



European Humanitarian Forum

Closing Session

24 March 2022, 17:15-17:45

Panelists: President Ursula von der Leyen (video), President Emmanuel Macron (video), Minister Matilda Ernkrans, Commissioner Janez Lenarčič.

Executive Summary:

The closing ceremony was the opportunity to take stock on the discussions over the past two days as well as pave the way forward.

President Ursula von der Leyen put emphasis on the European support to Ukraine in what is the worst humanitarian crisis on European soil in decades. She announced that the European Union would support Member States welcoming refugees with additional EUR 3 billion. The President stressed that the crisis in Ukraine could have terrible consequences beyond Europe and in particular on food security. She reminded that other crises are occurring around the globe in a period with an unprecedented number of refugees. President von der Leyen called upon States to step up their contributions to humanitarian aid.

President of the French Republic, Emmanuel Macron, highlighted the importance of respect for International Humanitarian Law and, referring to Ukraine, how the humanitarian space is increasingly under threat. He recalled France's commitment to humanitarian aid and pointed to the Call for Humanitarian Action launched together with Germany. President Macron expressed support for the creation of a European response capacity mechanism to humanitarian crises and emphasised the need to mitigate and address the risks and consequences of Climate Change. He also called for the EU and its Member States to build "a genuine common humanitarian policy".

Swedish Minister Matilda Ernkrans, focussed on Russia's aggression against Ukraine. She underlined, as future co-host of the next European Humanitarian Forum, how this event was a unique opportunity to show that European humanitarian assistance can make a difference in this period of unprecedented needs. She outlined three action streams to address these challenges collectively: investing in anticipatory action on climate change impacts, ensuring flexible quality funding for effective delivery of humanitarian aid, and the need to broaden the donor base. Minister Ernkrans invited participants to the second European Humanitarian Forum in Spring 2023.

In his concluding remarks, Commissioner Janez Lenarčič reflected on the main elements of the Forum that will turn into an annual event and become a platform for all humanitarian actors and stakeholders to come together. Over the two days, different sessions put focus on

the unprecedented humanitarian needs, emphasized the challenges faced by humanitarian organisation on the ground as well as to look at the way forward and at how to enhance the response. Commissioner Lenarčič outlined the main basis for future work and echoed the call to share the responsibility more broadly and equitably amongst donors. He voiced his support to Ukraine and recalled the need not to forget other crises around the world.