STATEMENT

By

HE. Mr. Y. Halit Çevik
Permanent Representative of Turkey
to the United Nations

at the

69th General Assembly Plenary Meeting

on agenda item 69:
“Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance”

12 December 2014, New York
Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the progress of humanitarian activities of the UN system. We also would like to commend the efforts of the outgoing Under-Secretary-General Ms. Valerie Amos for her efforts to ensure effective coordination in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President,

The world continues to face increasing number of natural and man-made disasters. Although our collective capacity to respond to these challenges increases in parallel manner, significant loss of life, damage and the long lasting impacts caused by various humanitarian crisis remain a cause of grave concern. The effective coordination of humanitarian assistance and cooperation among relevant stakeholders are essential. OCHA plays a central role in realizing these goals and improving the global humanitarian community to better function together.

Mr. President,

In parallel to the change in the nature of the humanitarian crises, the humanitarian system must evolve appropriately to adapt itself to better respond to those in need. We all must be cognizant of the fact that, humanitarian aid and engagement not only mean reaching to those in need, but also investing in peace and security. There is a strong link between them. With this understanding, we commend the Secretary-General for his initiative to hold the first World Humanitarian Summit that will be held in Turkey in 2016.

Turkey continues to support the Summit Secretariat in its efforts to maintain and develop a holistic, inclusive and comprehensive approach in the preparation process. We look forward to working together with all member states, UN agencies and humanitarian partners, including civil society and NGOs.

The Summit process, which is well underway, enables member states and all relevant stakeholders to address the issues of aid effectiveness, serving the people in need, innovation and risk management, with the aim of sharing best practices and broadening partnerships in the humanitarian field.
Adopting a comprehensive approach in humanitarian efforts, including disaster risk management, building resilience of communities and institutions as well as early response and recovery, is necessary.

We believe that the World Humanitarian Summit, together with post-2015 development agenda efforts, including work on SDGs, Climate Change and the post-Hyogo framework for disaster risk reduction will mark a new era in our understanding and conduct of risk management and humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President,

The crisis in Syria enters to its fourth year, the suffering of the Syrian people continues while the ramifications of the conflict become more alarming. As our hopes continue to find a political and long-lasting solution to the crisis in Syria, Turkey will continue to provide necessary assistance to the Syrian people in close cooperation with the UN agencies. Much needed support of the international community has to increase to address the needs of Syrians while building the resilience of host communities that endure tremendous pressures.

Mr. President,

Since the beginning of the crisis Turkey has so far spent more than 4.5 billion dollars from the national budget for Syrians in Turkey. However, our assistance to other humanitarian emergencies continue, covering a wide geography including Central African Republic, Iraq, Myanmar, Somalia and Ukraine. The Global Humanitarian Assistance Report indicates that Turkey became the third largest government donor in 2013.

As part of our response to the most recent Ebola outbreak, we aim to continue our bilateral assistance to the most affected countries and support the African Union, while engaging with our partners during our G-20 Presidency to explore new flexible emergency response mechanisms to address the economic and social effects of similar crisis.

Turkey has also been among the contributors to the “Central Emergency Response Fund”. Turkish contributions to the Fund have now reached 2.25 million US Dollars since the Fund’s inception.

Turkey is also willing to exchange experience and knowledge on humanitarian issues. The HOPEFOR initiative, co-sponsored by Turkey, Dominican Republic and
Qatar, is a case in point. The Initiative aims to strengthen coordination of civil and military assets in natural disaster relief operations.

I thank you for your attention.