

**UN HUMANITARIAN CHIEF CALLS FOR SCALING UP SUPPORT TO MORE THAN ONE MILLION PEOPLE ON THE MOVE IN AFGHANISTAN**

(Kabul, 7 September 2016) - The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Stephen O'Brien, today called on the international community to urgently scale up support to over one million people anticipated to be displaced internally and across borders by the end of the year.

Afghanistan is facing a humanitarian crisis as highly vulnerable families will experience the severity of Afghan winter, many for the first time. Over 5,000 displaced Afghans are returning from Pakistan every day. As a result of this sudden influx of returnees, the Humanitarian Community in Afghanistan decided to launch a Flash Appeal requesting around US\$150 million to support the humanitarian response to meet the needs of the spike in numbers of new people on the move, including new, assisted and undocumented Afghan returnees.

"Families have lost their homes and livelihoods. Displaced people are living in tents, unable to feed their children and have had little or no formal education. This cyclical pattern of prolonged conflict must end to avoid another generation of children being lost to war and suffering," said the UN humanitarian chief concluding his two-day visit to Afghanistan.

During his mission to Afghanistan, Mr. O'Brien met with humanitarian partners, Government officials and the diplomatic community and visited displaced families affected by the continued conflict.

The humanitarian impact of this prolonged conflict in Afghanistan is severe. More than 1.1 million people have been displaced from their homes by the conflict, including more than 245,000 people since the beginning of 2016. As the conflict ensues, humanitarian needs are increasing and access constraints have escalated.

Alarming levels of malnutrition affect 2.7 million people including a million children under the age of five. Only 35 per cent of children with severe acute malnutrition are being reached and of those, only 25 per cent are actually cured. "More must be done to alleviate children's suffering and protect them from dying," Mr. O'Brien said.

Mr. O'Brien called on government, donors, international community and humanitarian partners to commit to saving lives through better health care services and tackling widespread malnutrition – a silent humanitarian emergency - which claims more lives of children than the current conflict in Afghanistan.

"Now more than ever the international community must remain steadfast in support of the people of Afghanistan to provide for displaced families, new returnees and work to tackle the alarming malnutrition crisis to prevent more than 126,000 children from dying this year," said the UN Humanitarian Chief, Stephen O'Brien.

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