



Global Alliance for Urban Crises

SPECIAL SESSION SUMMARY

All Core Responsibilities of the Agenda for Humanity



“Displacement, conflict and natural disasters are increasingly urban phenomena and if humanitarian action is to be fit for purpose it must adapt to be more effective in towns and cities.”

**Dr. Joan Clos, Director
General of UN Habitat**

I. Overview

The purpose of the session was to officially launch the [Global Alliance for Urban Crises \(the Alliance\)](#) and to bring attention to the urban dimension of humanitarian crises and the need for the adaptation of global crisis response to an increasingly urban world.

The Alliance is an innovative partnership bringing together over 65 organisations - consisting of local government networks, humanitarian and development actors and professional associations - to prepare for and deliver humanitarian responses in urban areas. Alliance members commit to develop specific tools to assess vulnerabilities and capabilities among crisis-affected urban populations, with a particular focus on the displaced. They pledge to work to ensure urban expertise is available during emergencies and that services are provided through existing systems with a view to supporting municipal authorities and other local institutions. The Alliance is committed to working with a range of other partners to incorporate crisis preparedness and response capacity as a core element of urban resilience. It is guided by a series of principles laid out in the *Urban Crises Charter*.

II. Key outcomes/themes

Major commitments launched at the session were in support of the Urban Crisis Charter, which outlines guiding principles for members of the Alliance to be used as a basis for both policy and operational level engagement, in order to be more effective in preventing, preparing for, and responding to humanitarian crises in urban environments.

Sixty-five organisations committed to the Urban Crises Charter. Forty-two organisations indicated that they wanted to deepen their engagement by becoming partners in the Alliance, committing also to the following:

- Strengthening their institutional set-up, capacity and programming in order to contribute more effectively towards the goal of improved prevention, preparedness and response to urban humanitarian crises;
- Working with other partners to develop new initiatives that will operationalize the urban recommendations reflected in the Synthesis Report for the Summit; and
- Actively supporting the core functions of the Alliance.

The session detailed activities being undertaken by partners in four key commitment areas:

1. Tailor humanitarian response to the urban context by developing shared assessment and profiling tools, promoting joint analysis, and adapting coordination mechanisms.
2. Develop or work with existing global, regional and national rosters to facilitate the deployment of urban leaders, managers and technical experts.
3. Build the evidence base on the specific characteristics of protracted displacement in urban areas, and contribute to the design of appropriate and cost-effective responses, with particular regard to protection of vulnerable people, shelter, basic services and infrastructure.
4. Ensure that initiatives focused on building urban resilience incorporate components on resilient response and recovery from crises, and that they leverage greatest impact in cities most at risk of humanitarian emergencies.

III. Way Forward

Follow up actions include shaping key initiatives around the key commitment areas, including the development of an urban crises response roster which will allow local authorities and humanitarian actors to be better capacitated for a more effective urban response; incorporating key messages related to better prevention, preparedness and response to urban crises into the New Urban Agenda, to be adopted at Habitat III in Quito (October 2016); making the Alliance more operational, with support of a small secretariat and a partnerships council; and preparing for the World Urban Crisis Forum (2018), as part of the World Urban Forum (held every two years) to provide an opportunity for all members to share good practices and organize dialogues to contribute to and refine the overall priorities of the Global Alliance for Urban Crises.

IV. Speakers

Moderator:

- Ms. Lyse Doucet, Chief International Correspondent, BBC

Co-chairs:

- Mr. Kadir Topbas, Honourable Mayor of Istanbul and President of United Cities and Local Governments
- Dr. Joan Clos, Director General of UN Habitat

Speakers:

- Mr. Sean Penn, Chairman and Founder of J/P Haitian Relief Organisation and Ambassador-at-Large of Haiti
- Her Excellency Baroness Verma, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for International Development, United Kingdom
- Mr. Alfred Romualdez, Honourable Mayor of Tacloban, the Philippines
- Ms. Fatimetou Mint Abdel Malick, Mayor of Tévragh-Zeina, Mauritania
- His Excellency David Miliband, Chief Executive Officer of the International Rescue Committee

From the floor:

- Ms. Ellen Hamilton, Lead Urban Specialist, Social, Urban, Rural, and Resilience Global Practice, World Bank
- Ms. Florika Fink-Hooijer, Director for Strategy, Policy and International Co-operation, European Commission