UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF CONCLUDES VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

(Tehran, 5 September 2016): UN humanitarian chief Stephen O’Brien today concluded a two-day visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran where he met with senior officials in Tehran including Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ambassador Sadegh Hossein Jaberi Ansari; His Excellency Dr. Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli, Minister of Interior; Special Advisor to the Supreme Leader Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati; His Excellency Mr. Esmail Najjar, Head of the National Disaster Management Organization; Dr. Amir Mohsen Ziaie, President of the Iranian Red Crescent Society; General Gholamreza Jalali, Head of the Passive Defense Organization; and humanitarian partners.

Mr. O’Brien’s discussions with Iranian officials focused on expanding regional cooperation on humanitarian assistance and strengthening the partnership between Iran and the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) especially on preparedness for and response to natural disasters in the Middle East.

“It was an excellent opportunity to discuss Iran’s considerable experience and expertise in disaster management and humanitarian response, from which we have much to learn,” said Mr. O’Brien at the end of his first visit to Iran as UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. “I look forward to working more closely with our Iranian partners to further improve the international humanitarian system, so we can respond effectively, efficiently and fast to crises now and in the future”.

During his visit, Mr. O’Brien also discussed humanitarian issues and concerns in Iraq, Syria and Yemen and urged the Iranian Government to use its political influence to help the humanitarian community’s principled assistance and protection to all people in need.

“Conflicts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq continue to affect the whole region with millions of people displaced at home and fleeing across borders to safety in neighbouring countries. Iran has a very important role to play in helping us gain better access for humanitarian organizations in the region and elsewhere,” Mr. O’Brien said.