

## **Protecting the humanitarian space means protecting WFP's humanitarian work – side event on political and operational ways to safeguarding humanitarian action**

Side event first regular session of the Executive Board  
Tuesday, 1 March 2022, 13:30–14:30  
Virtual event on Zoom

### **Context**

Attacks directed against humanitarian workers, in blatant violation of international humanitarian law, as well as legal and bureaucratic obstacles impeding the delivery of assistance, result in the shrinking of the humanitarian space. The looting of two WFP warehouses in El Fasher, North Darfur, on 29 December 2021, is just one recent example. WFP is taking measures to adapt to this reality. UNHAS, for instance, is an essential tool to deliver assistance despite the shrinking of the humanitarian space. Nevertheless, it is all the more necessary to reverse this trend as humanitarian needs have reached a record high.

Therefore, Germany and France are organizing in the margins of this Executive Board a side-event focusing on the “Call for Action to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law and principled humanitarian action” (CfA). This political declaration, launched by our two countries in September 2019, has so far been endorsed by 53 signatories.

### **Objectives**

On the one side, France and Germany will present their ideas on how to further operationalize the CfA in order to help preserving the humanitarian space. On the other side, an overview of field-level challenges from WFP will provide evidence for the most pressing needs to counter the shrinking of the humanitarian space. The experiences of two NGOs that are leading efforts on the protection of humanitarian space, Geneva Call (GC) and the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN), will further illustrate efforts. It is GC's mission to spread knowledge about international humanitarian law and it is now focusing on preventing starvation with a new “Deed of Commitment”. CCHN helps humanitarian organizations to further professionalize their access negotiations and hence to counter the shrinking of the humanitarian space.

## **Agenda**

### **Welcoming remarks**

- Moderator: Ramón Lohmar, Alternate Permanent Representative of Germany

### **Introduction**

- Mr Amir Abdulla, Deputy Executive Director, WFP

### **France: programmatic proposals to strengthen the humanitarian space**

- Her Excellency Céline Jurgensen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of France

### **Germany: programmatic proposals to strengthen the humanitarian space**

- H.E. Ulrich Seidenberger, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany

### **Field perspectives on challenges to maintaining humanitarian space**

- Ms Margot Van der Velden, Director, Emergency Operations Division, WFP

### **Dissemination of international humanitarian law to prevent starvation**

- Mr Hichem Khadhraoui, Director of Operations, GC

### **Defending the humanitarian space through professionalized negotiation**

- Ms Joëlle Germanier, Director, CCHN

### **Interventions and questions from the participants of the WFP Executive Board meeting**

### **Reactions by speakers**

### **Closing remarks**

- Moderator: Ramón Lohmar, Alternate Permanent Representative of Germany

We kindly ask you to register your intervention with the German ([pol-1-io@rom.auswaertiges-amt.de](mailto:pol-1-io@rom.auswaertiges-amt.de)) and French ([thomas.sauvageot@diplomatie.gouv.fr](mailto:thomas.sauvageot@diplomatie.gouv.fr)) missions.