Your Excellencies

Last year we applauded the promise made by the world’s governments to “leave no one behind”.

There is no more applause. People are still being left behind. This is a Summit dominated by super-charged natural disasters, a Syrian catastrophe in its sixth year, and the greatest displacement crisis of our age.

Many governments have actively fuelled this fire of suffering. Others have done too little to stop it. Most continue to watch on whilst international humanitarian and human rights law is violated.

I speak up for those people we work with, especially the women and girls most affected by crises around the world. Let this Summit fulfil its promise.

First, we must all deliver a fundamentally redesigned humanitarian system:

It must be one with gender equality at the heart of its design. Women are not helpless victims. They are the front line responders, protecting their families and communities, and the best mediators of conflicts.

We must push more power and resources into the hands of local actors. Governments, the UN and NGOs must direct at least 10% of funding to local actors by 2020. Oxfam itself commits to triple that by 2018 and significantly increase funding for women’s organizations.

But ultimately: the crimes must end. We are witnessing the rupture of International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law in countries like Yemen, Syria and South Sudan, by parties that kill, torture and displace civilians with impunity and without any shred of consequence.

We need an urgent and genuine commitment to reverse this. This is the real test of the Summit.

World leaders must leave Istanbul dedicated to comply with the Arms Trade Treaty. You must end the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. And you must adopt the Kigali Principles, and invest in the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

World leaders once made a treaty to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war”. They called it the UN Charter.

You must act again. Leaders of governments, we call upon you to ensure everything you do truly protects civilians. That’s the commitment our humanity needs.