CLOSING REMARKS
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Partnering with the Private Sector:
How Data Can Improve Humanitarian Response

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Excellences, distinguished speakers, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the United Nations Development Programme and the Crisis Bureau, it is my pleasure and privilege to make the closing remarks for this session.

We have both reviewed the challenges created by large-scale disasters, as well as outlined opportunities that lie ahead in using new technologies and sources of data to inform humanitarian decision-making and address the needs of affected people in recovery efforts.

Effective response starts with a map and up-to-date information.

Sharing data, predictive tools and information, where and when they are needed, is essential. We all are only too aware that the necessary data are often scattered among numerous agencies.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must also recognize and welcome innovation, and the value of concerted efforts and partnership between ourselves and the private sector.
OCHA’s Centre for Humanitarian Data does exactly this. As my distinguished colleague Ms. Mueller highlighted, the Centre supports the humanitarian community by providing access to data that they need to make informed decisions.

From Somalia to Bangladesh, Haiti to the Philippines, more than 180 organizations are sharing data on the Centre’s Humanitarian Data Exchange platform. The private sector is contributing data, expertise, and other support.

Today, we heard of examples from the Asia Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management, Transparenta.MX, Microsoft, the American Red Cross and Amazon on how companies have supported emergency response and recovery efforts. It is evident that we can greatly benefit from business expertise in data management and thus we are ardent supporters of public-private partnerships.

The private sector is an indispensable partner, yet one that has too often been overlooked. With their on-the-ground networks, expertise and ability to swiftly adapt and innovate, companies play an integral role in ensuring that lives and assets are saved, and that nations can recover from shocks more rapidly. Importantly, the private sector contributes to the resilience of affected communities, where it can avoid market disruption due to conflict or disaster.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the commitment of 13 private sector networks to the Connecting Business initiative – one of the first joint partnerships between the United Nations’ development and humanitarian arms.

What makes this partnership so unique is that it creates a clear entry point for the private sector to collectively engage in disaster reduction, emergency
preparedness, response and recovery. But equally importantly, it has also created a *momentum.*

Last year, eight of the 13 private sector networks supported by CBi responded to emergencies in their respective countries. They participated in joint needs assessments, channeled financial and in-kind contributions to emergency response, built information systems and re-built critical infrastructure.

As we speak, a bright example is the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation – a CBi Member Network – which actively participates in relief operations in areas impacted by the super typhoon Manghut. Philippine private companies were also able to prepare themselves for the onslaught of the typhoon with the PDRF’s Emergency Operations Center, the first of its kind in the world to be run by the private sector, that monitors hazards around the clock and provides risk analysis.

**Conclusion**

Let me conclude by saying that this is an inspiring foundation on which we can build, working to deepen the partnership between ourselves and the private sector as we respond to crises in the years to come. I believe that together, we will be able to respond faster and more effectively, saving countless lives, minimising impact from disasters and other emergencies on communities, and making them more resilient to future shocks.

Thank you.