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Subject: Humanitarian Strategic

Dear

Gregoire

I hope that this message finds you well despite these difficult times. We have all been faced with extraordinary challenges this spring, but I hope that we will get out

of this situation with further clarity on what is fundamentally important in our work and our lives.

With this message, I would like to brief you on the outcome of Sida's review process of its Strategic Partnership, which is conducted in parallel

with preparations for the humanitarian strategy 2021 – 2025.

Sida's humanitarian assistance is provided through a Strategic Partnership with no less than 20 humanitarian organizations; 7 multilateral organizations, 11 NGOs and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB). The current partnership was established in 2014,

with the intention of undertaking a comprehensive review already in 2017 in preparation for the humanitarian strategy 2017 - 2020. However, a number of organizations considered the review to be premature, hence we decided to postpone the overall process to

2019, in line with the upcoming humanitarian strategy 2021 - 2025.

In light of the new strategy, Sida has devoted considerable effort and time to evaluate its own

internal working modalities for humanitarian response efficiency as well as the

humanitarian strategic partnership.

Sida's internal work has mainly focused on 5 distinct areas; 1) Strengthened *global humanitarian allocation model and ensuring its firm adherence to the 4 humanitarian principles* and mainly the principle of impartiality, through humanitarian indicators

that are analyzed objectively for about 30 crises on annual basis, B) Ensuring that

humanitarian aid reaches those with the most severe humanitarian needs, through a comprehensive revision of the internal analysis tool "Sida's Humanitarian Crises Analysis" for the 15 largest crises respectively. For example, these analysis now include

maps showing humanitarian needs and also where exactly Sida directs its humanitarian assistance, and where monitoring is conducted, C)

Early disbursement of funds, which has been possible through a comprehensive shift in work processes enabling to jump to 100% disbursement of funds in Q1 in 2019 and 2020 (from 65% in 2016), as well as enabling 150 - 200 RRM per year which promotes rapid

humanitarian response within 24 hours, D) Analysis of needs and follow-up of the response in difficult contexts by visiting about *100 projects in hard-to-reach areas* per year and D) a clear commitment to

resilience by supporting over 30 projects worth of about 500 MSEK through humanitarian assistance, which is in addition to the close cooperation with about 15 country strategies to enable development funding in fragile settings.

The purpose of the work described above is first and foremost to enable Sida's humanitarian partners to provide timely assistance to those in most severe needs; whether through an acute humanitarian response or a resilience programme. We have throughout this

strategy period worked hand-in-hand with our strategic partners to progressively improve and finetune our working modalities for the purpose of a relevant, efficient and timely humanitarian response. And throughout the years we have been humbled by the invaluable

work you conduct, often in the most difficult settings.

But that work needs to be continued, and is ever more important in the light of the following 4 trends:

1. *Surge in humanitarian needs in hard-to-reach areas*; throughout the strategy period around 10 million people with humanitarian needs were/are not reached due to hindered humanitarian access. Many times these people have the most severe humanitarian

needs, but remain completely or partially without humanitarian assistance. This is despite the fact that numerous humanitarian agencies can be present in the country – yet with no or little access to those in most need.

2. *Increased number of armed conflicts, which stresses our obligation to provide genuine protection*

(i.e. the *prevention* of violations). After some years of decline in armed conflicts, conflicts are now on the rise. At the beginning of 2019, there were

41 active highly violent conflicts, an increase from 36 at the beginning of the previous year.

This puts an unprecedented pressure on humanitarians to provide assistance in the most difficult settings. This also entails increased risks of course, and 2020 was a tragic year for

humanitarian personnel with over 100 relief workers who lost their lives in service. At the same time, at least half a million people have lost their lives in war-torn areas in recent years alone, despite the fact that most humanitarian organizations are present

in the country and almost all with large "protection programs". While the humanitarian community has made progress in providing assistance, I think we all agree that the humanitarian community still has a way to go in terms of protection and particularly prevention

of violations.

3. *Increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters*.

For example, there was a threefold increase in natural disasters between 2000 to 2009 compared to the period between 1980 and 1989.

This places higher demands on multisectoral humanitarian interventions that involve several sectors simultaneously (such as water / sanitation

and food security and health and education, etc.). This approach is even more important in multi-year resilience programme aimed at sustainable solutions and an approach leading to phasing out of humanitarian assistance and transitioning

to development.

4. *Widening gap between the number of people in need of humanitarian aid and available resources,*

as the HRP's are on average 60% funded. This calls on humanitarian donors in particular to secure funding for humanitarian aid in accordance with the principle of impartiality, with its compelling urge for humanitarian action based on "need alone" prioritizing

the "most severe cases of distress".

Given these 4 trends, we anticipate that Sida's humanitarian assistance will in the coming years be directed even further towards the most vulnerable people with the

most severe humanitarian needs. This strategic direction has of course been discussed with you all in the 3 previous

Strategic Partnership Meetings and also validated during recent *Humanitarian Stakeholder Meeting* organized by Sida and which took place in June 2020. In this meeting, there were strong affirmation of Sida's unique position as a humanitarian donor

firmly anchored in four humanitarian principles. A position we find increasingly difficult, given the increased politicization of humanitarian aid.

When it comes to Sida's analysis of the Strategic Partnership, it has been quite an extensive undertaking, including: A)

Internal analysis by the humanitarian team in Stockholm, based on experience ranging from 2013 until today, B) In parallel, the same analysis was carried out together with about

14 *Swedish Embassies*, C) *Overview of financing trends to organizations* based on Sida's annual needs analysis, the "Humanitarian Crises Analysis", D) Field visits, as Sida visited more than

300 *projects during the strategy period, with focus on hard to reach areas*, and E) the

global evaluation where ITAD conducted a comparative analysis of all strategic partners. The final draft has already been shared but the final evaluation will be sent to you by end of July.

In the light of all of the above, and the very thorough process we have conducted, I wish to inform you that IOM have regretfully not been selected for renewed Strategic

Partnership 2021 – 2025. Mainly, this is due to the fact that the humanitarian budget is under severe constraints and that we believe that IOM would be in a good position to receive funding from development strategies. We will support IOM, by establishing

contacts with Sida's development strategies and together with you introduce your work to no less than 14 development strategies in the upcoming humanitarian field days, where around 14 Embassies participate. We will also we will be able to extend our Agreement

with IOM till 2021. This will be discussed in further detail in the upcoming yearly meeting with in early fall.

Let me also take the opportunity to thank you for your kind collaboration throughout the process.

Best Wishes

Susanne