

**Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and
Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths**

Statement on Afghanistan

I welcome today's adoption by the Security Council of a humanitarian exception in the UN sanctions regime applicable in Afghanistan.

This milestone decision will enable urgently needed humanitarian action to save lives and livelihoods in Afghanistan. It is evidence of how seriously Member States take the shocking levels of need and suffering in the country.

Some 160 national and international humanitarian organizations are providing critical food and health assistance in Afghanistan, as well as education, water and sanitation, and support to agriculture. We urgently need to ramp up this work. Humanitarian operations in Afghanistan are set to be the largest anywhere in the world in 2022, reaching some 22 million people.

This humanitarian exception will allow organizations to implement the work we have planned, and it will give legal assurances to the financial institutions and commercial actors we rely on to engage with humanitarian operators.

The road ahead in Afghanistan is neither easy nor straightforward. The impact of our assistance also depends on the cooperation of the de facto authorities in the country and on the flexibility of the funding we receive.

We must all do everything we can to preserve the life, dignity and future of all Afghans.

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