famine.

We agreed that the conflict in South Sudan continues to have a horrific human cost. More than two million South Sudanese have fled the violence to neighbouring countries since 2013, while another two million people are estimated to be internally displaced. More than 2,600 cases of sexual and gender-based violence were reported to humanitarian partners in 2016, and civilians continue to be killed and children forcibly recruited. We also recognized the precipitating effect of violations of international humanitarian law on famine and food insecurity. We therefore called upon all sides to uphold their obligations and responsibilities under international humanitarian and human rights law, taking constant care to spare civilians and civilian infrastructure. We called on all actors with influence over the fighting parties to exert pressure on them to respect the rules of war.

We paid tribute to the commitment, bravery and professionalism of humanitarian workers in South Sudan, and to those who have lost their lives while saving others. We condemned the killing of 85 aid workers since the conflict started in 2013, including 18 this year alone. We called upon all parties to consistently allow safe, rapid and unhindered access for humanitarian staff, equipment and supplies, and to eliminate arbitrary bureaucratic access impediments. We also called for accountability for attacks directed against aid workers and all civilians.

We acknowledged the donor support to the South Sudan crisis, including the $263 million contributed through the Central Emergency Response Fund and $580 million through the South Sudan Humanitarian Fund since December 2013. We agreed on the urgent need for donors to provide additional flexible and needs-based funding to the response, as the highly prioritized 2017 South Sudan Humanitarian Response Plan and the South Sudan Regional Refugee Response Plan remain underfunded, and humanitarian needs will remain high into 2018 and beyond.

We also agreed to hold ourselves collectively to account in delivering the commitments made today.