

Chair's Summary

G20 Ministerial Event

“The role of logistics in preparedness and response for Covid-19 pandemic and future humanitarian and health crisis”

A G20 ministerial event on “the role of logistics in preparedness and response for Covid-19 pandemic and future humanitarian and health crises” was held on the 30th of June in San Vito dei Normanni (Brindisi), at the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot premises (UNHRD/Brindisi). The meeting was co-organized by Italy and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and co-chaired by the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr. Luigi Di Maio, and by the Executive Director of WFP, Mr. David Beasley. It was moderated by the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent and President of the Italian Red Cross, Ms. Francesco Rocca. The Italian Deputy Minister for Development Cooperation, Ms. Marina Sereni, wrapped up the debate.

The summary aims to summarize the key outcomes at the meeting based on the understanding and responsibility of the Chair.

The event was an opportunity to exchange experiences, lessons learnt and good practices on preparedness and response to Covid-19 and other emergencies. It contributed to the development of a greater understanding of the United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) Network and its capabilities in the context of humanitarian logistics.

It also showcased the importance of logistics preparedness and response in an increasingly complex environment, where ongoing crises have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Covid-19 has also made it increasingly challenging to carry out humanitarian operations, and has seen the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance increase while progress towards development has been undermined.

The debate was enriched by suggestions and “food for thought” based on a common experience in different regions of the world.

Member States and International and Regional Organizations shared their efforts in addressing the Covid-19 emergency at national, regional and international level in a spirit of solidarity and mutual collaboration. The meeting acknowledged the importance of working together to enhance resilience in a global and interconnected world, with values of collaboration and solidarity at the forefront.

The meeting:

- underlined how the pandemic challenged the resilience of people and societies worldwide, in particular in fragile and conflict-affected situations. The indirect effects of Covid-19 have been widely felt in relation to malnutrition and food security. Not only has Covid-19 multiplied poverty and inequality, but it has also emphasized the critical need to continue addressing the most urgent non-Covid-19 related humanitarian needs.
- acknowledged the fundamental role of preparedness, anticipatory action and disaster risk reduction, including the pre-positioning of emergency stockpiles, to address future humanitarian and health crises. It also acknowledged the importance of adequate training for humanitarian and health workers; the contribution of innovation, technology and digitalization in humanitarian action; and the need to identify shared operational procedures and adapt customs regulations;
- underlined the need for strengthened coordination at a global, regional and local level as well as collaboration and complementarity between humanitarian, development and health programmes. The role of partnerships between public and private logistics providers was also emphasized;
- highlighted the outstanding contribution provided by “first responders”, local actors, NGOs and national societies in addressing the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the importance of supporting the localization of humanitarian aid;
- recalled the need to ensure full and unhindered humanitarian access and respect for International Humanitarian Law, as well as the importance for restrictive measures not to jeopardize the supply of humanitarian aid. Equitable access to vaccines and local and regional production were also underlined;
- emphasized the role of the UNHRD Network worldwide in creating synergies and efficiencies among its partners, in particular among UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes.

An appeal to expand the humanitarian donor base to support logistics system and to enhance quality and multiyear funding was launched in order to address the lack of adequate financial resources in humanitarian logistics and, more broadly, in the humanitarian field.

Great appreciation was expressed for the extraordinary work undertaken by WFP, the UN Agencies and Funds as well the international and regional organizations attending the G20 meeting in containing and fighting the Covid-19 pandemic (List of participants attached).

The Presidency expressed its wish that the debate on humanitarian logistics could continue in the G20 setting or in other fora in the future.