UNOG Bi-weekly press briefing: COVID-19 Preparedness - OCHA

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Shotlist


2. Wide shot: Press Room III, with four people visible in shot, including three on podium.

3. Medium wide shot: Alessandra Vellucci, Director of the Information Service at UN Geneva, with Jens Laerke, Deputy Spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) sitting some distance away to her left. A projector screen indicating “UNIS GENEVA Bi-weekly Press Briefing” is shown to rear.

4. SOUNDBIT (EN) - Deputy spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Jens Laerke: “The coronavirus pandemic now has a foothold in more than 140 countries. Some of these are countries that are already in humanitarian crises, due to conflicts, natural disasters and climate change.”

5. Medium wide shot: podium speakers seated some distance apart.
6. **SOUNDBITE (EN)** - Deputy spokesperson for the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Jens Laerke: “More than 100 million people rely on support from the United Nations humanitarian agencies. OCHA’s top priority is to ensure that we do all we can in order to keep providing life-saving help to those people.”

7. Close-up: microphones, empty tables in background, podium speakers to rear, spaced apart from each other.

8. **SOUNDBITE (EN)** Jens Laerke/OCHA: “From Geneva, we have dedicated teams which are looking exactly at these practical implications on humanitarian operations, on logistics, on supply chains, and so on and so forth. So, it is too early to tell you exactly what is going to be the fallout of this on our operations, but we are monitoring it very, very closely.”

9. Close-up: Jens Laerke, spokesperson for OCHA, speaking into microphone at podium, other podium speakers to rear.

10. **SOUNDBITE (EN)** Jens Laerke/OCHA: “The emergency relief coordinator Mark Lowcock has already released $15 million from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund to help fund WHO and UNICEF’s efforts to contain the virus in vulnerable countries. Other OCHA-managed funds in individual countries are also stepping up and country-based pool funds have released money to scale up immediate preparedness in Afghanistan, Sudan and Jordan.”

11. Medium shot: UNTV camera in foreground and to rear, empty chairs.

11. Wide shot: rows of empty chairs, podium speakers to rear.

Story

Millions of people in crises will need UN humanitarian aid in midst of COVID-19 pandemic

More than 100 million people around the world are relying on life-saving support from the United Nations and will continue to need this as the COVID-19 spreads, a spokesman of the UN Office for Humanitarian Coordination (OCHA) said at a press conference in Geneva on Tuesday.

The Press was following the briefing remotely after Swiss authorities yesterday imposed new measures to limit meetings to no more than five people, part of the coronavirus response in the country.

“The UN office for Humanitarian Coordination (OCHA) is determined that crucial line saving work for the world's most vulnerable communities must be sustained,” said spokesperson Jens Laerke. “That means continuing focus on coordination across the group of humanitarian system so that we have the resources they need and maintaining effective humanitarian operations leaving no one behind.”

The OCHA spokesman said that the UN’s top priority is to ensure that everything possible is done to keep providing life-saving help for these vulnerable people.

“We are working closely with the United Nations Member States and the private sector to ensure funding for the equipment is available to fight COVID-19 in the world’s most vulnerable countries,” Mr. Laerke said.

“The WHO has appealed for $675 million to fund the response to the COVID-19 pandemic,” he remarked, while adding that work is ongoing to coordinate a consolidated global humanitarian appeal.

UN agencies are currently assessing where and how humanitarian operations on the ground are being disrupted to identify solutions as quickly as possible.

“We are taking precautions to ensure the safety of staff and the people we serve,” Mr Laerke said, while “helping to raise awareness among vulnerable communities to inform them of how to protect themselves from COVID-19”.