

Concept Note

Donor Conference

To Support IDPs and Refugees in Sahel and
Lake Chad Region

26 October 2024

Rabi' al-Thani 1446

I: Background

The Sahel and Lake Chad Basin countries – Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Mali – are experiencing an unprecedented, long-lasting and multi-faceted crisis. The United Nations estimates 33 million people currently require humanitarian assistance and protection across the region – including 11 million people who have been internally displaced and refugees in the Sahel and Lake Chad Region. The conference aims to engage the international community and raise financial commitments to contribute to the USD 1 billion outlined in the humanitarian response plan

The origins of this crisis lie mainly in political upheaval affecting parts of the Middle East and North Africa from 2010, which has had serious security, socioeconomic and humanitarian consequences for countries in the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin. Climate shocks, such as the drying up of Lake Chad and cycles of flooding and drought, and chronic socioeconomic challenges further exacerbate the crisis.

Governments in the region are working to address these challenges through robust humanitarian and development initiatives, with support from their Member State partners, the United Nations and international financial institutions. These efforts seek to provide emergency assistance to people who need it, while striving to promote crisis-affected people's self-sufficiency and wider development objectives.

In support of these efforts, the OIC is convening a Ministerial-level conference for the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin on 26 October 2024. This conference fulfils a resolution adopted by the 49th OIC Foreign Ministers Council in Nouakchott (March 2023) and will provide a platform for donors to mobilize resources to help address the crisis. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia announced to host the conference with OIC in cooperation with OCHA and UNHCR.

II: Conference objectives:

This Ministerial-level conference will seek to achieve the following general objectives:

- 1. Raise awareness of the multifaceted crisis gripping the Sahel and Lake Chad Basin and strategies to address this crisis:** The conference will highlight needs analysis and response strategies to meet humanitarian needs while promoting self-sufficiency and development objectives, as outlined in reference documents from national governments and the United Nations (including UN Humanitarian Response Plans, development frameworks, etc.).

2. Build strong partnerships to support nexus approaches that promote longer-term solutions to displacement, food security and other challenges: The conference will highlight innovative programming opportunities to address immediate humanitarian needs while promoting nationally owned development objectives, including opportunities for joint programming between governments and international partners on key priorities (e.g., durable solutions to displacement, strengthening food systems, rehabilitating Lake Chad).

3. Concentrate diplomatic support to prevent crises in the region and to promote effective response and achievement of longer-term objectives: The conference will identify and agree steps for OIC and other Member States to strengthen diplomatic support for Sahel and Lake Chad Basin countries as they seek to address the crisis, including initiatives to mitigate negative impacts on the entire civilian population and to maximize efficient use of resources.

4. Mobilize resources for the immediate humanitarian response and nexus initiatives: The conference will include a pledging component for donors to announce support for humanitarian response and nexus programmes, with a focus on multilateral initiatives that support national priorities (i.e., UN Humanitarian Response Plans, Regional Humanitarian Fund, joint nexus programmes under development).

III: Strategic approach and conference format

The conference seeks to achieve its objectives through a holistic, comprehensive approach that includes affected governments and communities. The conference will promote national sovereignty; international cooperation; humanitarian principles; poverty reduction; sustainable food security; constructive dialogue; peace and security.

The event will consist of four main sessions:

- **Opening statements:** Brief remarks by conference hosts, with a focus on describing the impact of crises and response objectives (max. 5 minutes each).
- **Facilitated discussions:** Moderated, High-Level Panel Discussion on Humanitarian Action to Address the Needs and Promote Self-reliance of the Refugees, the Displaced and the Affected Population in the Sahel and Lake Chad Region with a focus on three key priorities: 1) Durable solutions to displacement; 2)

Addressing immediate challenges including instability, forced displacement, and food insecurity 3)
Strengthening partnerships for optimum results.

- Statements and announcements: Statements and funding announcements by conference participants, with announced pledges to be recorded and tracked for follow-up.

Following the conference a communique will issued to the press along with the summary of pledges.

Closing statements: Brief closing remarks by conference hosts

V: Participation:

The conference is open to all OIC Member States, donor countries and invited institutions, with requested participation at Ministerial level or equivalent. Delegations will also include heads of national development or cooperation agencies in the relevant countries. When registering for the conference, participants will be requested to complete a short form confirming their participation and any pledges.

Please note this conference is by invitation only.