

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

BROOKINGS DOHA CENTER

REFLECTIONS ON THE WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT  
WITH THE U.N. UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL  
FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS AND  
EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR

Doha, Qatar

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**Featured Speaker:**

STEPHEN O'BRIEN  
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian  
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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. BARAKAT: My name is Sultan Barakat and I am the Director of Research at the Brookings Doha Center. I'd like on behalf of the Center and my colleagues to welcome you all to this policy discussion which we hold every now and then to address some of the most pressing issues globally and regionally.

Today we're very fortunate to have with us the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Mr. Stephen O'Brien, coming fresh from the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul. As you know, the summit took place earlier last week -- a few days ago, in fact. For us now, we have already had our weekend here -- on the 23rd and 24th of May and it brought together some 6,000, 7,000 participants representing humanitarian agencies, nongovernment organizations, U.N. agencies, governments, academics, media, and others.

It was a great, grand gathering of all those who have concern for our common humanity and those who

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have had experience of attempting to respond to the very sharply rising needs around the world and, of course, particularly in our region. We're very fortunate, and I think it's very fitting, that Mr. O'Brien starts his tour, if you like, post the summit with this region, and more so in Doha today.

I think this region worked very hard over the last two years in the build-up to the summit and I personally took part in at least three consultations, thematic and regional, and aside from the outcome of it, it was a refreshing process for us. We have not had that opportunity to meet each other before or to coordinate at that sort of global level. So it offered huge opportunities and it led to the generation of many different ideas, some of which we will be discussing later today.

But before we go into more details about the summit and the outcome and some of the reflections from it, allow me just one minute to introduce Stephen O'Brien, and then we will ask him to address us for about 10 to 15 minutes on his thoughts from the

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summit, and then we'll engage in a question-and-answer session and come back to you for your questions.

Mr. O'Brien was born in Tanzania and educated in Kenya. He's a United Kingdom politician, or at least until recently he was a politician. He served for 14 years as a member of Parliament in the United Kingdom, and 2 years ago he was given a lifetime appointment as a member of the Privy Council, which is an advisory council for the sovereign, for the Queen.

Between 2012 and 2015, he was the Prime Minister's envoy serving as the United Kingdom's Special Representative for the Sahel, working intensively with international partners, seeking secure peace in Mali and neighboring countries by pursuing an integrated strategy of security, governance, humanitarian aid, resilience, and development. Mr. O'Brien was given in 2014 the Champion's Action Award for his leadership in mobilizing various campaigns against malaria, and he has become the global advocate for WHO on malaria, and

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in supporting the campaigns for the Malaria Partnership, and the patron of Malaria No More UK.

He holds a master's degree from Cambridge University and, most importantly and throughout his political office, he was known for those of us who lived in the UK for championing development overseas. He's one of the few people who have taken a keen interest in development overseas, and led the process in many different ways, within and outside Parliament.

Thank you very much for joining us. Please, the floor is yours.

MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you very much indeed. Thank you. (Applause) Well, Dr. Sultan Barakat, excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, and I very much hope, given the context, students, as well. I count myself as one and I am genuinely thrilled to be with you this evening because it gives me an opportunity to come hot foot, as you've just heard, from the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul, the first-ever such summit, bringing all of those who are engaged in humanitarian action and

ambition and vision together. Above all, to put the people who need us at the front and center of everything we do.

So my remarks will somewhat focus on that, but I'm very happy that we should arrange very broadly in the question-and-answer session later, depending on what's on people's minds. And for me it's a great pleasure to be back here in Doha, in Qatar, and to be with you here at the Brookings Doha Center.

I start by acknowledging that it's your leadership that is vital to inform and guide how we tackle global challenges, with the support, the insight, and the perspective of this very important region of the world. As we think about, and indeed as the summit starts to really address the great challenges, we now face what we're calling the greatest humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, both in scale and complexity and, indeed, challenge.

So to put that in perspective, tonight as we speak, more than 130 million people need access to

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humanitarian assistance and protection. Over 40.8 million of those people are displaced within their own country as a result of conflict and violence. And a further 20.2 million people have had to flee and seek refuge in other countries. The economic and financial cost of conflict and violence in 2014, the latest year for which we have reliable figures, has been estimated by some to be \$14.3 trillion, or 13.4 percent of the global economy.

In 2015 alone, natural disasters displaced 19.2 million people in 113 countries. Prioritizing the vulnerable, the United Nations and our many humanitarian partners are seeking almost \$21 billion to provide aid for 91 million people in 40 countries. Yet, let me be blunt, almost halfway into the year, \$17 billion of that vital \$21 billion is still missing.

The causes for this ever-increasing human suffering are clear: political failure to resolve conflicts that know no end, causing untold suffering; mass displacement and political and economic turmoil;

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flagrant violations of international humanitarian law; more severe and more frequent natural disasters linked to climate change; and growing inequality that is cutting off millions from development's progress.

So that's why the Secretary-General convened the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit and to put forward, as I'm sure you're all very familiar with now, his ambitious agenda for humanity. Under the title, "One Humanity, Shared Responsibility," he asked the United Nations, governments, and all the other stakeholders to live up to the five responsibilities to tackle these fundamental challenges of our time and to tackle the root causes.

So, ladies and gentlemen, last week in Istanbul, 9,000 participants, including 173 member states, of whom 55 were represented at heads of state or government level, the private sector, civil society, NGOs, and as I said earlier, the affected people themselves, we all came together to commit, to commit to action in support of the Secretary-General's agenda for humanity, along those five core

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responsibilities, putting affected people at the center of global decision-making. And let's be honest, while it is, of course, too early to have a full analysis of around -- wait for it -- 1,500 commitments made by organizations, and the initiatives launched at the more than 130 side events, leader's roundtables, and special sessions.

I'm going to attempt at least to share with you now a preliminary overview of the summit, which will transform the lives of those who need it most. And it is, therefore, no coincidence that as I left Istanbul, my first port of call was to go straight up to the Syrian border, just inside Turkey. I went down to Point Zero, right where you cross into Syria at the Bab al-Hawa crossing, then straight to Geneva to do a Security Council briefing, and then straight here to Doha because of the intense commitments which Qatar has shown to all of these issues, and the very strong delegation that they sent to the summit, which was deeply appreciated.

And first, of these five responsibilities,

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the most powerful action leaders can undertake is to commit to prevent and resolve conflicts. World leaders agreed to take early action to prevent potential crises from deteriorating into war. Leaders called for the Security Council to take a more proactive role and live up to its mandate and responsibility. Among that leadership, France promised not to use its veto in the Security Council in the case of mass atrocities. Switzerland committed to increase the percentage of its Overseas Development Assistance, ODA, dedicated to fragile countries by 50 percent.

And I'm very pleased that the Qatari government committed to its Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies this very important initiative about which we might hear a little bit more later, which is more than simply training. Important, very important that is, but also very much to start in Arabic, with English translation, but very much on the research basis, underpinning what it takes to be better at preventing and resolving conflict, and to be

context specific.

Second, we must uphold the norms that safeguard humanity. State, civil society, and humanitarian leaders repeatedly stated that international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, and independence, are more relevant than ever. It is the last protection against barbarity.

And many states promised to redouble their efforts in training armed forces, and the non-state armed groups adopting national legislation and ratifying core international treaties. The idea for an improved monitoring and reporting mechanism for violations of international humanitarian law gained more traction.

The third area, following on from the adoption of the Sustainable Development goals last year when the world came together and made that promise, the summit was the first occasion to act on that promise of leaving no one behind. Participants committed to halving the number of internally

displaced people by 2030, and to find better long-term solutions for refugees and displaced people based on a more equal sharing of responsibilities.

There was broad support to enable women and girls to take on roles as leaders and decision-makers in humanitarian response. A new fund for education and emergencies has already received \$90 million, and the Global Business Coalition for Education promised to mobilize another \$100 million. And, of course, I take this opportunity to applaud Qatar's substantive engagements and their substantive contribution to education in the region. And we also witnessed the launch of the charter on the inclusion of persons with disabilities, with now one out of seven people affected by crisis, disabled people finally have a means to hold international responders accountable.

We also witnessed a new compact for young people to participate in humanitarian action. We've had young people traveling with us around all the eight regions of the world in the consultation that led up to the World Humanitarian Summit, not least

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with the commitment here in Qatar to youth. And that has been really important as a thread that's really worked its way right the way through to the conclusions. And now the commitments and, therefore, how we're going to take all of this forward.

Fourth, the summit reinforced support from all stakeholders to go beyond meeting humanitarian needs by changing people's lives through ending needs. This means we must strengthen a principled humanitarian response, but we must, at the same time, build on comparative advantages to help people not only to survive, but to thrive. In recognizing the need to change, the United Nations' Secretary-General, eight United Nations agencies -- including my own, OCHA -- endorsed by the World Bank, we signed a breakthrough commitment to action on collaborating in a "New Way of Working" -- we've made that with capital letters and we mean it -- that will lead to strengthening the United Nations to meet needs, reducing vulnerabilities, and managing risk better by working together towards collective outcomes over

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multiyear timeframes, and based on comparative advantage at each context. More predictability is absolutely vital to be able to give any kind of hope or credence to the phrase, to try and reach people, not only to survive, but also to thrive.

Moreover, together with the Netherlands, I launched a new data center to improve how we collect and analyze independent and impartial data to ensure a needs-based approach to humanitarian response. The Connecting Business Initiative, CBI, will better link private sector skills and resources before, during, and after emergencies. A new global preparedness partnership by a group of finance ministers, the United Nations, and the World Bank will help 20 of the most at-risk countries prepare better to respond to natural disasters by 2020.

And fifth, and of course by no means least, none of these core responsibilities and commitments will get traction if we do not fix the way we finance our collective efforts, how we invest in humanity.

Concrete commitments were made to increase resources

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and widen the donor base, including through expanding financing streams and mechanisms, ramping up risk insurance, greater support to pooled financing mechanisms, and mobilization of Islamic social finance.

There was broad support from member states to increase the Essential Emergency Response Fund to \$1 billion and we committed to strengthening other pooled funds, a grand bargain, a phrase you did hear, no doubt, before the summit. It was achieved. It was done. A grand bargain between donors will lead to more funding, less bureaucracy, more efficiency, more predictability, but above all more efficiency and more effectiveness in humanitarian action over the next five years.

This includes a commitment to channel 25 percent of funds to national and local responders as directly as possible by 2020. Private investors now have the opportunity to invest through Humanitarian Impact Bonds. A financial tracker was launched to capture the individual, public, and private investment

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and donations to develop a far more accurate sense of the funding which is available. The World Bank announced a new mechanism to provide massive, long-term, low interest development projects to address fragility.

The summit also saw several concrete commitments for scaling up the use of cash instead of in-kind assistance. So, ladies and gentlemen, the World Humanitarian Summit was designed, and I said it all from the beginning, as a departure point. As somebody said yesterday in Geneva, when I was giving a briefing, they said, well, actually, it's more like an accelerator. And I really like that. So, departure point, but this time we now have our foot very heavily down on the right pedal, on the gas.

Because we have heard the commitments by our leaders, now is the time for action. Don't let the summit just be another meeting of words. Let's convert it into the action for those who need us. So those who commit it, they will now need to drive the change. They will now need to be the champions behind

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the commitments they made to make sure we land them. My office will help, very much so, by helping monitoring the collective progress on the commitments. We're marshalling all of these commitments together. We will be publishing them in the weeks to come, once we've had a chance of course to verify them. We must make sure they're accurate.

And by supporting those who have committed to implement the change, to welcome the challenge of change, as well as building on the best. Some of the initiatives launched at the summit, of course, they'll take on a life of their own. There's nothing to stop us tomorrow, simply working better across our silos, getting on with it.

Others will take the intergovernmental route where member states will have to come together to forge agreement, to come to a collective view for this broader agreement and implementation. So these will have various tracks and we will be announcing those at the same time, or somewhere in the intervening period between what you see as the Chair's Summary that came

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out at the World Humanitarian Summit, a document which encompassed all that, in a summary way, was achieved.

Of course, we'll have a big report that goes towards the General Assembly, but it will be this commitment for action, this document, this will become the rocket fuel that drives us forward, to hold people to account for their commitments, to identify the champions, where people can sign up and sign on and get behind how we are going to effect the necessary change and really ramp up our ability to do humanitarian action better for the people who need us. Given the scale of demand, exponential as it is, as well as the generosity of the world as it is, but sadly the gap getting wider. We have no option, we have to address that gap by dealing with all of these big principles and, at the same time, the commitments.

So it will be a real opportunity to keep people's feet to the fire and that's exactly what we intended. A summit which, like no other, was intended to be one where we didn't know the outcomes. Luckily, my hair was already completely white. We had no idea.

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There was no pre-cooked, post-summit communiqué. Everything was done, I can tell you, in a rather quick way that afternoon. It was a genuine attempt to bring people together to generate will.

I mean, when you ask for a pledging conference, you can add up the bottom line number at the end, in a sense. You hope it's going to be good, but it is what it is, and you can make a comment on it. This is much more difficult to capture, to bottle up, but we did it. If it had been just 50 countries with 3 world leaders I think a lot of you would have said that was a nice conversation, but 173 countries, 55 world leaders, 9,000 participants, everybody in a multi-stakeholder process, not just driven by the U.N. member states and the donors.

Nobody can ignore this now. This is real will, political and other will. This requires action because now the world demands we act upon what we said. And so I, of course, note carefully those who had expectations which weren't met. I'm always open to understanding people's criticisms, but I look back

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on that summit, very recent as it is, and I really sense an optimism. A success, yes, but the success is now going to be defined by how we translate the words into action.

So there was, above all, through the multi-stakeholder process, something in itself which was quite novel and unique. There was a real role for civil society all the way through the worldwide consultations, through the census report, through the Secretary-General's report, through the very nature of the enormously tight, busy program we had in Istanbul, and all of those who came with delegations. We all needed to be cloned at least eight different ways to be at the same place at the same time, but we couldn't and, therefore, we had to participate as best we could. But it was intensive.

So we had the role of civil society, of academics and analysts, such as yourselves at the Brookings Center here in Doha, and of other partners. This is all instrumental to putting these commitments into action and it's your multifaceted knowledge of

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conflict triggers, and the drivers of conflict, as well as your analysis of the complex package of interventions that are needed to address them. These are crucial to strengthened conflict prevention and resolution. I believe you can play a dynamic role in promoting, advocating for, and advising on how to turn these commitments into reality for a better, more stable world, and, above all, with less human suffering.

So I do look forward to discussing in much more depth with you how we can work together on this front and drive this agenda forward. There is only one result, it has to be better than where we are today.

Now, before I finish, it does give me an opportunity to let me thank Qatar, the Qatari people, the leadership, and the Emir for the generous contribution to humanitarian aid. Since 2015, Qatar has committed over \$92 million to various humanitarian emergencies across the globe. This year Qatar has pledged over \$110 million, including a \$10 million

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contribution to the Iraq response, and a recent announcement for \$10 million for critical humanitarian work in Aleppo, Syria.

As of tonight, we all worry intensively not only about the violence, which is appalling and abhorrent, but the fact it is becoming increasingly encircled, and we are desperate to keep the Castello Road open. Otherwise we could even have Aleppo subject to besiegement, which itself as a weapon of war is absolutely reprehensible, as I said to the Security Council on Friday.

So this is in addition to the fantastic work many of the Qatari charities with whom I've had many opportunity today to have many good and positive conversations, and they are undertaking this bilaterally, as well, which is very important. Although we do need to hear about that so we can aggregate the amount of totality of the work that's going in. A significant amount of Qatar's contributions is channeled through the U.N. Alert, the humanitarian multilateral approach. I have the word

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"system" written in my notes, but I'm giving up the word "system," it sounds too dominant.

It's an ecosystem. We all need to play to our comparable advantages and, of course, the U.N. is a big player and it has many component parts, but we all need to play together to make sure we deliver our very best, and use our great advantages and our local knowledge and our context-specific abilities to bring the very best for the people in need, and to help them get a new foothold on life.

And this attests, if I may say, to the value Qatar attaches to partnerships for collective action and lining up its investment in humanity in a strategic and value-for-money way. All, to be frank, music to my ears. I happen to be a musician, so that is a very important phrase.

So Qatar's support to humanitarian action goes far beyond financial contributions, and I think that's an important point, as well, to emphasize. Qatar contributes to the formulation of global humanitarian policy and strategies. And I must thank

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Qatar for being an active partner throughout the World Humanitarian Summit process, and attending the summit at the highest level.

In this Qatar is a humanitarian pioneer in the region, and for that I am deeply grateful. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much for this fantastic overview of the outcome of the summit. And if you'll allow me, I'm going to start with a question that's been repeated again and again by the critics of the event that although we acknowledge there were 54 leaders who attended the summit, only Merkel from the G7 turned up to the meeting. Was that a reflection, do you think, of the level of political commitment amongst the heavyweight actors in this field or is it just a coincidence?

MR. O'BRIEN: Of course, I would very much have preferred to have the world state leaders from each of the P5 or the G7. I think that when you say "only" Angela Merkel, there's nothing "only" about Angela Merkel. She made a fantastic contribution and

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we were deeply, deeply grateful that she showed such leadership and example in identifying the whole of her country with the wonderful work that they've been doing on the humanitarian -- and on something of an epic scale.

Of course it would have been better, but, of course, each of those countries were represented, some at very, very high levels, but not the highest. We know that there is a genuine and deep commitment over many, many years to humanitarian affairs. And there has been a very strong appetite to understand that we can't all just rest on our laurels, or indeed the types of systemic approaches that we've taken over years. We do have to relish this opportunity to embrace change. Not in any way to cry the fantastic humanitarian action that's taken place in the past, but above all to recognize that if we're going to have any hope of meeting the future need, of diminishing the amount of demand that's coming through, we are going to have to change. We have to recognize that we all have to collaborate in a much more cohesive way.

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But the only other counterpoint that I'll make to the criticism that's been leveled on that score is that, actually, when you look at all those leaders who came, and all the countries that were represented at the World Humanitarian Summit, 173, I think it's fair to say which 20 weren't -- we wouldn't go there too fast. So it was only 20. And if you look at the percentage of how that worked out in the five regions of the world, they were all represented at over 70 percent: Eastern Hemisphere, Western Hemisphere, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere.

So it was a truly World Humanitarian Summit. It wasn't the traditional donors talking to the U.N. system. It was a genuine embracing, all-inclusive, very inclusive participatory. And the fact that 9,000 people registered -- I certainly have seen the reports of people we can count who were in the rooms participating at well over 5,000. Yeah, this is remarkable.

I think what we have done is we've shown the world places demands on world leaders, whether they

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were there or not, now to step up, to be champions for the Agenda for Humanity, and to place the people who need us at front and center of our decision-making, rather than simply being the ones who have to take last place in the queue.

MR. BARAKAT: Right. In the build-up towards the summit there was no intergovernmental consultation, was there?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, there were briefings, I can assure you, both in New York and Geneva, and elsewhere, to the member states. With the member states we have many points of view, some of whom were not comfortable with a multi-stakeholder process. The U.N., as you know, is very familiar over its 70-year history of putting on many, many member states into governmental process meetings. And, of course, by having an intergovernmental process you negotiate an outcome which is, therefore, totally predictable as to what the resolution will be at the end.

MR. BARAKAT: Yes.

MR. O'BRIEN: So, of course, as a matter of

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process, it was not overwhelmingly comfortable for a lot, and some felt it was inappropriate. We stuck to our guns on the basis that the nature of humanitarian action is delivered by such a range of people, it was only relevant to embrace all of them to discuss this in the world's first-ever World Humanitarian Summit, which had to include all of those who had been delivering humanitarian effect.

Of course, the U.N., through its various agencies, through my office at the Office of Coordination, in my role as the Emergency Relief Coordinator with the Interagency Standing Committee, of course we are huge components of that. But there is no one entity in the world, no one country in the world that can now deliver the necessary scale of humanitarian need. We have to come together. We have to work together. And we have to embrace the people in the field as much as we do those who have either the money or the policies. And that's why we felt it was really important to insist on going on this route.

MR. BARAKAT: One of the difficulties we

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felt, particularly, I think, within the region here is the tension between giving aid in one hand and fueling conflict within the other, and this is as far as some states are concerned. Or supplying weapons within context where aid is being given and denying access, and so on.

Was that an issue, do you think, that has inhibited the level of participation among some states? And was it addressed at all during the summit or not?

MR. O'BRIEN: I don't think it was a reason for why people chose to come or not come. I think there were genuine diary scheduling conflicts, to be frank, and you can be assured that we were pushing very hard on all countries. So I think we were more aware of their diary issues than anything else.

But, no, the issue itself was very much there and discussed at times. And there was indeed a side event which specifically tackled the question of the use of weapons in populated areas, for instance. And that was obviously important.

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MR. BARAKAT: The urban crisis.

MR. O'BRIEN: But I think that in most people's minds, there is a very strange equation. That the amount of the financing gap at the moment on humanitarian aid, it was broadly said by the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing -- the one that was co-chaired by His Royal Highness Nazrin Shah and Vice President Kristalina Georgieva -- there's about a \$15 billion gap in what money is brought in to the amount of money that is needed in order to meet the humanitarian needs. And a statistic I didn't say in my remarks was that of the 130 million people who need humanitarian assistance tonight, if that was a country it would be the 11th largest in the world, just above Japan.

It doesn't have a flag, it doesn't have a head of state, and it has, as we know, precious little money. That's why we all have to step in and be the advocate, be the provider, what a state should do for her own people, that is why we have to collectively come together to do that.

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And I think that there is a sense that the money that is spent on arms and armaments is of such a scale larger than the gap that we need to fill, the mismatch is how can we try to incentivize moving that resource allocation across to meet the needs? Because there's no equivalence between the amount that's spent on arms and the gap the we need to meet the humanitarian needs. There is simply an absence of a recognition of the political will that needs to make that decision.

And that's what I hope the Humanitarian Summit will now aid countries in their decision-making and their policy stances, to be able to recognize -- not these, because I suspect that academic and other institutions, like yourself, will continue to write provocative articles, and so forth, which point this up, and it's glaring. So it is becoming a political question which politicians will have to answer and, having been a politician myself, there's nothing quicker to make you answer than something that makes you feel uncomfortable. And if you know it has



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popular support, your currency in the end is that you want to get re-elected, so you don't want people to take their vote away from you. So you want to make sure that you respond to those challenges.

MR. BARAKAT: And in terms of finance, if you'll allow me to continue on this point, the gap has existed consistently for some years now.

MR. O'BRIEN: It has.

MR. BARAKAT: But also there had been a consistent critique of the system, or what you call now the ecosystem, of being largely inefficient. And people accuse it of high overheads, biased distribution of resources, a lot of benefit to northern organizations, and so on, and the discussions have tackled some of those issues. To what extent do you think we've moved forward in proving to the world that every dollar, every riyal, here given is going to be used as efficiently as possible?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, I think that's the phrase, "as efficiently." I think that sometimes you hear, we want every single riyal to reach the people

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in need. Well, then there has to be some form of mechanism to translate money into necessary action in the field, so there will be a transaction cost. The question is efficiency. Now, before I was a politician, I come from the private sector, so I've given a pretty sort of eagle eye even to my own organization, OCHA, which is, in financial terms, one of the smallest entities in the U.N., but as part of our offer into the grand bargain, into a new way of working and doing better, so OCHA has said we will bring down our overhead costs, our administrative costs from 13 to 7 percent.

We will make sure that the administrative costs of the Central Emergency Response Fund comes down from 3 to 2 percent. That's real money that will now reach people in need, which wouldn't otherwise have got there.

Now, of course it means we have to be smarter and leaner at what we do. It's not easy because when you are an organization that represents all the member states of the world, inevitably that is

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a collection of -- well, in the end, of course, interests. And that will need Brookings. So there is a big need to make sure that is properly done, but at the same time we need to be much more efficient.

So, yes, everybody needs to step up in that way. I wanted to make sure concretely and you can see that we've worked very hard to do that, from my perspective. There's also a lot of myth around and I think it is very important, just as on Friday when I'm reporting on Syria or on Yemen to the Security Council, as I said indeed, it got challenged on Friday. I say, I come here relying on the facts or giving you the good reports of what we can vouch for and rely upon.

It's up to the politicians then to take their decisions on good facts. I can give comment, but in the end the decision-making comes down to them. It's exactly the same when it comes to the money. So there have been figures bandied around that the U.N. costs 70 percent, or something amazing like that. I have, of course, taken that very seriously. I've

examined it. It's complete myth. It's completely wrong.

Once it's out there, of course, like every rumor, it's like a horse that bolted out of the stable.

MR. BARAKAT: What do you think the more accurate estimate of the cost?

MR. O'BRIEN: I think it does depend on the organization within the U.N. that you're talking about. But I can tell you, in my own case, OCHA is aiming for 7 percent and we're moving between 13 and 7.

MR. BARAKAT: Is that so?

MR. O'BRIEN: I set up a charity, a malaria consortium, some time ago because I ran it on business lines, albeit we didn't -- I even said, we'll run it for profit, we just reinvest the profit. We don't pay ourselves, and we'll run it like a business. And I insisted that we never had an overhead higher than 2.25 percent. It can be done. In big international institutions it will never be as low as that, but it

needs to be very efficient. You need a will to do it.

MR. BARAKAT: And one of the distinguishing facts or features of the summit was the involvement of the private sector. And I think the talk about bringing them in as for-profit actors in the humanitarian scene raised a lot of questions amongst those of us who have been working in this field for a long time. Can you just elaborate a little bit more about this idea, this mechanism? How can you bring in the private capital to support in times of emergencies, and then make some profit at a later stage?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, apart from the facts, given my own personal background, I really don't have any fear about the word "profit." Profit drives enormous efficiency and it tends to make sure everybody's working in the most relevant way. The challenge is what you do with it. And so, profit itself is releasing more funds that could be reinvested, so I think if you see profit as a gain, like a personal gain, or a return to shareholders,

then of course there's a question mark, who are you working for?

But if you see it as generating more money that can be reinvested, and when you talk to the private sector -- and it was true when I was running a multinational business, there is a part of the business which isn't there to make the profit. You have your own products, you have your own services, your own expertise. You run it efficiently, and you have the choice to run it efficiently because you're not trammled by all sorts of other policies and very complex public service requirements, which, of course, do place many more burdens outside your own control, but you can choose also to create a culture within your company. And that's exactly what they do when it comes to the participation in humanitarian affairs.

When there's a natural disaster, this seems pretty obvious. Placing at the disposal of people who have suddenly been caught up in a cyclone, or something, and there happens to be a warship available, then it doesn't go there as an asset of

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war, it goes there as an asset of help, to make sure there's a platform which is stable enough to be able to start reaching people who couldn't otherwise be reached and it's made available cost-free. There's no profit in it to a government, other than reputation, which is a good thing to do. Likewise for a company.

If they choose to make available either their technical expertise, we have some very good examples already and I'm very happy to mention them. It's not because I'm paid by them to give them some advertising. It's because they are partners of doing good work, just as I would expect the public sector to be referred to in doing great work, noble work, in the humanitarian affairs. And so even in conflict -- when I was in Ecuador 40 hours after the earthquake, a plane on the tarmac in Manta, right on the coast, right where half the buildings in the center completely collapsed, where people were still, with their dogs, trying to pull people alive out of the rubble. It was a DHL plane, which is there on the tarmac, long before my plane landed.

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They got there very fast, bringing in teams from neighboring countries with their sniffer dogs, with the heat seeking equipment, all pro bono.

MR. BARAKAT: It doesn't concern you that it echoes the talk we heard in the early 1990s about bringing in private security firms, particularly in areas of conflict, that we could subcontract this part of the operation to the private sector and they would provide good security, good efficiency, and so on. But then they're not governed by any system and they operate in a vacuum outside the restrictions that others face. At least within the humanitarian field there is this ethical drive and framework that drives people to do their job properly. Does that not concern you at all?

MR. O'BRIEN: It concerns me and I take it very seriously. And I don't think there is an equivalent between what I'm talking about and private security firms. I think there is much greater difficulty in conflict settings, which is after all where 80 percent of our current humanitarian



expenditure goes when the needs arise. So I think there's a lot more to be done to try and understand. Now that it's done, I think that we've learned a lot of lessons collectively from that period.

I think much more important is to recognize that this has been the case over a long period of time, and I think this applies as much to humanitarian as it does to development, and something which in my previous life I was very much part of ensuring happened, and that is untied aid. I think this really does matter and I do think that holding onto humanitarian principles, as somebody in the private sector, as much as in the countries who might be allied with that private sector entity, have to recognize that to get to the most efficient, effective delivery, there has to be a completely open tender process, fully transparent.

There's a web out there which is very easily able to deliver all of this, and so we don't tie aid and relief to any specific country interest, and that really matters. I think that does have an effect on

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the way some people feel motivated in regions, and it may be something which is worth exploring further as to how we can really give that effect without demotivating the will to want to make sure donations come forward. Because, of course, people want to have relationships with the areas of familiarity they have great disconnection with. It's bound to be the case.

But the more we can help people have confidence that their general abilities can be generally applied, then that is the antiseptic to some of those tied vested interest worries that you are articulating, and where there's no connection, therefore, between any kind of future allied activity, i.e., profit, from something where one got an engagement with.

After all, we need everybody to step up and commit where they can offer help. And we don't want them to say, I daren't do that because somebody thinks that one day I may try and make a profit out of that. You know, we all need to be open minded enough to welcome the full range of people, but recognize there

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are principles, there are modes of operation, there are undertakings you make, such as you stick to the humanitarian principles of impartiality, neutrality, independence.

You make sure that you try to come together within the often U.N.-led humanitarian response plan. There is a strategy to get us from where we are to where we need to be. Get on board with the plan, make sure everything that you do is sent to the financial tracking service in-kind, or, in money terms, so that everybody knows what everybody else is doing. That's the best antidote to the concerns you raise. But let's not restrict the offers of help, because if we do that, sadly, the need out there is so great. There is room for us all, and we need to offer it because if we don't, we are deliberately asking some people not to be helped who could be helped.

I don't think it's our judgment on that score that should predominate. I think the people in need, need to know that the fullest, maximum weight of everybody who can make a contribution is welcome.

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MR. BARAKAT: And it seems to me, throughout the discussion there was an attempt to challenge the existing architecture of how money gets distributed, A, in terms of who is it handed over to? And, as you know, there was a lot of push from local and regional agencies to be recognized as the first point of contact by donors.

MR. O'BRIEN: Absolutely.

MR. BARAKAT: And also, what kind of financial assistance they were -- at least I feel there's a real urge to move away from the in-kind support and embrace more cash aid. And the experience of the Syrians in Jordan and Lebanon, in particular, prove that if you give aid directly in cash you preserve people's dignity and you allow them flexibility to move the market, and so on.

What kind of commitments have been made? You mentioned earlier that there was a commitment to reach 25 percent --

MR. O'BRIEN: Exactly.

MR. BARAKAT: -- by 2022?

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MR. O'BRIEN: 2020.

MR. BARAKAT: 2020. But that is from donors directly to local agencies?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, no, from agencies to local players.

MR. BARAKAT: We'll still be there.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, and also there was a similar commitment between the international NGOs and local NGOs, and ICVA was well represented as representing that voice, as well as many who came in their delegations and so forth, not the least from here in Qatar, where there was already a very strong track record of the local NGOs being so front-end deliverers.

And I think that the question in the end is a combination between localization, which I think we need to have a real commitment, a real determination to put more capacity into the hands of those right at the front end. Today a very good example is that most of what we do achieve in Syria -- and we do achieve a lot in Syria despite the incredible barriers,

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blockages, and dangers, but almost all of that is done through local NGOs.

It's very difficult, either in the international scene or at the U.N. I've been to Syria twice, but I am the humanitarian. I have a certain ability to enter, but it's very difficult for many to do so. So there is a real need to recognize that the localization -- and this was a very strong call, if I may use a clumsy term of the global south, but it was a strong call, particularly in natural disaster, natural hazard risk-dominated areas, which, after all, if you're on the Southern or Eastern Hemisphere is really what you're thinking about, is to suggest that there is so much more that needs to be built. So we don't, as it were, have a system which seeks to bypass local capacity, but more to build upon it and to help support, whether it's a government or a municipality. And there was another declaration about enhancing the ability to support local municipalities in urban settings where so much of the need now arises, as well as local NGOs.

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That really does matter in terms of the ability, but the second point you made was about cash. Of course, quite a lot of cash is being used and, indeed, vouchers which are the equivalent, but we need to take this away from just being at a very specific local level to actually think about cash much more strategically.

Those of us who come from any kind of background in societies where there is a social safety net system, broadly we trust people who we want to help report, who are in danger of falling through the bottom. We give cash. From the fiscal arrangements we generate cash and we give cash and we suggest how it should be used, but in the end people must make their own choices.

What I would say is, I think this is incredibly tied to the empowerment and gender issue. It's my experience that -- and I coined the phrase when I was in a previous life as a development minister -- if you get it right for girls and women, you get it right for development, full stop, on the

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evidence. (Applause)

MR. BARAKAT: Well, in our region many of our crises are not generated by natural phenomenon.

MR. O'BRIEN: I understand.

MR. BARAKAT: So we suffer a lot from conflict, which generates a huge number of displaced people, as you know, and a lot of need. And the cash transfer has been a particularly difficult issue at all levels, starting from the top counterterrorism regulations that have been brought in all the way down to the accusations of some of that cash ends up in the wrong hands or gets transferred into weapons, and so on.

MR. O'BRIEN: Of course.

MR. BARAKAT: And it's a real dilemma. How do handle cash in those particular contexts? At the same time we know that giving people aid in-kind is not necessarily much better because they can translate it into cash.

MR. O'BRIEN: Diversity.

MR. BARAKAT: So the real answer to all of

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this is really as you were suggesting, to give more leadership to local organizations --

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes.

MR. BARAKAT: -- and to try and trust in people more.

MR. O'BRIEN: I think that's absolutely right. I think that we need to be very careful that there is always a very quick traction, particularly in the commentariat, and particularly in some of the less benign comments that come from some of the journalistic organs in the donor countries, that where diversion is discovered, these can be highlighted, put completely correctly because they must be exposed. They should be held to account. We need to make sure -- I have two answers to that.

First of all, even in the humanitarian setting -- it's easier in other settings, I grant, but even in the humanitarian setting -- if something like that goes wrong the first thing we should do, as we would do anywhere else, is we ask for the cash back. We demand the cash back. So we can actually then

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redeploy it to the people who do need it.

Now, it can be a big struggle and you can't necessarily identify, but at least we should put it out there. There is no impunity on this.

Secondly, I think we should recognize that the scale of the diversion, the scale of this is -- as yet on the evidence -- it is still within the parameters that even in the private sector are sort of tolerated at the 1 to 2 percent level. So let's not let 1 or 2 percent be the enemy of the 98 percent. We do need to be careful not to allow, as it were, the small example to be the only way we organize. That is actually in danger of losing the very big picture which is, in the end, we have masses of scale of humanitarian needs to meet and we have no choice.

If we're going to do it all in-kind, where we need safe, unimpeded access under our humanitarian principles where, whether it's me and all my brave colleagues in the U.N. arguing and negotiating over months patiently to get 15 checkpoints cleared to get to Madyia, and it takes a year to get there because

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every time you get up to the eighth checkpoint, that agreement gets broken and you're required to go back to the start again. And then you get past the eighth checkpoint, so you've finished with the Syrian government and now you've got three Hezbollah, and then you've got six militias to get through.

This is very difficult stuff. Cash is much more fungible. You could get cash, particularly through the mobile technology, to people in besieged areas. You can't do it at the moment because they often don't have banking systems, but when you think about the way the future could develop, this could become the norm.

So we've got to be enervative, we've got to -- I think, for institutional capacity -- maybe I'm more comfortable with it, given my own background than some are, but I think we have got to accept some risk.

MR. BARAKAT: Some opportunity.

MR. O'BRIEN: Now, the trouble with risk is in the public sector. None of it is my or your money. It's other people's money who expect their

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politicians, their public servants, to be held to account for the way that money was used. And when things go wrong in the private sector, people say, well, it's an 80/20 risk. So long as you didn't get the big decisions wrong in the 20 percent, we'll go with the 80.

The trouble with the broad public sector, it's a 100 percent to nil risk. The minute you get something wrong you're hauled over the coals. If you're a politician, in my experience, you've got everybody you're looking at wanting your blood and everyone behind you wants your job. So you're on your own and that's a pretty terrifying place to be unless you've got a jolly good answer for everything.

And that's why, in a sense, we've got to find a way if we're going to be inevitable, if we're going to reach the scale, if we're going to just take a little bit more risk we might actually end up leveraging much better. But the technology should help us because it should get over some of these burdens.

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MR. BARAKAT: Absolutely. Another phenomena that is rising in our region, partly because of the spread of state fragility across the region, is the rise of non-state actors.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yeah.

MR. BARAKAT: Armed non-state actors, actors that are increasingly in control of treachery, weapons, collecting tax, et cetera. But they also are controlling territories that have civilians, and access to those people has been particularly difficult and it requires, if we're going to go through the commitments made, including number one -- which is about preventing conflict, putting an end to it, we must move beyond the sort of with or against doctrine and start some kind of contact, some kind of negotiations with these people, and I know at the field level it probably happens, but a lot of it is considered illegal and people can be tried if they travel to the United States, in particular.

Was that an issue addressed during the summit, and is there something that we can take

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forward?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, I do think its very much a part of the World Humanitarian Summit and I think we should all, those of us who have been engaged with it, just quietly pat ourselves on the back. We didn't duck the big issues. The first two core responsibilities in the Agenda for Humanity, led by the Secretary-General, the top diplomat of the world, is we have to be better preventing and resolving conflict. We have to find a better way of adhering and ensuring that there is real accountability for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Both very tough, difficult subjects where people have many points of view.

I would certainly say that I think on the first, speaking from a humanitarian perspective, I think we do need to find a way of encouraging the broad political world to be able to find a way of having the capacity -- dare I say it, the political courage -- to intervene earlier, to find a way, particularly where we have any impasse, and we have

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too many of them at the Security Council level. But conflicts are, by definition, a failure of politics at all levels, both the local level and at the top level.

But yet there's no obvious site in the current institutional arrangements of resolving that quickly, and I don't see that necessarily around the corner. I don't think we should ever say that we don't hope and pray for it, but, therefore, we should think about what it would take to have better intervention.

I think that the Qatari initiative that I've been hearing about and was committed to, I think is going to be a strong potential contributor to that kind of thinking because, of course, there is nothing more difficult in the world of humanitarian action -- it is also true of development, as well, but particularly in humanitarian action -- is, if I take action, which is to invest in doing something before it took place, how do I prove the accounts are factual?

Go back to people like me, other politicians

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who -- I'm not one anymore, I'm totally independent. I don't even represent a state at all anymore. I'm a totally international diplomat, but when I used to have to stand at that dispatch box, where is the good answer when you just, say, spent \$100 million on something that never happened? That's quite difficult when you're spending a lot of your taxpayers' money on people thousands of miles away, who they will never meet.

So there's a big accountability and trust issue which needs to be overcome, and I think that academics and others are going to have to help how that level of accountability for the use of public funds, which is all we really have access to in terms of scale. However much we bring the private sector on and however much others become participants, it is going to be ultimately public money which funds this going forward. It's how do we prove the accounts are factual?

So I made a speech, actually, in Istanbul very much urging an academic meeting on the Sunday,

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saying if I was to ask you to concentrate where your research should lie -- I would rather ask you here at Brookings -- how do you really tackle, if you were to serve as countries through their politicians, through their leaders, how to be accountable for investing in early intervention acting on the clues rather than waiting for the factual proof?

Now, we could have an earthquake tonight. We can't change those facts, but there is somewhere going on in the world today, the worry -- I better not name any country. There is the worry that we could be entering into a conflict. Now, as it happens, I've chosen to put three people into a particular country because I think that we need to be there already preparing for a humanitarian crisis that could come out of conflict, if one occurs. If it doesn't occur, I'll have to no doubt be very accountable to the donor support group, who are effectively like my shareholder body, i.e., the donors, saying, why did you have that million dollars on that line when nothing happened?

Answer: You've never had a better investment. But

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how do I prove it? So this is really tough stuff.

And the second, of course -- I'm sorry this is a very long answer -- is international humanitarian law. We have, as humanitarians, the privilege of these principles and the law of impartiality, neutrality, and independence in the name of humanity. This is reflected in the authority I get, as OCHA, as the ERC, the Resolution 46182. And so when you say, we have the problem of the non-state armed groups, yes, of course the law applies to states.

As it happens, humanitarian law applies to everybody. This is not a U.N. law made for/by member states. International humanitarian law has been emerging since the 1850s, 1860s. It is held in Geneva, the guardianship of it through the Swiss government is very much promulgated by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and we all know that they have their regular meetings, which is again a multi-stakeholder approach. And we do know that we're in a very, very large global conversation as to how we move from having the law to

ensure that there is no impunity for violations. Much more difficult to introduce a mechanism that is going to be attractive, but one which I think we're all equally determined should be developed, but we have to make sure -- like all law -- you bring the people with this, particularly when international law, in the end, is law by consent.

So this is very tough stuff, but we aren't ducking the issue. We need to have that very large global conversation. Without it the status quo will continue and as Ban Ki-Moon said in the introduction to his own report, the status quo is unacceptable. It's just not doable. We have to move on, we have to find a better way. And that's why the World Humanitarian Summit, which took the risk of not being that starting point, luckily, through the will of all the people who came, has ended up being the point of departure. Or as I said in my remarks, as was most helpfully suggested to me in Geneva, is now the accelerator, particularly when they were looking at the CERF, the Central Emergency Response Fund. I

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happened to be speaking in Geneva, so I said, well, luckily, it looks like CERD is becoming the CERF, because we were sitting on top of the actual accelerator that goes around the land underneath where I was speaking.

So I was very pleased. I think that is a good remark and I think it's one which we should grasp with both hands. Let's use this as rocket fuel to propel us all forward and hold people to the commitments they made. Let them be the champions. If it's all coming from us, it always looks as though we're trying to impose. Let it be much more ground up, coming from the people and coming above all for our humanity.

MR. BARAKAT: Great, thank you so much. Given my background, I could easily spend another two hours asking you questions. (Laughter) And I'm enjoying every minute of it.

MR. O'BRIEN: Let's pity the audience.

MR. BARAKAT: But I'm conscious of the fact that in the audience we have a room packed with

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practitioners, and some senior policy and decision-makers, including Dr. Mohammed Almaadid, who is the head of the Qatari Red Crescent, and Dr. Fatima Gailani, until recently was the head of the Afghan Red Crescent. So we have a lot of people who I'm sure will have much more tougher questions for you.

And we have about a half an hour left and also I have to just say that --

SPEAKER: Forty-five minutes.

MR. BARAKAT: Half an hour because we started 15 minutes late. Okay, we'll start --

MR. O'BRIEN: If you want to group them, I'm happy to help out, if you think that would help.

MR. BARAKAT: We'll group two or three questions together. Dr. Hamid?

DR. HAMID: Thank you very much, Stephen, for this very good kind of a packaging of what has happened last week. What I wanted really to raise in regard to this region -- I have been in thematic kind of consultation for quite some time at the secretariat.

Basically, political miscarriages and political mishaps and crisis will never be cleaned by humanitarian workers, never, ever. And I'm quite worried that even though the summit has raised very valid questions during the whole process of the consultation, but are we asking the right questions? Because the frequent rise of humanitarian spending is not necessarily solving any problem because the problem lies there at the root causes where you have to end occupations or you have to end conflicts or you have to prevent what has led -- let alone the climate changes impacts and so on.

And, unfortunately, in the first two roundtables -- at least I was in the first one, "Ending Political Conflicts and Preventing It" -- there were few commitments that is not necessarily sufficient to set an answer at this critical time of human history. There were a few things that probably someone can be hopeful about it and not necessarily negative, but still the process is voluntary. Even those who made commitments are not necessarily going

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to commit to what they have committed, within the commitments we have seen.

What is the process, especially when it reaches an inter-government process where the inertia is, as we know? And the second thing is if we compare this process with SBGs or the climate, it's totally different. It is a multi-stakeholder. It is probably bottom up, you know, and governments do not have humanitarian national strategies.

The other thing I want to comment is when the issue of Islamic Social Fund came up, which is probably going to be still argued in this region, probably some other regions have raised this issue, I was a panelist on the transparency on humanitarian aid and what I know from humanitarian aid systems they did not yet have the technicalities of how such a new fund could be probably integrated in that system. So I think there is a lot down the line to be addressed. Thank you very much.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you. I think maybe if you can address the questions because he kind of

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presented three questions in one.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yeah.

MR. BARAKAT: And then we'll continue with a second round.

MR. O'BRIEN: I think you're absolutely right to highlight the fact that -- in fact, asking the right questions, in many ways we've had to also recognize with a multi-stakeholder approach, with, let's face it, some who didn't feel this was an appropriate conversation to be having at all, someone who felt that this was the summit they didn't want to happen, that if we had tried to go for an intergovernmental process and tried to have a negotiated outcome, I have to tell you in my judgment we'd have had no summit, we'd have had no outcome. So anybody who had expectations that this was going to secure agreement of something started with the wrong expectation. We were taking the courage to even start the conversation.

And let's not doubt just what a huge and big thing that was. And those who perhaps cynically think

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that sounds like a load of words, they need to really think what it would be like without the summit. We wouldn't be here. We wouldn't be having any kind of conversation and we certainly wouldn't be tackling what is underlying your question, which is the root causes.

Now, one of those, which some people would like to see a complete redesign of the Security Council mechanism. Well, apart from the fact that's way beyond my pay grade, it's also something which is way beyond the contemplation of the humanitarians coming together. We deal with the consequences of other people's failures or where the climate, the natural world has forced upon us a reaction in an emergency because people get caught up with it and we need to do something very quickly in our obligations as global citizens to step up. And with information flying around the world within nanoseconds we know our duties almost before we realize that something's happened.

Secondly -- and so I think in many ways we

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need to be very careful not to lose sight of what we're trying to deal with both as a vision, as an ambition, to stay on task because we know there's humanitarian need out there and we're not doing sufficient to meet it. And at the moment, there aren't any obvious ways of doing so.

If we focus on process we'll get lost. And so it's not been an easy ride, I have to confess. I wouldn't have chosen this as my first 11 months in the job, but we've managed to both stay on the day job and we've met the emergencies and we've done what we have to do. We continue to coordinate, we continue to adapt and develop our organization. But, at the same time, without being able to have access to all the normal panoply of a big world summitry mechanism where you end up with all the negotiations and with a very fine document at the end of it, if I may dare say so with an absolutely fantastic team around me, little old OCHA managed to pull off the world's first-ever World Humanitarian Summit. And it was only possible because we did include everybody and they came and

they really wanted to engaged. And, boy, did we get engagement.

So I think that what we generated was something which is very magical, which is will, political will and the other will. And it's going to be driven upwards. And all political will that has to be answered for in the end comes from the people. Politicians have to answer for it. And if they want to get ahead of the curve, they show leadership. Otherwise, they react to opinion polls. So let's help them show their leadership and take this forward.

And as for the Islamic Social Fund point, which was an important point, this has been an area where a lot of people have been very responsibly and carefully going on a big journey. This is not well understood by the world at large. Of course it's very well understood in very specific contexts where the obligations and the duties and the opportunities of the great faith of Islam is well known. But it is not well known outside those communities.

And it was particularly helpful that the

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high-level panel on humanitarian financing, which reported, was co-chaired by His Royal Highness Nazrin Shah, the ruler of Perak in Malaysia, because there are a very large differences between various communities who adhere to Islam about what that means and where the duties lie about social finance. And so without wanting to get into the intricacies of zakat and so forth, I think it's very important that we recognize there's a lot of work to be done. But, again, we caused the point of departure which is going to enable people to decide is this something for them or is it not? And if it isn't, what alternatives would they propose so that we can land something which is sustainable?

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much. To be honest, as a region, we would have been very happy with the United States making a similar commitment to France on the use of the veto power, but that wasn't the case.

MR. O'BRIEN: I couldn't possibly comment.

(Laughter)

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MR. BARAKAT: Please.

SPEAKER: (inaudible) thank Dr. Sultan a lot. And secondly, I'm Dr. (inaudible) from Arab Red Crescent and cross organization. So because I'm from an Arab organization, I prefer to speak in Arab, if you don't mind, please.

MR. BARAKAT: Please, yes. We can get translation. Just give us a second.

SPEAKER: I was following the reports and I attended the Humanitarian Summit where I saw great work and we thank you for it and particularly Mr. O'Brien. But the press reports that there was no hope and there was only pain. No hope, but only pain. That to say the many hot issues were not discussed, for example, the refugees issue, which is the most important. Whereas we had Mr. O'Brien -- although we were there, but many of my colleagues with me, Mr. (inaudible) and others who are here now, who although there was so much work done there, so many presentations, so many workshops, but nevertheless the press releases of the U.N. or the summit did not

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clarify the activities Mr. O'Brien referred to. This is one thing. Another thing -- I'd like to thank Mr. O'Brien for telling us about this, although we were there all the time.

Another thing, many of the problems are launched by the politicians and treated by humanitarian activists such as you and others, triggered by politicians through conflicts and by spending billions while activists like you try to solve them. And so for this (inaudible) of diplomacy that you refer to is the best way to adopt.

Third, it was said this idea of a humanitarian bank. Let's say the donors who present them with a sum of money, you don't promise what they will be presenting next day. But if we think of investing this money or part of it after permission of the donors, then I think this will lead to sustainable development. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

MR. BARAKAT: (Speaks in foreign language)

SPEAKER: I think (inaudible) and I think we

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should not underestimate what had happened here. You know, the last couple of years there was a consultative process. The amount of energy that went through -- at least I'm talking from our point of view as an organization. I don't know -- I don't think maybe governments are excited or not excited, that's -- at least for us, the people working and seeing the pain on the ground. We (inaudible) there was a lot of movement, a lot of dynamic, there was a lot of energy. Inside each country, brought organizations together to discuss these issues, brought organizations and government together at the regional levels, and they brought everybody. So it's a huge consultative process. And this is the first time in history that had happened.

So I think just by having that process is a fantastic thing. And then you've got a place, there was a commitments. And there is commitments. We think it's not enough, we think it's short, we think it's this, but at least we are building an infrastructure somewhere, and that's important when

you start. So that's an important thing.

I think you said in the beginning of your speech there are global challenges. And these global challenges require global responses. So what do we need?

We need an infrastructure in which there is a global approach where you said north, south, east, and west, okay, that will give us not just an understanding of the situation and data collection, data analysis somewhere in Holland or somewhere else, because, you know, you can get that, but you need to interpret it. And you need to interpret it, you need to the local areas. And there is where in decision-making you have to involve people at all levels: local levels, the regional levels, and at the U.N. level, which is really short at this moment. So you need to tackle that.

There is another point, you talked about the finances and you guys talk about efficiency. I think that's only part of the equation because there is effectiveness, as well. Okay? And you can't be



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effective if you are putting money at the wrong cause or at the wrong problem because you perceive the problem is like that. And this is where localization is important, as well, to identify the need. You know, localization is not only about implementation. It's also about identifying what's the problem.

The third thing I mention, I think somebody said about the -- or Hamid, I think, said something about transparency because that's the third dimension. You know, if you have corruption anywhere at any stage of this, we need to have, you know -- then the delivery would not be there. It will be short. So we need to have mechanisms to make sure that it is there.

I'm sorry, I don't want to go further, but I think it's very important you give organizations the capability to be capable of delivery and, second, the capacity to access and, third, protecting people's human rights. Because it's not just about feeding people. We do this for animals and giving them shelters. People live in dignity.

The final point. You talked about the

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private sector, which I support you. Anybody's going to assess, that will be welcome, but we should be very careful not to remove the humanity out of human (inaudible) response. Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. BARAKAT: If you can respond to these two.

MR. O'BRIEN: I'll try and be as quick as I can to make sure we get as many people in. But on the question of refugees, let me be clear, what actually happened at the summit was to recognize what a steppingstone the summit has been towards what is already meant to be an intergovernmental process well argued on the 19th of September, which the Secretary-General has called. As it happens, President Obama's having a meeting on the following day, on the 20th, when all the world leaders come to the General Assembly anyway, so it's a very good timing point there. Because let us be clear, refugees, yes, but not all people movement is humanitarian. If we don't address it well, it rapidly becomes humanitarian.

So the question of movement of people, forced displacement, is broadly humanitarian, but it sits within this overall holistic approach that we took at the summit to deal with all the root causes, all the issues. And that's why it was a complex summit. It was jolly difficult to be at everything, but there were special sessions, side events on forced displacement, on migration, and a lot of that. And Karen AbuZayd, my colleague, was there to capture all that because that was part of bottling up this political will, this very difficult thing to achieve and it was very important.

And so I would certainly say that on the question of whether you felt there was sufficient clarity from the press releases, the chair's summary was intended to be just that, a summary. It wasn't intended to capture everything. That's where we're going to take a few weeks, admittedly, because we have to verify it to make sure what was said in the sessions, what was said in the side events, what was said in all the paperwork that we were submitted both

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online, some chose not to use the portals, so we had to go out and find the paperwork, we need to check back not just with the member states, although it was important -- we are the U.N. after all -- to give proper respect to the people who grant us what we are. Because ultimately, we live under the values of the charter, we the peoples. The peoples are represented by member states, so that is, if you like, our primary accountability.

But this was a summit like no other where we really made it to draw in everybody through the consultations that I was delighted to hear have been appreciated because that was in itself pretty high risk and we managed to achieve that. So I think that the press release was never going to be able to capture all that. It was too extensive. It was eight or nine pages long as it was. I mean, I always try to get a one-pager. And so that will come up in the commitments for action. You will see in the commitments document all these things that you've heard reflected and that were very important.

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On the humanitarian bank there'll be more. But, again, this is a starting point. If we had all the answers, we didn't need a summit. This was to try and foster -- the summit ended up catalyzing.

I mean, a very good example is we got a charter for people living with disabilities in crisis. They're always the ones who are least found, always left behind first, and always in the end almost impossible for people to feel confidence that disabilities could be addressed. Four months ago, there wasn't such a thing. Because there was a summit everybody's concern with disabilities came together, rapidly put through. There is now a charter. We're now all under pressure to make sure everything we design in an emergency responds to that charter. That's a tangible outcome from the summit itself. But that's the catalyzing effect that the summit has had and I think that's worth mentioning.

And I think this question of the energy through the consultations, recognizing the process point which I've already touched on, but these

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commitments in the end are the driving power, the infrastructure of what we're going to be able to deal with. You're right, in the end the U.N. has a real role to make sure that not only are we advocates, highlighting, me talking to the Security Council, making sure they know the humanitarian effect of the failure of political decisions; making sure we try to hold people's feet to the fire; gaining resources which are needed in order to meet that humanitarian need; making sure we demand as a law, as a right, not making condition upon anything else, access, safe, unimpeded access to get sufficient to meet the humanitarian needs.

And I used the phrase "lifesaving and protection" like it's a German word, all run into one with a big capital letter at the front of it. That is what it is for us. It isn't just making sure they have food, water, shelter, meds. It is to do, also, with making sure that they are protected, particularly civilians in conflict, and not left in a state of vulnerability. Having saved a life, it doesn't serve

that life well to then leave it in a state of vulnerability; to start to build the infrastructure at it which is why the education in emergencies was so important. One of the reasons you flee is if after three years in a protracted crisis you can't get your children educated. You don't want your child to be part of a lost generation.

So in the end, you were right, I hope I did mention in my remarks efficiency and effectiveness, but never the two should be riven. We should always refer to the two. And transparency, in the end, is absolutely vital because, yes, corruption is absolutely a menace and terribly, terribly counterproductive. But in the end, this is about trust. This is about trust that if people who aren't the field workers, who aren't part of the deliverers, their money on their behalf will directly go into be resourcing what we all do. They want to trust.

And coming, if you like, from my business background, the thing that matters is not the first time. In my case I made roof tiles, bricks, and dug

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quarries all around the world. But if I was to test whether I had done something worthwhile, whether I'd been transparent with my customers, and, of course, we often have to speak for the customers, the people in need, although we need to empower them more and more to be their own voice, their own agents of change, it's the second sale that matters. It's you coming back again to trust that you can place your money to deliver the further effect.

The first time, in a sense, is the easiest. It's getting that second one.

MR. BARAKAT: Talking about the second (inaudible) and building on what Dr. Mohammed suggested, is this a one-off summit or do you have a plan to sort of continue the consultation in some format? Is there a mechanism where maybe through the OCHA regional offices in partnership with academic institutions and others they can continue this building on these avenues of contact that have been created?

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, as I said to you

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probably before we came in, although I wasn't expecting the question, the Regional Steering Group, which they're behind the eight worldwide consultations and the thematic consultations, it's been really powerful in terms of bringing together this collective common will.

And a phrase I've not used yet, but I do think is genuine, is something that's happened as a result of the summit. Actually I think it happened in the consultations before, is normally when you get summitry and you all come together, particularly intergovernmental, you end up -- it's not a bad thing, but you end up with the lowest common denominator. What's happening here, although some of it's been agreed, some of it will have to be agreed, we are aiming to support a vision and actions through commitments of the highest common factor. This is totally appropriate. We're dealing with humanity, our common humanity. There's no compromise in that.

You can't negotiate humanity. You can't negotiate the word "human" in humanity. It's what it

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is. It was one of my answers, early days, to the members states who were very much objecting to the process. I said this is the one topic in the world you can't negotiate an outcome. There is no diminishing amount of humanity. You delivery humanity to your fellow citizens in need or you don't.

Lifesaving and protection are absolutes. So that is why we went through with such principle to do this. And I think that the Regional Steering Group, however it may transmogrify into whatever becomes relevant to help chase this process, if you like even be the enforcer to make sure it's relevant to all the regions, just as the consultation was.

We had that conversation in Istanbul on the morning after the conference. It was the only meeting I had on the Wednesday morning was to talk with the Regional Steering Group, as well as my staff, to thank them. And that was very important. We need to use that to harness that energy from around the world to really make sure this now delivers.

MR. BARAKAT: Right, thank you so much.

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Take another round of questions. Please.

SPEAKER: Thank (inaudible) for your detailed presentation, but not convincing for me because we suffer from double standards. By the way, in Istanbul, you never mentioned at all the old refugees, Palestinians, or those who are blockaded, besieged in Gaza and are killed every day. Only Qatar helping them. So what I say there are many causes. You said natural disasters, poverty, or illegal immigration, disputes and so. A safe zone in Syria, which is impeded by United States of America, may solve a big part of the problem, but they're opposing a safe zone.

Let us speak frankly. Why United Nations not call for a meeting or a convention I think for collecting the agent requirements? I think you said about \$21 million or something like this.

MR. O'BRIEN: Twenty-one billion.

SPEAKER: Yes. And to be divided all over the members, to be mandated or obligatory to be collected. Why you wait donors which never donate?

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Thank you.

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, thank you very much for the challenge. And I didn't actually understand your name. No, I did understand, but I was just wondering do you represent a Palestinian interest?

SPEAKER: No, I am a dissident against (inaudible) who is giving us old people. And the same problem, (inaudible) totalitarian regimes are the cause of (inaudible).

MR. BARAKAT: Which is a career as an academic.

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, I fully understand and, of course, I do represent the United Nations, but I represent the humanitarian.

SPEAKER: Yes, I know that.

MR. O'BRIEN: And the advantage I have is that it isn't that I duck the politics. It's because I have to rise above the politics. I have to. The impartiality, the neutrality, the independence of making sure we can get our convoys through so that I continue to have discussions with the Syrian

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government, with the armed opposition groups, with -- and when I say "I," I'm speaking for the very brave people in the U.N. who are there in the field, on the ground, and we need to make sure we are always conscious of their safety. So if I stick to the principle, it's because we need the access to reach people in need. I mustn't be sullied by the idea that I might take sides.

Of course the U.N. has its political arm, it has the Security Council, it has all these things which work or don't work, but, you're right, there is a question mark in some people's minds. Of course it would make my life a lot easier if there was mandatory ties on member states to produce 21 billion simply because I say please raise it, but that's not the way it is and it wasn't going to happen in Istanbul. And I have to say don't hold your breath. It will be nice if we could suddenly find the money was always coming in, but all these humanitarian response plans, they're all underfunded, some abominably so. I mean, with Central Africa Republic or Chad or the Gambia, I mean,

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we're looking at single-digit percentages, if none, which are funding the humanitarian needs in those countries.

So, you know, we have a major crisis of resource, we have a major crisis of need, we have a raft of willing people and actors, skills, experience, expertise which can be mobilized, both locally and internationally. But getting that equation right requires us to stick steadfastly to meeting need. Our only test as the humanitarians is not to reach people partially, but to meet need where it arises, however it arises, whoever it effects.

But just to answer your specific question, I'm very pleased that UNRWA, the U.N. operation for Palestinian refugees, it was there, Pierre Krähenbühl was there, he was deeply engaged. He wrote to me to say he was very, very grateful that there was an opportunity for the questions that you have raised to be front and center in so many of the sessions. He will be able to take away a lot of huge support for the principled action that he is trying to lead with

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so many people of good will.

So I understand the political nature of your challenge. And I've replied, as I must, in a non-political way, but not to lose sight of the fact the serious issues that you identified.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you. How about taxing the arms manufacturing? (inaudible) imposing on it.

MR. O'BRIEN: Again, you see, I do respect the fact that in the end, although --

MR. BARAKAT: I'm just saying this as provoking it.

MR. O'BRIEN: -- some states will think that the U.N. is not like this, but in the end the question of tax is a sovereign matter. We aren't in the business of imposing as a world bully because we, in the end -- it was member states that came together 70 years ago to create the United Nations. There was a visionary ability to put the words together. The charter of the United Nations is a most wonderful document. Of course, resolutions have clarified, even amended it, but unlike even the U.S. Constitution,

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which is regarded as a pretty good document, the U.N. charter doesn't have rafts of amendments to it. It's stood the test of time. It's based upon values.

It's not a membership club. This is about articulating the greatest visionary principled values that mankind has wanted to be able to achieve and that's why it's stood the test of time. It's why we're not in the business of imposing or demanding that member states should do things which are not part of their sovereignty. It's appealing to member states with all the accountabilities they have within what we hope are their settled borders, within their jurisdictions, within their accountability to their people, whether they have full or partial or alternative to democratic systems, what really matters is ultimately they take responsibility for -- under one humanity's shared responsibility, the responsibility to deliver on those values of which humanity is the central value that underpins security and peace, development, and human rights.

MR. BARAKAT: The other context in the  
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region that's causing us a lot of headache is Yemen.

MR. O'BRIEN: Yes.

MR. BARAKAT: We feel there has been an incredible silence about what's going on in Yemen in terms of addressing the humanitarian needs. In fact, it's the opposite. Some of the main powers in the world are rushing to sell more weapons in the region and you talk about a huge gap in financing assistance. And somehow it feels as if the Yemeni people were left to the Saudis to fight the war and to aid simultaneously.

Does this fit within the framework of humanity that you've described?

MR. O'BRIEN: Of course the conflict in Yemen is really worrying, it's of grave concern. As the world's humanitarian chief, I think you will find that the exception to what has not been a very loud noise is that I have been extraordinarily noisy and at times extremely noisy on the subject. I myself have been, of course, to Sanaa. I've been to Aden. I've been in the streets where there are unexploded

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ordinance. It is very dangerous and risky. It is notable that whilst we the U.N. have stayed and delivered and over 3-1/2 million people have been reached every day in Yemen in need, but 80 percent of the country have some form of humanitarian need tonight. That's 21 million people out of 26 million or so.

You know, this is a major humanitarian crisis. It has been designated one where I have had to surge support. As it happens, the U.N. has put in outstanding leadership in the resident coordinator, humanitarian coordinator. We need the rest of the partners to rush in with their strongest leadership to deliver on the ability to reach humanitarian needs, whether it's water supplies, above all fuel. We've put in a U.N. verification inspection mechanism for the shipping that needs to bring in the supplies, particularly into Hudaydah.

Let's be clear, before the conflict in Yemen, 50 percent of the population were living well below the world poverty line. And where almost 90

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percent, if not more, of everything that was consumed by Yemenis of staple -- water, fuel to pump from the aquifer, and the mills to grind the cereals -- all that came from imports. And the economy is now absolutely on the edge. So there is no shortage of noise and highlighting it.

Indeed, I made yet again a presentation to the Security Council on Friday on Yemen. But it is one of those where because it is a genuine conflict between various people who've come together, it's very complicated, of course. But it is not for lack of the humanitarians wanting to deliver humanitarian need. It is the ultimate in proving that if we could prevent a conflict, we wouldn't have to meet the scale of humanitarian need because we would be actually helping the Yemeni people take their due place in the world of hope and thriving.

So we're not in position tonight to solve the political issues, but we are certainly able here to recommit to meeting the humanitarian needs of people in Yemen.

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MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much. I'll take two last questions. Sorry, three now. Is it Sarah? And then the young man with the curly hair.

So, okay, take them in any order. Now that you have the microphone, please speak.

SPEAKER: Sorry, first of all. I'd like to thank you very much, Mr. O'Brien, for being here. And I just wanted to continue on the line of questioning of Dr. Barakat.

In September last year, I was lucky enough to participate in the activist kind of summit, the exact same summit, that was held in Qatar here. And obviously there were around 350 humanitarian practitioners and activists from all over around the world.

And I came across very interesting people and one of them that actually had been to the Syrian-Turkish border, so with his own eyes, you know, how the things actually take place. And what I mean here is specifically the financing of the U.N., how the financing of the humanitarian aid was actually

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delivered on the ground. And he documents, and later on he started his own NGO, is that big cars that has the U.N. logo on it was being driven by militias and that basically the humanitarian aid that was supposed to be delivered for the Syrian people was not really delivered as it should have been to the Syrian people, but was manipulated by the actors on the ground.

So my question is in this summit were there any actual financing -- were the financing failures, if I would, addressed in this summit other than just being hopeful and trusting more and more? Were there any actual steps and measures taken to making sure that these aids do not fall into the wrong hands? Thank you.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much. Sarah?

SPEAKER: Hi. You mentioned the importance, Mr. O'Brien, you mentioned the importance of working with local actors on the ground when administrating aid. Recently I spent some time in Greece working with NGOs in refugee camps and one of the striking things is the lack of confidence in the U.N. from the

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NGOs and the refugees. So I wanted to see what you could do to remedy that because it must be very difficult to work with organizations that don't necessarily trust you.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you. And one last question. Dr. Halid right here at the front, please. I'm sorry, we have to bring it to a close because the recording runs out in an hour and a half.

DR. HALID: Thank you so much. Halid (inaudible), Qatari Red Crescent. Two fast questions. The first one is I also remember in the consultation that we did in the MENA there was a lot of talks about the need for restructuring the U.N. humanitarian system. And I found that -- I didn't find it exists at all within the reports of the Secretary-General and others. And I was told that, Halid, the reason for that, that we need to change, first of all, the way we do the business and then that it will be reflected on the structure. So I don't know, I would like to have your feedback.

The second one, I have a good number of

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young men and women working together at the Qatari Red Crescent, and they always ask me this difficult question: Dr. Halid, what about advocacy, how we can have impact on the U.N. system, on politicians? And to be honest with you, I would like to hear the recipe, the magic recipe, from your side. How can I answer them in a way or another? There is a lot of eagerness within my organization trying to have an impact not only on delivering aid, but on changing policies and that. Thank you so much.

MR. BARAKAT: Right, thank you so much. So three very simple questions. (Laughter) It's going to take us another hour to answer. The issue of finance, trust, and restructuring the U.N.

MR. O'BRIEN: Okay. Well, thank you for that little finale. (Laughter) The question was raised by the gentleman there, like you I've been to the Syria-Turkish border and, in fact, just 36 hours ago. And I spent time right down there on the border with the very brave Syrian truck drivers. And wherever there is a report or a suspicion that a truck

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driver with a U.N. badge or not is somebody who you think is part of the problem rather than part of the solution, then the very first thing rather than it were to give up on that is make sure that we have the evidence. We can't do anything if you don't tell us. So please, give us the evidence that you think or suspect because it really matters for the rest of everybody who's putting such great courage and work into it that we don't allow that reputational risk to start imperiling everything else that's going on that is brilliant and good and important and needed.

So I would certainly say, please, I would encourage you always to have a sense that you can bring the evidence to the local level. There's the crossing monitoring mechanism and there are people in that office and that would be accepted. So, you know, like all these things, if we all act on suspicion and rumor, then it just becomes a compounding problem and everybody loses trust in each other.

I hope that you've probably detected from my engagement with you today, I don't know how to be

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untransparent. It's not part of my way of doing it. It's not part of the way OCHA wants to work. It's really important. In the end, the U.N., yes, it is fueled by values, but in the end, we're at your service. We're there for you. We don't have a right to exist. We don't have a right to work. We only have a cause and our cause is to be at the service of we the peoples who create us.

So please, make sure that where you're worried, where you think there's a genuine concern, we've got to know about it. Otherwise, we can't act. And it's in our interests to take action on such things.

And as for the financing failure, the gap, it's a tough economic environment at the moment. You know, we can see all around the world that everybody is struggling for money. It would be nice if we could make these quick equations between you're spending money on one thing, why don't you just spend it on us? But, of course, we all know that budgets and the way financing flows work, what helps generate growth, what

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helps spread to people, how people who've got money tend to make money, and those who haven't yet been able to participate in great economic wealth struggle to get on the ladder. We all know that. But you don't change it overnight by simply shouting for it. You have to address the strategic goals of getting a structure in place.

Because as I've found through certainly my experience, in all walks of life if you simply go and ask people for money, by and large they thumb their nose at you. I mean, why? Why would I give you money? We're all deeply motivated to save lives and to protect civilians. In a sense, it's almost like, well, why wouldn't you give us money? But that's not the way the rest of the world would necessarily engage.

If you say I've got a strategy, I've got a plan, and we can deliver, so that if you put your money with us we will get there, then that is something you can finance and get behind. And the world has been very generous in its grant funding.

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That's been going up. The trouble is the need has gone like that. That's why the summit's been so important because that gap isn't going to correct itself unless we do something about it; unless we give greater incentive for people to invest and we help to bring down the demand.

Of course, if we could resolve conflicts better, even prevent it in the first place, whether taking a risk of acting on the clues rather than waiting for the facts, then we would help bring down that exponential curve. But we live in the region here which is the biggest area of conflict in the world, and that's why we have to be recognizing that this is where one of the great opportunities lies for this part of the world to really engage in this ability to look at how do you bring down the need in the first place by being better at resolving conflict.

So I hope that's a full answer to your genuine question, which I take seriously.

As for Sarah's question, if I may call you Sarah, I'm very conscious that there is always, to

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some degree, an element of distrust between local actors and institutions. When I was much younger than clearly I am now, I had a very healthy distrust for the British Parliament. In the end, it didn't stop me taking a decision that in the end to be somebody who is the democratically elected person with a seat in your own body to help make decisions on behalf of constituents, I thought, wow, that's so wonderful. I must try and do that.

So there is a degree to which we have to understand there will always be a deep suspicion about institutions, the establishment, the people who look as they've got a sort of vested interest to preserve themselves, to be the big guy around town. But that said, in the end we have to be judged on our actions.

And I have to say, as I think my colleagues in the UNHCR, who are primarily the people you would have been engaging with when you were in Greece doing the wonderful work that you were committing yourself to, and thank you for what you've done, and all the NGOs, we know that even the NGOs in the world, local

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or international, came together, it would still be that compared to what's needed. You have to have this partnership between the scale of the world body, of this massive experience. These are very big entities. But it's up to us to generate more trust by recognizing there is a partner to be had here of complementariness, not a takeover, not a feeling of subsuming one into the other.

This is an ecosystem, as I said earlier. This is not a system. We talk about the U.N. system because it is very big and we do have our own system and we need to address some of the down parts of it. But that said, I think there is an opportunity for us build better trust and we should understand and appreciate that. But there will always be a degree of distance because some people choose to join the U.N., but we all have choices in life. Those doing exactly the same work may choose to join the local NGO. That's often to do with the particular type of personalities we are and our ambitions in life.

So I think there's a -- I would prefer to

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regard that as a constructive dynamic rather than a destructive one. And I think we all have to be very respectful of each other's roles and how we can work together.

And then finally, attempting to answer Dr. Halid's question from the Qatari Red Crescent, the question of the restructuring of the U.N., in the humanitarian space as against some of the things calling for under core responsibility one, i.e., what the world leaders and particularly one has said the political member state representatives, which is why - - I think it was an earlier comment from the gentleman, the representative from Afghanistan, why there weren't the same number of deep commitments about preventing and resolving conflict because that in the end is this intangible political will. There needs to be a demand placed by a bottom-up feeling that we have to do better at this. But ultimately, they're the only people who can deliver it.

Political will has to, in the end, be commanded by those with political responsibility. And

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so it was notably self-selecting who could sign on to that, which is partly an answer to this question, as well. Because the way that we looked at that, I called it a New Way of Working and I said it was with capital letters. It's a two-page agreement, I'm a signatory, of how we across the U.N. work across -- because at the moment there's a lot of silos. They tend to work in very strong silos, so if you want to go and talk refugees, you don't necessarily come to the coordinator. You go off to UNHCR. If you want to talk children, you go to UNICEF. You want to talk food, you go to WFP.

Now, there is at local level -- and this is where it matters -- there is an argument to be made about -- and I would urge this, but I have to be careful because it sounds as though I'm boosting my own role, my own position, and that's never a helpful thing to do. And I'm genuinely humble and responsive about this, but my eyes were somewhat opened when I found myself going to Ecuador and arriving 40 hours after the earthquake. They were still pulling people

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alive out of rubble. And I was right there at the moment when things really mattered to make the right decisions.

And we were in a room not dissimilar to this with about this number of people. And they were all the people who happened to be the representatives in Ecuador of whether it was UNHCR or WFP or the tiniest local volunteer organization, not even registered as a charity. And of course they all (inaudible) what we call the humanitarian country team meeting convened by the U.N. resident coordinator, who happens to be a very good person, Diego Zorrilla. And immediately I made him also the humanitarian coordinator because as ERC that's one of my privileges that I am able to appoint somebody to be the humanitarian coordinator. U.N. didn't have one in Ecuador and with an Ecuadorean government which wanted to be strongly convinced of the merit of the international community being able to supplement what the government itself was already doing with all the governments that's already deployed around the country.

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And of course they all came together and said, well, can do this, we must do that and the other. To which there was, at the moment, a sort of concern that everybody was offering, but nobody was really offering to be coordinator. Where was the priority? What needed to happen now? What was the critical path? Because they live for it. You know, these are fantastically well-motivated people who have been readying themselves to meet a crisis and wants to get on with it. But, of course, some things were totally irrelevant.

What is the characteristic of the immediate response in Ecuador apart from we don't want the big land-grabbing diggers in until you've got to the fourth day, when there's less chance of being able to find somebody alive, perhaps the fifth day. You don't want rubble being pulled off. You don't want that kind of help at that point.

It isn't the point at which you have a particular agenda for your charity. It isn't relevant. And so there was a degree that we did need

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shelter. Amazing actually, we needed fresh water, bottled drinking water. There had been a lot of contamination, but the truth was the most difficult thing was because what water was in the country, and there was a lot of it in bottles, but it was sufficiently needed now, the supplies were -- the profiteers had marked it up from \$1 to \$5 a liter. And mostly it was people who were very poor who had been most affected by the crisis.

So my opinion was let's flood this with water because then we'll stop the profiteers, even in the crisis. And there are always some. You know, none of us feel good about that, but human beings being what they are, they've got a full variation of people, some were profiteering. So let's flood the market to take their chance out of the market and get people back to be able to afford \$1 a liter. So that was a big context-specific thing and that's where you need coordination.

Now, at the moment, when you say what's going to change, the change at the moment is that

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there's no power to make that happen at the moment. You can appoint influential and good leadership people, but there is a degree to which we have to be better at working across our silos and often being a bit unselfish and recognizing the immediate need now may be for this, but that will then graduate that. There'll then need to be a blend of the following. So that people start being more coordinated in their response and doing it very quickly, taking the right decision first time, every time.

That's not easy, but it does require a degree of unselfishness, which is hard in any institutional capacity where, of course, you have an accountability to justify all the money you've raised from generous donors. So that is very important. And the New Way of Working is seeking to address that problem. And I'm very hopeful that we will be able to make that work. Now that's real. That will make a big difference to people in need.

And then finally, you asked about young people and that was about advocacy. I'm in no doubt

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that the best advocates of the world are the people who are our future. And I would like to, again, place on record, Qatar, particularly not at least through the consultations, but Qatar has been particularly focused on the engagement and inclusion of the young voice, of people who will be responsible for when we need them.

And I don't want to cast aspersions around the room, but I suspect that I may be at the older end, but I don't think all of you are in the first blush of youth. (Laughter) And, therefore, I think it's very important that we make sure -- because in the end what we are doing today is to make sure they have a world. We need their voice in it and they need to co-own the future and they need to feel as engaged as the rest of us do. So I think you make a very powerful point.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much. I hope you found this evening, as I did, extremely helpful in terms of allowing us to understand the value of the summit and the outcome and where we're heading from

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here. But I also found it helpful, I think, in terms of re-engaging the region with the U.N. system. And it's very reassuring to see that the top leadership, we have people like yourself, Stephen, who can relate directly to people around the world and spread principles of trust, transparency, and so on.

So we're really very encouraged with this and wish you all the best with your very hard job. I know exactly what it takes. It's a terrible position to be in. But I think within the region we have a growing commitment to address our own problems. And with the right type of coordination and cooperation with the U.N. system I think we can achieve much, much more.

MR. O'BRIEN: Thank you.

MR. BARAKAT: Thank you so much for this. Thank you, also, for our colleagues in the OCHA office in Abu Dhabi for having coordinated today's event. And a big thank you to my colleagues in the Brookings Doha Center. They all worked very hard at relatively short notice to make this happen. And thank you, of

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course, to all of you for giving the time to be here today.

Please join us. We have a light dinner at the back of the room. And you'll get more opportunity to get to know each other and also to speak to Stephen more. Thank you so much. (Applause)

\* \* \* \* \*

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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