

**Statement to Press by Emergency Relief Coordinator  
Valerie Amos  
World Humanitarian Day  
Press conference, New York, 19 August 2011**

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Thank you very much and I'm very pleased to be here talking about World Humanitarian Day with my colleague Tony Lake of UNICEF.

Today, World Humanitarian Day, is the day that the United Nations and partners mark events around the world, and we're doing that from Australia to Afghanistan, in parks and offices, on the radio and on Twitter.

It's our chance to pay tribute to the colleagues we have lost. Colleagues in Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Congo, Haiti in recent years, and we also celebrate the achievements of the thousands of aid workers at work today. We thank them for their service. And of course we must do more to protect them from harm.

We've just launched the World Humanitarian Day song, 'If I Could Change', sung by Sweet Rush from Somalia, Salman Ahmed from Pakistan, and Jamaica's Ziggy Marley, among others, and produced by Haiti's Jerry Wonda. It's a song that we will play to you at the end of the press conference.

I hope that the song will inspire a new generation of humanitarian workers – and indeed inspire people everywhere to get involved: it's all about the fact that we can all change our world for the better.

The theme for this year's World Humanitarian Day is 'people helping people', and as UN agencies, the Red Cross and NGOs urgently scale up help for the millions of people affected by drought and famine across the Horn of Africa, this is an opportunity to reflect on the life-saving work aid workers do, often in dangerous environments in their own communities, or far from home.

More than twelve million people need our help in Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti. The situation in Somalia is particularly grave, and there is now famine in five regions, and it continues to spread.

We're all working as quickly as we can to provide life-saving aid and protection in the capital Mogadishu, across the border in refugee camps in Kenya and Ethiopia, and increasingly in the south, in Al-Shabaab controlled areas.

But we're still not reaching enough people. Donors and the public have continued to give generously but we still need more than a billion dollars to provide all the aid that is needed.

We need to keep attention focused on the situation in the Horn of Africa. We need to show people how they can help, whether it's by giving money or by volunteering, or by spreading the word.

Today is about remembering and recognizing humanitarian workers all over the world, but it's also about remembering the people in need. We have to do all we can to help the people of the Horn of Africa.

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