FOGGS | Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability

Brussels, 16 March 2023

Thank you, Dear SOTF Co-facilitators,

Re: The Secretary-General's policy brief on an Emergency Platform (A/77/CRP.1/Add.1)

In our view, the Secretary-General does not need any authorization for convening the UN system for better responding to emergencies. In fact, there is a need to map, streamline and strengthen *existing* early warning and response mechanisms, like OCHA, the Interagency Standing Committee and the CEB - Chief Executives Board for Coordination, *not* reinvent the wheel. It is all within the power of the Secretary-General, as Chief Administrative Officer of the Organization and *primus inter pares* among the Executive Heads of the UN system, to devise cooperation protocols, convene agencies and include other actors, who may be able to contribute to addressing an emergency.

Under previous UN Administrations one would have expected this not to be a Policy Brief for debate but a well thought-through operational plan by the Secretary-General on how he intends to improve the services the UN, its departments, funds and programmes and its sister specialized agencies offer to Member States and the citizens of the world in terms of early warning and response to today's complex, multidimensional emergencies. Of course, the Secretary-General would need authorization from the UN membership if additional resources were required, but apparently this is not necessarily the case.

The lessons drawn in the Policy Brief from the shortcomings in addressing the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic should include the failure of utilizing effectively the capacities of the UN system. The COVAX arrangement, the subpar performance of which is not directly acknowledged in the Brief, cannot serve as a model for further subcontracting public actor responsibilities to private actors. It is rather an example of how *not* to address emergencies. And in this light, any blanket authorization or standing authority to the UN Secretary-General to engage private entities in any coordination mechanism like an Emergency Platform is not advisable, in view of very probable conflicts of interest of such private entities.

While the Secretary-General should do his part to better organize and deploy the UN operational machinery, convening the agencies needed for an effective intervention in view of an emergency, the Member States need to consider their own decision-making mechanisms to politically guide the response of the UN system across sectors. In that regard, there is clearly a need for an intergovernmental body to supervise action by the UN system and to coordinate the multilateral organisations in addressing challenges to human security, with adequate arrangements for the inclusion in consultations and implementation

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of civil society and other non-state actors. To that end, FOGGS has proposed the establishment of a Global Resilience Council (GRC), like a "UN Security Council for non-military threats".

We hope that more energy will be spent on debating and hopefully agreeing on and shaping such an intergovernmental body, which can be a UN General Assembly subsidiary body, as a major outcome of the Summit of the Future, rather than mulling over the details of an Emergency Platform that could be the Secretariat's mechanism for implementing the decisions of a GRC.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of the positions presented above.

Yours sincerely,



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Executive Director

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