



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Co-Chairs' Summary of the Extraordinary Virtual Ministerial Conference 'A Strong UNRWA in a Challenging World – Mobilizing Collective Actions'

Published 24 June 2020

23 June 2020

We, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan and the Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden, in collaboration with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), on 23 June 2020 convened an Extraordinary Virtual Ministerial Conference entitled 'A Strong UNRWA in a Challenging World – Mobilizing Collective Action'.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations participated in the conference. Other participants included the Commissioner-General of UNRWA, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Palestine and ministers and senior officials from 75 governments and international organisations, representing all regional groups of the United Nations.

Participants recognised that UNRWA operates in a highly complex and unstable region where more than 5.6 million Palestinian refugees continue to be exposed to conflict, poverty and despair. In this regard, participants underscored that UNRWA remains an indispensable and effective provider of quality and innovative programmes that provide assistance and protection to Palestine refugees.

Participants re-affirmed UNRWA's crucial contribution to the human

development of the Palestinian refugees, regional stability and peace in the Middle East and announced new and additional pledges, including through multi-year agreements, as well as through support for innovative funding avenues. Participants also called for increased mobilisation of resources for the Agency.

During the Conference, participants acknowledged the agility and innovation shown by UNRWA's frontline staff who helped prevent a major outbreak of COVID-19 in overcrowded refugee camps and ensured continued access of refugees to lifesaving services. Participants stressed that the effects of COVID-19 had a more socio-economic impact on Palestinian refugees, and warned that pressure on UNRWA and the host countries would increase. In this context, they called for the international community to step up support to ensure that no Palestine refugee is left behind.

As co-chairs, we value the high-level engagement in today's conference and the support of the UN General Assembly's December 2019 renewal of UNRWA's mandate for three years. We commend the Secretary-General for his strong conviction regarding the importance of UNRWA's mandate and critical need for its ongoing operations.

Participation in today's conference further helps translate the strong political support for UNRWA's mandate into sustained financial support for the Agency. Sharing financial responsibility is of vital importance, and we express special appreciation for the pledges of \$130 million in funding by numerous participants. We especially thank donor countries that have made concrete multi-year funding commitments to the Agency as essential towards addressing the Agency's recurrent cash flow crisis. The commitment by UNRWA partners to support the Agency through microfinancing, Islamic social financing and the Waqf Fund for Palestine refugees is strongly commended.

We also express special appreciation for the invaluable support of the hosts who generously shoulder major responsibilities in accommodating Palestinian refugees. We call on the International community to join these nations by providing predictable, sufficient and sustained funding for UNRWA in order to continue implementing its mandate pending a just and durable solution to the question of Palestine refugees is found in accordance with international law and relevant UN resolutions, including UN General Assembly resolution 194, and within the context of a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state solution.

We welcome the appointment by the UN Secretary-General on 1 April of Philippe Lazzarini as the new Commissioner-General of UNRWA and are confident that under his leadership, and together with a new senior executive management team, UNRWA will successfully confront the multiple challenges ahead. We welcome today's statement from the Commissioner-General calling for a mutual social contract to enable UNRWA to continue to support the rights and dignity of the Palestine refugees and promote their human development , pending a just and lasting solution to the refugee issue.

We underline the importance of the Agency's efforts to strengthen effectiveness and accountability, governance, management and transparency. We equally salute the Agency's commitment to remain at the vanguard of neutrality in a highly complex and volatile environment.

In conclusion, we affirm that the Extraordinary Conference, with its high-level engagement and the strong financial support pledged by UN Member States across the world, was an important step in strengthening UNRWA and its outstanding capacity and effectiveness across the region. Further, it was an important step towards putting the Agency on a stable and sustained financial footing. As co-chairs, we remain committed to follow up on the conclusions agreed upon today and stand ready to organise a follow-up meeting in the autumn.



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Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Water, sanitation and hygiene: World Leaders' Call to Action on COVID-19

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Heads of State, Government, and leaders from United Nations agencies, International Financial Institutions, civil society, private sector and research and learning are mobilizing around a call for the prioritization of water, sanitation and hygiene in the response to COVID-19. Their joint statement:

Until there is a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19, there is no better cure than prevention.

Water, sanitation and hand hygiene, together with physical distancing, are central to preventing the spread of COVID-19, and a first line of defence against this serious threat to lives and health systems. Handwashing with water and soap kills the virus but requires access to running water in sufficient quantities.

Our response plans – at national, regional and global levels – must therefore prioritize water, sanitation and hygiene services.

Leaders that recognize the role of water, sanitation and hygiene in preventing the spread of COVID-19, will save lives. Leaders that prioritize international collaboration and support, will save lives. We are only as healthy as the most vulnerable members of society, no matter in which country they are.

Hence, we call on all national, regional and global leaders to join us in:

Making water, sanitation and hygiene available to everyone, eliminating inequalities and leaving no one behind, taking care of those who are most vulnerable to COVID-19. This includes the elderly, people with disabilities, women and girls, and those living in precarious situations, such as in informal settlements, refugee camps, detention centres, homeless people, as well as those people whose livelihoods are limited or destroyed by measures put in place to stop the spread of the virus, and women who shoulder the vast majority of unpaid care work in crisis. These measures are critical, not just to protect these vulnerable populations from COVID-19, but also to prevent other infectious diseases that can spread when water, sanitation and hygiene services are disrupted.

Working collaboratively with all stakeholders in a coordinated manner to improve water and sanitation services, as each actor, whether public, private, donor or civil society has something to offer to protect populations from COVID-19. Coordinated action is more effective, including urgent immediate action to establish handwashing facilities within health care facilities and at entrance points to public or private commercial buildings and public transport facilities, Partnerships such as Sanitation and Water for All are key platforms for national, regional and international cooperation and exchange of experiences.

Ensuring that water and sanitation systems are resilient and sustainable in order to protect people's health and support national health systems. Service providers for water, sanitation and hygiene including utilities and informal providers will have difficulties to maintain or expand services at a time of reduced financial flows restricted movement. This is both a short-term and a long-term requirement to save lives. Undisrupted global supply chains, including movement of goods and production capacity, for water, sanitation and hygiene commodities and services must be maintained at all costs. Water, sanitation and hygiene workers must also be granted sufficient protection to be able to provide us with such services without disruption.

Prioritizing the mobilization of finance to support countries in their response to this crisis. Any financing directed at supporting emergency interventions must have long-term solutions already in mind. Access to water, sanitation and hygiene must be affordable to all, and this may require additional funding to support service providers and help those who cannot afford it. Funding envelopes need to be maintained with no diversion away from the commitments and priorities set for the water, sanitation and hygiene sector. This includes avoiding any shifts in domestic funding allocations that support WASH services and sustained support by international donors for

on-going water, sanitation and hygiene humanitarian responses, and broader Grand Bargain commitments.

Delivering accurate information in a transparent manner. Consistent and rational messaging based on scientific advice that is accessible to everyone will help people to understand the threat and enable everyone to act accordingly.

COVID-19 is not the first and will not be the last epidemic that countries will face. Resilience to future crises depends on actions taken now, as well as on policies, institutions and capacity put in place during normal times. Let us ensure this threat is not a missed opportunity to achieve our vision of universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

As leaders, this is our chance to save lives.

Signatories



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Statement from Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Joint press statement Protecting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Promoting Gender-responsiveness in the COVID-19 crisis

Published 06 May 2020 Updated 06 May 2020

Joint press statement by H.E. Ms. Lindiwe Zulu, Minister of Social Development of South Africa H.E. Mr. Peter Eriksson, Minister for International Development Cooperation of Sweden H.E. Mr. Gent Cakaj, Acting Minister for Europe & Foreign Affairs of Albania H.E. Mr. Felipe Carlos Solá, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade & Worship of Argentina H.E. Hon. Marise Payne, Minister of Foreign Affairs & Minister of Women of Australia H.E. Mr. Alexander De Croo, Deputy Prime Minister & Minister for Development Cooperation of Belgium H.E. Mrs Karen Longaric Rodríguez, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bolivia H.E. Ms. Bisera Turkovic, Deputy Chairperson of the Council of Ministers & Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina H.E. Ms. Maritza Rosabal Peña Minister of Education, Family & Social Inclusion of Cabo Verde H.E. Ms. Karina Gould, Minister for International Development of Canada H.E. Mr. Nikos

Christodoulides, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Cyprus H.E. Mr. Tomáš Petříček, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic H.E. Mr. Rasmus Prehn, Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark H.E. Hon. Mereseini Vuniwaqa, Minister for Women, Children & Poverty Alleviation of Fiji H.E. Mr. Ville Skinnari, Minister for Development Cooperation & Foreign Trade of Finland H.E. Mr. Jean-Yves Le Drian, Minister for Europe & Foreign Affairs of France H.E. Dr. Maria Flachsbarth, Parliamentary State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany H.E. Mr. Nikos Dendias, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece H.E. Ms. Diene Keita, Minister for International Cooperation & Regional Integration of Guinea H.E. Ms. Emanuela Del Re Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation of Italy H.E. Ms. Ilze Vinkele, Minister of Health of Latvia H. E. Ms. Claudine Aoun, President of the National Commission for Lebanese Women of Lebanon H.E. Mr. Gbehzohngar Milton Findley Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liberia, H.E. Ms. Katrin Eggenberger, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Principality of Liechtenstein H.E. Mr. Franz Fayot, Minister for Cooperation and Humanitarian Action of Luxembourg H.E. Mr. Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A. S. Oliva, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Madagascar H.E. Mr. Srđan Darmanović, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro H.E. Ms. Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare of Namibia H.E. Ms. Sigrid Kaag, Minister for Foreign Trade & Development Co-operation of the Netherlands H.E. Rt. Hon. Winston Peters, Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Foreign Affairs of New Zealand H.E. Mr. Nikola Dimitrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia H.E. Mr. Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development of Norway H.E. Ms. Teresa Ribeiro, Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal H.E. Mr. Cornel Feruță, State Secretary for Global Affairs and Diplomatic Strategies within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania H.E. Ms. Slavica Djukic-Dejanovic, Minister without Portfolio responsible for Demography and Population Policy of Serbia H.E. Ms. Arancha González Laya, Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union & Cooperation of Spain H.E. Dr. Ignazio Cassis, Foreign Minister of Switzerland . H.E. Hon. Simon Kofe, Minister of Justice, Communications, and Foreign Affairs of Tuvalu H.E. Ms. Liz Sugg, Minister for International Development & the Foreign & Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom and the governments of Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Costa Rica, Croatia, Ecuador, Estonia, Georgia, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, Moldova, Peru, Republic of Korea, Slovenia, Tunisia, Ukraine and Uruguay. Protecting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and Promoting Gender-responsiveness in the COVID-19 crisis

We, the Ministers of South Africa, Sweden, Argentina, Australia, Albania, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Fiji, France, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Italy, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, are honored to issue this joint statement on behalf of the people and governments of 59 countries: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador,

Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, Moldova, Montenegro, Namibia, Netherlands, North Macedonia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Serbia, South Africa, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Ukraine and Uruguay.

Humanity is confronted with the unprecedented threat of COVID-19. Around the world, the pandemic is having a devastating impact on health systems, economies and the lives, livelihood and wellbeing of all, particularly older people. Responding effectively to this fast-growing pandemic requires solidarity and cooperation among all governments, scientists, civil society actors and the private sector.

COVID-19 affects women and men differently. The pandemic makes existing inequalities for women and girls, as well as discrimination of other marginalized groups such as persons with disabilities and those in extreme poverty worse and risk impeding the realization of human rights for women and girls. Participation, protection and potential of all women and girls must be at the center of response efforts. These efforts must be gender-responsive and consider different impacts surrounding detection, diagnosis and access to treatment for all women and men.

The restrictive measures designed to limit the spread of the virus around the world, increase the risk of domestic violence, including intimate partner violence. As health and social protection as well as legal systems that protect all women and girls under normal circumstances are weakened or under pressure by the COVID-19, specific measures should be implemented to prevent violence against women and girls. The emergency responses should ensure that all women and girls who are refugees, migrants or internally displaced are protected. Sexual and reproductive health needs, including psychosocial support services, and protection from gender-based violence, must be prioritized to ensure continuity. We must also assume responsibility for social protection and ensure adolescent health, rights and wellbeing during schools close-down. Any restrictions to the enjoyment of human rights should be prescribed by law, and in accordance with international law and rigorously assessed.

We support the active participation and leadership of women and girls at all levels of decision-making, including at community level, through their networks and organizations, to ensure efforts and response are gender-responsive and will not further discriminate and exclude those most at risk.

It is crucial that leaders recognize the central role of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) in health emergencies and the need for robust health systems to save lives. In this context, sexual health services are essential. We recommit to the immediate implementation of the UHC political declaration by all. Funding sexual and reproductive health and rights should remain a priority to avoid a rise in maternal and newborn mortality, increased unmet need for contraception, and an increased number of unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted infections.

Around the world, midwives, nurses and community health workers are essential to contain COVID-19 and they require personal protective equipment. Safe pregnancy and childbirth depend on all these health workers, adequate health facilities, and strict adherence to infection prevention. Respiratory illnesses in pregnant women, particularly COVID-19 infections, must be priority due to increased risk of adverse outcomes. As our national and international supply chains are impacted by this pandemic, we recommit to providing all women and girls of reproductive age with reproductive health commodities. And we call on governments around the world to ensure full and unimpeded access to all sexual and reproductive health services for all women and girls.

We welcome the multilateral efforts, including by the UN, including UNFPA and UN Women, WHO, the World Bank and IMF, and regional development banks, as well as the G7 and G20 declarations, towards a coherent and global response to COVID-19. We encourage them all in their efforts with national governments and other partners to ensure an effective response and assurance of the continuation of essential health services and rights.

We must coordinate our efforts in this global health crisis. We support the UN General Assembly resolution entitled Global Solidarity to fight COVID-19. And we encourage all governments, the private sector, civil society, philanthropists and others to join us in supporting the emergency response, particularly in the most vulnerable countries, and to give full effect to the global commitment to universal access to health care.

6 May 2020



Government Offices of Sweden

Statement from Ann Linde

Jordan, Sweden Convene Trilateral Meeting on UNRWA

Published 14 April 2020

Amman/Stockholm 14 April 2020

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of Jordan, H.E Ayman Safadi, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, H.E Ann Linde, and UNRWA Commissioner General, Philippe Lazzarani, held a meeting by teleconference today to discuss the importance of international and regional support to UNRWA as it faces increased financial and operational pressures compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic in its areas of operations. The meeting was also attended by the Minister of International Development Cooperation of Sweden, H.E Peter Eriksson, and former Acting Commissioner-General of UNRWA, Christian Saunders.

The meeting addressed the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic on Palestinian refugees and on the Agency's budget and operations. With the destabilising effect of COVID-19 worldwide, participants called on the international community to respond to the UNRWA flash appeal and emphasised the importance of the Agency's work as a critical component for regional development, stability and security.

The trilateral discussions explored resource mobilisation efforts in support of the 5.6 million Palestinian refugees under the Agency's mandate. To this end, participants discussed the preparations for convening the second Ministerial Strategic Dialogue on UNRWA in the near future, via telecommunication, with the aim to ensure sustainable political and financial support to UNRWA in 2020 and beyond.

The meeting explored ways to support UNRWA following the overwhelming international support to renew its mandate at the United Nations General Assembly in December 2019. In this regard, the participants stressed the

need to translate the political support into financial support, to allow UNRWA to continue delivering its vital services to Palestinian refugees efficiently and without interruption. Participants acknowledged the role that UNRWA plays in situations of humanitarian emergencies, as well as its role in ensuring that Palestinian refugees continue to access basic rights such as the right to health, education and other human rights, in line with Agenda 2030, as well as with the Decade of Action, which aims to leave no one behind, including Palestine refugees.

Participants of the teleconference underlined their strong political support for UNRWA and for it to continue to operate in fulfillment of its mandate until a durable and just solution of the question of the Palestine refugees is found in accordance with relevant UN resolutions, including UN General Assembly Resolution 194 and within the context of a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the two-state solution.