



19 August 2021 – On this day, World Humanitarian Day, we stand together to pay tribute to humanitarians in Syria and worldwide. Every year, we take this critical moment to extend our deepest condolences to all those who have paid the ultimate price. We also express our immense gratitude to all those humanitarians working tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of Syrians – saving lives and preserving the dignity of those in need of a helping hand.

We continue to see crisis upon crisis in Syria, with ongoing hostilities, economic deterioration and growing inequalities, and an unrelenting pandemic. We also see the growing impacts of climate change in Syria, with evidence to be found in the increasing and ever more severe droughts, forest fires and floods and the associated consequences. So, in line with the global thematic focus of World Humanitarian Day this year, we also pause to reflect on climate change as a local and global crisis.

Climate change has and will continue to come with an immediate and tragic human cost. We see this tragedy being played out in Syria as people, including the vulnerable living in fragile circumstances, and especially women, contend with direct and indirect implications of the changing climate. This can be seen in the lack of water, food, electricity and livelihoods opportunities for millions and the resurgence of diseases, due to the ongoing drought. We all must come together in solidarity with people who need it the most. As humanitarians, we continue to advocate for the vulnerable and most affected. This, along with our every effort to ensure a future where humanitarian and early recovery needs are met, resilience is strengthened, health and well-being are ensured, civilians are protected and safe, and that those who risk their lives to help others can do so in safety and security.

This year's World Humanitarian Day, we cry out and lend our voices to the call to action on climate change. We humanitarians call on world leaders to come together and do what is

needed to slow climate change and secure the planet's future, secure the future for us all. We also call on all stakeholders in the Syrian crisis to support our work to make sure we can remain true to our mandate – to support the most vulnerable girls, boys, women and men in Syria, wherever they are.

Signatories

Dr Khalida Bouzar, Assistant Secretary General, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States (UNDP)

Mr Ted Chaiban, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (UNICEF)

Mr Ayman Gharaibeh, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (UNHCR)

Ms Corinne Fleischer, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (WFP)

Dr Ahmed Al-Mandhari, Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean (WHO)

Dr Luay Shabaneh, Regional Director for Arab States (UNFPA)

Mrs Carmela Godeau, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa (IOM)

Mr Muhannad Hadi, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis

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