



87 Million Lives: Delivering on the Promise

Ministerial-Level Side Event of the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Monday, 21 September 2026 | 16:30 – 18:00 | Millennium Hilton New York One UN Plaza

Concept Note

1. Purpose

On 8 December 2025, the Emergency Relief Coordinator launched the 2026 Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO) and the **87 Million Lives** campaign, led with the IASC, to mobilize **US\$23 billion** for hyper-prioritized life-saving assistance to the **87 million people in greatest need**, within the broader GHO target of **135 million people**. By early September, [total potential support](#) had surpassed **US\$13 billion while a gap of well over US\$11 billion remains**.

Reaching the 87 million people most in need takes more than funding. It demands safe, unimpeded humanitarian access, respect for international humanitarian law, and protection of civilians and aid workers. In the final quarter of 2026, financial support must be matched by targeted diplomacy that improves access, strengthens protection, and extends humanitarian reach.

The event is a moment of recognition, accountability and action, built around one urgent question: **what will it take to reach the 87 million people hardest hit by crisis** — and who can make it happen? It **will recognize** the Member States, refugee-hosting countries, regional partners, private sector and philanthropists, and others supporting the humanitarian response; show (not tell), through data, league tables and human testimony, **what funding has delivered** — and what the gap is costing; and **mobilize commitments** for the final quarter of 2026. The message is clear: reaching people requires more than money. It demands decisive action to close funding gaps, secure access and strengthen protection.

2. Format

This tightly structured 90-minute event will comprise:

- 1. Opening and scene-setting (5 minutes):** Mr. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator will open the event and introduce a visually powerful film to set the tone and to bring to life why reaching 87 million people is a test to our humanity; followed by a visual presentation on the status of GHO co-presented by USG Fletcher and **H.E. Ms. Hadja Lahbib, European Commissioner for Equality; Preparedness and Crisis Management, European Commission**.
- 2. Hard Talk on delivering on the promise (80 minutes):** USG/ERC Fletcher, and **H.E. Mr. Sjoerd Sjoerdsma, Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands** will co-moderate dynamic sessions focused on delivering for the 87 million people most in need. Centered around the [Humanitarian Reset](#) pillars - Defend, Define, Devolve, and Deliver, the discussions will confront the sectors toughest questions and choices. Each session will bring together representatives from frontline organizations, the UN and humanitarian agencies, donor and host governments, and the private sector.
- 3. Closing (5 minutes):** The event will close with [calls to action on funding, advocacy, and access diplomacy](#).

3. Co-Hosting and Participation

Co-hosts: The Netherlands, the European Union and OCHA

Participation: Speakers are limited to Ministerial level, and representatives of IASC Principals and heads of frontline organizations, private sector executives and philanthropic leaders.

Registration: by Tuesday, 15 September via [Link](#).

Website: [87 Million Lives: Delivering on the Promise](#) | [OCHA](#) **Background and resources:** [Humanitarian Reset](#)

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