



WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT: LET'S WORK FOR TRUE PARTNERSHIP

(New York and Paris, May 19). On May 23rd-24th, Istanbul will host the *World Humanitarian Summit* (WHS), the first-ever major gathering of international actors to focus specifically on the future of the humanitarian sector.

“We and all humanitarian actors are experiencing unprecedented demands,” said Dr. Françoise Sivignon, President of Médecins du Monde/Doctors of the World France. “Though far from perfect, the summit is a real opportunity for international actors to redefine our response to current pressures, and to propose concrete commitments.”

“Doctors of the World will be there to champion three priority areas: true partnership with southern NGOs; ensuring the safety of health workers and patients; and to demand more action by States in Europe’s current migrant crisis,” Sivignon said.

Doctors of the World serves the world’s most vulnerable people, wherever they are. It is a global humanitarian and health network that provides life-saving care in more than 80 countries worldwide. Founded in 1980, the network is made up of fifteen member groups from Europe, the Americas, and Asia.

Background: Three Key Priorities at WHS

The Doctors of the World network has participated throughout the WHS preparatory process, and Françoise Sivignon, President of Doctors of the World France, will address the WHS plenary. In its participation, Doctors of the World will emphasize:

1. A Stronger Alliance with Southern NGOs

MdM believes that, for balanced humanitarian practice, “northern” actors must strengthen the capacity of “southern” NGOs and civil society to respond to humanitarian situations.

Doctors of the World has cooperated with local actors for more than 30 years. Southern NGOs are often the most affected by humanitarian crises, and usually the first to respond. They are crucial, indispensable actors due to their knowledge of the local context.

“The challenge is to mobilise all actors and to work with southern NGOs; the principle of intervening without borders also applies to our mode of operation. Without a radical transformation of the relationship between NGOs, the United Nations and donors, the world will not be able to cope with future crises. The WHS will welcome 125 “northern” NGOs and 375 “southern” NGOs, which is a significant step forward,” explains Dr. Sivignon.

MdM supports southern NGOs in their demand for increased access to humanitarian funding, of which they currently receive only 1%.

2. The Safety of Health Workers and Patients

The recent intentional bombings of civilians and healthcare facilities in Aleppo, Yemen, and elsewhere demonstrate the risks associated with humanitarian work.

Access to casualties, to healthcare facilities and the deployment of assistance are increasingly hindered. The World Humanitarian Summit is an opportunity to strengthen the call to protect health workers, facilities, and casualties in accordance with the law of armed conflict.

“Humanitarian work in today's world is a dangerous occupation. The recently adopted Security Council resolution for the protection of hospitals is a first step, but health facilities must be protected as a matter of urgency, so that we are able to work in safety. International humanitarian law must be respected,” Françoise Sivignon elaborates.

3. Strengthening States' Response to the Migrant Crisis

In 2016, 125 million people are in need of humanitarian aid. The number of displaced persons and refugees has almost doubled in the past decade, and now stands at 60 million. This figure reveals the extent of the migrant crisis, which is caused and worsened by the absence of political solutions.

“It's hugely symbolic that the WHS is being held in Turkey, which currently hosts the largest population of refugees in the world—over 3 million people.

The EU-Turkey agreement is a disgraceful deal. Europe must provide a collective and courageous political solution to address the influx of migrants” concludes Françoise Sivignon.

“The World Humanitarian Summit is our chance to influence tomorrow's humanitarian action. But States must also assume their responsibilities. We call on them to go beyond simply declaring their intentions, and to commit to concrete, meaningful responses.”

For More Information Contact

In Europe:

Aurélie Defretin/ Lisa Veran

Tel: +44 92 13 81 -14 31

Email presse@medecinsdumonde.net

In the USA:

Miranda Sissons

Tel +1 646 515 3712

Email: miranda.sissons@doctorsoftheworld.org