

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY



The second **World Humanitarian Day** takes place this year on 19 August. The day will raise awareness of what it means to be a humanitarian aid worker by describing their work, explaining the principles that guide all humanitarians, and portraying the hazards that humanitarian aid workers face in the course of their work. World Humanitarian Day will also honour those who have been killed or injured in the course of their work. The General Assembly, which established World Humanitarian Day in 2008, invites all countries, United Nations entities and international and non-governmental organizations to observe the day annually, providing an opportunity to increase public support for humanitarian work worldwide.

Why 19 August?

Seven years ago, on 19 August 2003, the United Nations office in Iraq was bombed. Twenty-two people lost their lives. Prior to that date and since then, many other humanitarian aid workers have lost their lives. The most recent large-scale loss occurred as a result of the earthquake in Haiti in January 2010. World Humanitarian Day has its origins in Iraq, but this year the aim is to make the day genuinely reflective of the global humanitarian community.

What is planned?

Publicity and information materials are being prepared, and will be ready for dispatch and electronic download throughout July. The materials will include:

- Key Messages on World Humanitarian Day.
- A one-minute Public Service Announcement high-definition film that can be broadcast leading up to the day.
- A longer version of the film, which will include a statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon. The film will be released for broadcast in early August 2010.
- The latest information on the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers.

What can you do?

We hope that these materials can be disseminated widely through the humanitarian community's information networks. We are relying on humanitarian organizations, United Nations Member States, all United Nations Information Centres, news networks and other media to help us ensure that the broadcast and print materials have wide coverage around the globe.

We also hope that interested organizations and groups will organize events in support of World Humanitarian Day, using or adapting the globally produced materials to highlight specific humanitarian issues that may be of interest locally.

Specific actions you can take:

- Ensure that colleagues and the general public are aware of World Humanitarian Day through dissemination of this leaflet, the one-minute film, and via professional and personal networks such as Facebook and Twitter.
- Use the Key Messages as points for senior political figures and officials to use in any media interviews or encounters organized specifically for the day.
- Lobby major international and national broadcast networks to show the version of the film that incorporates the Secretary-General's statement.
- Where possible, encourage humanitarian aid workers to speak to the media about their work.
- Organize public events featuring humanitarian work.

Download all World Humanitarian Day materials at <http://ochaonline.un.org/whd>