



## News and Highlights from the IASC Community

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*Capture: 19 December 2016 marked the 25th Anniversary of the UN General Assembly resolution 46/182, also marking the 25th birthday of the IASC.*

## NEWS

### The IASC celebrates 25 years – and some IASC highlights of 2016

On 19 December 2016, we marked the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations General Assembly resolution 46/182, which established the global humanitarian system today, including the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. In his message to the IASC Principals, ERC O'Brien noted that *"this anniversary is an important opportunity for us to step back and recognise that, despite the almost insurmountable challenges we are currently facing, we have achieved a lot together over the last twenty-five years. This resolution has enabled us to help millions of the world's most vulnerable to survive the horrors of war and the ravages of natural disasters."*

**The humanitarian landscape has changed considerably since 1991, and the IASC itself and the international humanitarian system has also evolved:** Humanitarian reform in 2005 addressed the *ad hoc* and unpredictable nature of many international responses to humanitarian emergencies by, for example, introducing the Global Cluster Approach. The Transformative Agenda (TA), adopted in December 2011, further strengthened leadership by Humanitarian Coordinators giving them increased decision-making authority in major emergencies. It has also ensured commitments for a faster response to quickly scale up through declaration of IASC Humanitarian System-Wide Emergency Responses ('L3 Response'). In 2016, L3 IASC system-wide responses were active for Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

**Increased focus has been on adapting the humanitarian leadership model to operational reality** (e.g. with deployments of Deputy Humanitarian Coordinators) and to attract and groom more humanitarian professionals for senior leadership positions. Fourteen humanitarian leaders were designated by the ERC in 2016. The HC Pool, a

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call for nominations was launched by the ERC to further increase the number of candidates and expand the diversity of their profiles.

The ground-breaking **World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016** was also a catalyst for IASC change, for the IASC to reach out to more diverse humanitarian stakeholders, work horizontally and break down traditional silos. IASC Principals expressed their collective commitment *'to translate discussions on new ways of working tougher into action, strengthen alignment across the humanitarian-development nexus and promote a stronger role for local responders'*.

**The IASC ensures an essential normative framework, establishes key standards, and provides operational guidance for humanitarian actors.** In 2016, *inter alia*, the IASC endorsed both a new IASC Protection Policy and, building on the experience from the Ebola response, new SoPs for Level 3 (L3) activation procedures in response to infectious disease events and a *Best Practice Guide on Inter-Agency Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms* was launched.

**Speaking together, the IASC uses its collective voice to safeguard and enhance respect for international humanitarian law, international human rights law and refugee law,** and to strengthen protection of civilians and on behalf of all those affected by conflict and natural disaster. In 2016, multiple statements by the ERC, and by other IASC Principals, drew attention to humanitarian needs in Ecuador, Fiji, Haiti, Iraq, oPt, South Sudan, Yemen and Syria, including the Jordan-Syria border, Aleppo and Darayya, as well as condemning attacks on aid workers, and key social infrastructure, welcoming the commitments prompted by the World Humanitarian Summit, promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, and making a global call for support and action in the response to El Nino.

**We now look forward to 2017.** As we continue to strengthen our humanitarian response on all fronts and, learning from the World Humanitarian Summit, engage with a more diverse humanitarian eco-system, the ERC has noted: *"It is now that we must stand closer together and live up to the vision and principles of 46/182. It is now that we have an opportunity to define a new chapter for humanitarian action and I look forward to taking this further with you in early 2017."*

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## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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## 2016 Farewells and Welcomes

In 2016, the IASC bid many farewells and warmly welcomed new members. As **Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator**, Ms. Kyung-wha Kang chaired IASC Working Group

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on Protection in Humanitarian Action, while she also spearheaded the review on the impact of UN Integration on Humanitarian Action and acted as the IASC Champion on Gender. The IASC wishes Ms. Kang well in her new capacity as Special Advisor on Policy to the Secretary-General, and looks forward to working with her in this new role in the future.

The IASC welcomes the appointment of Ms. Ursula Mueller as **Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator and Chair of the IASC Working Group**. A German national, Ms. Mueller has over thirty years of experience in international affairs, working on global issues and development financing. She has been Executive Director of the World Bank Group since September 2014, responsible for both strategy and policy development. Ms. Mueller has significant humanitarian and field experience, including as Germany's Humanitarian Coordinator (2006-2009). She has also served on the CERF Advisory Board and UNRWA Advisory Board.

Elected by the UN General Assembly on 1 January 2016, Mr. Filippo Grandi took up his role as the 11th **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**. In addition to his vast UNHCR field experience, he has served as Commissioner-General and Deputy Commissioner-General of UNRWA. He also served as Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Afghanistan and has worked with NGOs and the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative with the UNAMA. Mr. Grandi succeeded Mr. António Guterres, now Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Ms. Cecilia Jimenez-Damary was appointed **Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons** by the Human Rights Council in September 2016 and assumed the mandate in November 2016. She is a human rights lawyer specialised in forced displacement and migration, with over two decades of experience in NGO human rights advocacy and also has teaching experience as an adjunct professor of international human rights and humanitarian law. She succeeded Dr. Chaloka Beyani, who acted as Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons from 2010.

Replacing Mr. Colin Bruce in the IASC Principals' meetings, Mr. Mahmoud Mohieldin is the **World Bank Group** Senior Vice President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations, and Partnerships. Before joining the World Bank, Mr. Mohieldin held numerous senior positions in the Government of Egypt, including Minister of Investment from 2004 until 2010.

## ERC Statement: "South Sudan is on the brink."

In his 19 December [statement](#) to the Security Council, ERC Stephen O'Brien warned of the deepening and devastating impact of armed conflict in South Sudan. "*South Sudan is on the brink*," he said. He noted that the conflict in South Sudan has entered into its fourth year. At the very moment when needs are growing and deepening, the ability of humanitarian partners to provide timely and effective life-saving assistance is diminishing at an alarming pace, he said. The ERC stated that this aid comes at a great cost: At least 67 humanitarian workers have lost their lives in the field and the horrific attack on the Terrain hotel led to humanitarian workers being sexually assaulted, raped and murdered. "*If a political solution is not urgently found to stop the violence, the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan will not only grow, but will cascade way beyond anyone's control.*"

## IASC Principals meeting on 5-6 December 2016

The ERC convened a meeting of IASC Principals, co-hosted by UNHCR and UNICEF, on 5 and 6 December 2016 in Geneva. Principals discussed the role and relevance of the

engage more broadly with humanitarian stakeholders and audiences. With UNDG, Principals discussed safety and security, including how to strengthen the analysis of risks and the capacity to respond as part of creating an enabling and conducive environment for humanitarian assistance. The presentation by the Special Envoy, Mary Robinson, for El Nino and Climate, led to broad support by IASC Principals for a new 'Blueprint for Action' to support response to future El Nino and La Nina episodes, and a commitment to maintain momentum in taking forward collectively the 'New Way of Working'. A review of the context and lessons from the Ebola response reinforced the endorsement of new SoPs for Level 3 (L3) Activation Procedures for Infectious Disease Events. The shocking findings of the Humanitarian Women's Network Survey (HWN) of some 1,000 UN and NGO workers of their experience of sexual abuse and harassment in the workplace has promoted immediate attention to this issue by IASC Principals to reinforce existing governance mechanisms, response, and the duty of care to all staff. IASC Principal-level Champions have been appointed, and a joint IASC Principals statement on zero tolerance on sexual abuse and harassment in the humanitarian sector will be issued in January 2017. The summary record of the meeting will be available at: <http://iasc.ch/principals>



Photo credit: UNHCR/Susan Hopper

## IASC Champions on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Abuse in the Humanitarian Sector

IASC Principals welcomed Lindsay Coates, the President of InterAction, and Kate Gilmore, the Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, taking on the roles of Co-Champions on Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Aid Workers in response to the findings from the 2016 Humanitarian Women's Network (HWN) survey on the prevalence of sexual harassment and sexual abuse of female aid-workers by their colleagues in the workplace. They will work with a group of Senior Focal Points from IASC agencies to launch a more detailed survey to provide a deeper analysis of the extent of the issue, and to share and build on existing experience in preventing and tackling this issue within individual organisations, reinforce already-existing governance systems, and increase

## International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) and the Hellenic Red Cross' Game of Life: The story of Sharif

The IFRC and Hellenic Red Cross, in collaboration with London-based comic artist, Karrie Fransman, have produced an animation documenting the journey of 15-year-old Sharif, who fled Afghanistan alone after his entire family was killed. The video will also be hosted on MTV Voices. The link is available [here](#). The animation is available [here](#) with subtitles in English, French, Spanish, Arabic, German and Greek and without subtitles [here](#). It is also available on the [IFRC Youtube channel](#).

## International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent's (IFRC) Healthy Ageing Toolkit

By 2050, the number of individuals aged 60 years or above will have tripled from 600 million in 2000 to two billion; 80 per cent of them will live in low- or middle-income countries. While these statistics highlight the scale of the challenge society faces, an ageing population provides countless opportunities. Older people are, and will continue to be, vital assets to their families, friends and communities. IFRC continues to call for the eradication of all forms of ageism that deny older people dignity, decrease access to care and the right to a just quality of life. The pack contains a [Healthy Ageing Toolkit](#) for facilitators, volunteers and communities, a [Volunteers' Guide](#) and a [Facilitators' Guide](#).

## Launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview 2017

“Around the world, a growing eco-system of humanitarian actors ranging from local communities to national governments, international organizations and the private sector is delivering life-saving assistance and protection to people in need. Their work is more necessary and courageous than ever.” -Stephen O'Brien, Emergency Relief Coordinator. On 5 December, the Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) 2017 was launched in Geneva at an event attended by fifty-five Member States, and more than two hundred humanitarian partners from UN agencies, NGOs and academia. The GHO report provides an overview of global humanitarian needs and funding requirements for 2017 through the inter-agency coordinated appeals.

There is an estimated \$22.2 billion needed in humanitarian funding needed in 2017 in order to reach 92.8 billion people who are in need in 33 countries. As the impacts of climate change become more profound, the effects of natural disasters will become more frequent and more severe. Millions are displaced inside and outside state borders and conflicts last longer and are pushed from their homes due to man-made conflicts that affect entire regions. It is imperative that the humanitarian community demonstrates its solidarity to help those around the world who are affected by conflict and disasters. The 2017 Global Humanitarian Overview and the individual country plans tackle the most pressing humanitarian needs. The humanitarian community is already transforming to ensure a better, faster and more effective delivery of aid, including through the Grand Bargain and the New Way of Working. 2017 will be the highest funding appeal ever. A video of the launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview can be accessed at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDN8FRGHyzQ>



[Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation](#)s are triggered by the declaration of a Level-3 system-wide emergency and conducted within 9 to 12 months from the L3 declaration. Between 2013 and 2015, inter-agency humanitarian evaluations were conducted for three L3 emergencies: Super Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines, and the crises in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. The magnitude of humanitarian crises that took place during those years put a major strain on the humanitarian community, as the system's capacity had never been tested this way before. The video provides an overview of the situations that triggered the L3 emergency response declarations, and tries to answer some critical questions: how relevant and effective were the responses? Were the expected results achieved? What was the level of engagement of national actors and Governments? And which areas need to be strengthened?

The evaluations conclude that, despite tremendous logistical and security challenges, the humanitarian responses saved lives, reduced the effects of the crises on health and food security, and helped avert famine. Despite this success, improvements can be made in the transition from meeting short-term needs and long-term programming to a strong and efficient recovery phase. Valuable lessons were identified working better with national actors, the Government and crisis-affected people. The video can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaRn-5pzzRo&t=19s>

## Humanitarian Leadership - Survey on the role of Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator within the coordination system

ICVA has commissioned a study on the role of Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator within the coordination system. The study is being conducted by an independent research team based in New York, and are conducting a survey to gather the views of humanitarian stakeholders. The survey answers will be submitted anonymously via Survey Monkey. By taking the survey, you will make a valuable contribution to the research. Please use this link to access the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DHC-STUDY-GLOBAL>.

A full description of the study can be found at:

<https://www.icvanetwork.org/system/files/versions/ICVA%20DHC%20study%20-%20August%202016.pdf>

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## IASC PRIORITIES

### IASC Task Team on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action

The Task Team is hiring a consultant to research, prepare and deliver a report that will propose recommendations on the content and structure of the future 'IASC guidelines on inclusion of persons with disabilities in humanitarian action'. Particular attention will be paid to the standards set by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Full terms of reference for the consultancy position, including application instructions, are attached or can be found at: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/opportunities>.

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## Populations and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (AAP/PSEA)

The Task Team met on 8 December in a PSEA-focused meeting. The participants were informed of IOM's role as the liaison between the UN working Group and the IASC to ensure that many of the tools and protocols being produced are aligned, gaps are met and no duplication of efforts or contradictory tools are produced. Also, as a follow-up to the ERC's message to Humanitarian Coordinators on their PSEA responsibilities, UNDP has drafted a similar message to Resident Coordinators. The draft mapping of existing PSEA forums (within the IASC structure, the UN) and the in-country PSEA networks has been finalised. It will be sent out to the in-country networks for their inputs and to task team members in January for their additions. An update was also given on the mapping out currently carried out by Protection Cluster in Malawi. The meeting minutes are available [here](#).

## IASC Reference Group on Principled Humanitarian Action

The IASC Principled Humanitarian Action Reference Group held a retreat on 6 December 2016. During the retreat, the Reference Group took stock of successes and lessons learned of the previous IASC Task Team on Principled Humanitarian Action; discussed the role and value of the Reference Group; developed a shared understanding of trends and priorities in the context of Principled Humanitarian Action and identified objectives and outcomes for 2017. Key priorities, relevant for individual organisations as well as the Reference Group, were identified, including: Counter-terrorism measures/Countering Violent Extremism; Disparity between IHL in principle and practice; Donor-driven system and its effect on PHA; Awareness, application and integration at field level of humanitarian principles, including challenges around humanitarian access. Several concrete proposals for a 2017 work plan were produced, as well as ideas for further discussion and decision by the Reference Group.

Following the retreat, a dialogue was hosted by Handicap International and NRC on "Overcoming Challenges to Principled Humanitarian Action: Potential Pathways Forward". Humanitarians, UN agencies and State representatives came together to reflect on recommendations from the recent joint NRC HI study titled "Challenges to Principled Humanitarian Action: Perspectives from four countries".

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## REPORTS

### World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2016

At OCHA's annual Global Humanitarian Policy Forum, on 12 December 2016, Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson announced the release of OCHA's annual publication *World Humanitarian Data and Trends 2016*. You can now interact with the 2016 report through its companion microsite [www.unocha.org/datatrends2016](http://www.unocha.org/datatrends2016). The report aims to be a one-stop shop for policymakers, researchers and humanitarian practitioners to better understand the evolving humanitarian landscape. A comprehensive dissemination package, that includes an interactive data visualization for the 'country in need', is available at <https://data.humdata.org/organization/un-ocha>

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## FEATURED PRODUCT

## Infectious Disease Events

At their June 2016 meeting, the IASC Principals agreed to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to guide the use of IASC mechanisms in response to large-scale infectious disease events. The SOPs were developed through an extensive process of consultation within the Emergency Directors Group. They adapted the existing protocol for system-wide Level-3 activation to the specificities of a large-scale infectious disease outbreak scenario, and engagement with other relevant actors, and outlined the key steps to be followed, including around the initial assessment of the situation, consultations and decision-making, and set out the main system-wide implications of activation. The IASC Principals endorsed the IASC SOPs in December 2016. The SOPs can be accessed [here](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### IASC Meetings & Events

17 January 2016: IASC Focal Points Meeting

25-26 January: IASC Humanitarian Financing Task Team Retreat

16 February: Meeting of the IASC Senior Focal Points on PSEA

7-8 March: IASC Working Group Meeting

### Other Events

6-10 February: Humanitarian Networks and Partnership Week

28 March: ICVA Annual Conference

We welcome your feedback and input to [iasccorrespondence@un.org](mailto:iasccorrespondence@un.org).



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The IASC was established under General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (1991) as the primary inter-agency coordination mechanism for humanitarian action in complex and major emergencies. It is a unique forum which brings together UN operational agencies and other humanitarian organizations and is supported by the IASC secretariat. Email: [iasccorrespondence@un.org](mailto:iasccorrespondence@un.org)  
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