



With breaking stories and
newswire products from

UN NEWS CENTRE



Improving humanitarian assistance crucial as needs will likely rise – UN official



Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs

19 July 2011 –

Given that humanitarian emergencies around the globe are likely to increase, not decrease, in the future, it is necessary to strengthen partnerships to respond adequately when needs arise, improve preparedness and ensure predictable funding, the United Nations relief chief said today.

“We foresee that humanitarian needs will continue to rise,” Valerie Amos stated in her opening remarks to the humanitarian affairs segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in Geneva.

“Global challenges – such as climate change, volatile food and energy prices, migration, rapid population growth, urbanization and environmental degradation – continue to increase people’s vulnerability and humanitarian needs,” she said.

Ms. Amos, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, highlighted key elements of the Secretary-General’s 2011 report on strengthening the coordination of the UN’s emergency humanitarian assistance.

Between June 2010 and May 2011, the UN responded to more than 30 emergencies, working closely with humanitarian partners in support of governments. The report states that, given the challenges ahead, the UN and its partners will have to continue to adapt, which will require strengthening partnerships with all stakeholders, especially governments.

“This will also help us shift from a reactive system that responds to emergencies to a more prepared and anticipatory system,” said Ms. Amos. “It will also mean that we will have to work with our development partners.

“Humanitarian financing will have to change, especially to ensure predictable and adequate funding for preparedness activities and an effective transition between relief and longer-term recovery,” she added.

It is timely, she noted, that ECOSOC will be discussing two key areas for improving humanitarian assistance highlighted in the report – how to make the existing humanitarian financing system fit for the future, and how to strengthen resilience, preparedness and capacity for response.

“We all need to work together to ensure that we forge stronger partnerships in serving those in need,” stated Ms. Amos, adding that only by doing so will the international community be able to address the enormous challenges and increasing caseloads which it may encounter in the future.

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[UN chief urges increased, predictable funding to tackle humanitarian crises](#)