

17th December, 2024

Subject: Open Letter on Prioritising Child Protection in Humanitarian Action – Welcoming Your Leadership

Dear Mr. Fletcher,

We welcome you to your new roles as United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, which comes at a time of unprecedented challenges for the humanitarian movement.

We are writing to you on behalf of the [Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#) (the Alliance), and the [Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility](#) (CP AoR). The Alliance serves as the normative body for the Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPHA) sector, representing a network of over 300 organisations, while the Global CP AoR leads and supports the coordination of child protection responses as part of the cluster system. Together, we work to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children in conflict and other humanitarian crises. Our work pursues life-saving actions, such as preventing and responding to child recruitment and use into armed forces and groups, as well as promoting children's broader well-being.

We deeply appreciate the emphasis you placed on children and their protection at the launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview 2025, and we look forward to your continued leadership and commitment. **Children suffer first and most in crises, making [every humanitarian crisis a child protection crisis](#).**

A humanitarian system that systematically places [children and their protection at the centre of its efforts](#) will achieve better outcomes not only for children, but also for their families, communities, and broader societies. This provides a concrete path to operationalise the Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action. Protecting children is critical for survival, hope, and resilience, breaking cycles of violence and laying the foundation for peaceful societies. **We cannot continue with business as usual**; it is time to rethink how we holistically address the needs and contribute to the realization of the rights of the most vulnerable, particularly children.

As you embark on your new role, we encourage you to take concrete actions to ensure children and their protection are a central component of humanitarian action, including coordination, and that all humanitarian actors are accountable to children and their protection, including:

1. **Acknowledge child protection as essential and life-saving:** Make child protection a strategic priority in your global advocacy and resource mobilisation efforts and [ensure child protection receives proportional funding within all UN coordinated appeals, including Humanitarian Response Plans and Flash Appeals.](#)

2. **Prioritise children and their protection within humanitarian leadership:**
 - Ensure the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals prioritise child protection in strategic policy decisions, make it a standing agenda item in their meetings, and adopt a roadmap with concrete actions to operationalise this priority.

 - At the country level, request Humanitarian Coordinators (HCs) and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) to prioritise child protection throughout the humanitarian programme cycle—including preparedness, early warning, anticipatory action, and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus—in line with the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

3. **Ensure accountability to children through incorporating a child rights-based approach:** [Implement the UN Secretary-General’s call to strengthen a child rights-based approach across the UN system](#), integrating child rights—including the right to protection—throughout the humanitarian architecture.

4. **Underpin any transformational approaches to humanitarian coordination with clear accountability for the protection of children:** Ensure that any transformational approaches to the humanitarian architecture and system is underpinned by clear accountability, transparency and the centrality of children and their protection.

We remain fully committed to supporting you in these efforts and are available to provide any support in your endeavours as you deem suitable and helpful.

Again - we welcome you to your roles and we look forward to your leadership.

Sincerely,

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

The Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility