

**ADDRESS by DEİK PRESIDENT ÖMER CİHAD VARDAN
AT UN WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT'S
WELCOMING RECEPTION
İstanbul, May 22, 2016**

**H.E. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations;
H.E. Naci Korum, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey;
Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

On behalf of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey, DEİK, I would like to welcome you all to Istanbul, to the UN World Humanitarian Summit's Welcoming Reception hosted by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and DEİK.

Distinguished Guests;

We are all gathered here for one simple reason: to help the people.

In the next 2 days, about 5.000 global leaders gathered in Istanbul for the first-ever Humanitarian Summit, will draw the World's attention to the imperative humanitarian work necessary for global peace and prosperity.

Governments, bureaucrats, civil society representatives, academicians, business people... in other words, many of you representing our communities at large will work together and discuss better and more importantly, sustainable ways to "help the people".

Since this decade began, a record number of people have been forced to leave their homes due to conflict, war, disease and disaster.

It gives us deep sorrow to see it on TV every single day:

Migrants crowding on the ships, risking their lives by crossing dangerous waters.
Floods and fires all around the World eroding homes, families and communities.
Drought, famine, and malnutrition affecting babies and children.

The list goes on.

Therefore it should come as no surprise to all of us that we must be committed to respond to humanity in crises.

We don't have a minute to waste...

After all, this is a matter of life and death!

**Distinguished Guests;
Ladies and Gentlemen;**

We, as DEİK, represent Turkey's private sector.

We encourage our business people to invest outside of Turkey; in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, wherever it is needed.

While our Members connect Turkey with the rest of the World with trade; they also create employment and opportunities for the locals.

Among hundreds of examples, one of them is quiet striking and worth-mentioning:

A DEİK's Member who invested in Ethiopia several years ago now runs a textile factory with 8.500 locals. You would say: "what's unusual about that?" What is unusual is that 6.000 of them are young women. This is a unique opportunity for those women to earn their living in dignity.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Emerging as a key player in prevention, response and recovery from crises, the business community is increasingly at the forefront of humanitarian response.

Whether as a partner, a donor or a producer of goods and services for people in need, businesses play an important role in responding to humanity struggling in the face of crisis.

We believe impact investment is the new key model for economic development. This is why we encourage the business community to make more impactful investments and to pursue a win-win model for everyone's interest.

Honorable Guests;

Today, we are extremely honored and pleased by H.E. Deputy Secretary General's presence at our Reception.

As DEİK, it is our great pleasure to present him the Statement we have prepared and signed on behalf of the Turkish business community.

Titled as "**Humanity is our First Business**", we have outlined our commitment for humanity struggling in the face of crisis.

And; as the Turkish private sector, we stand behind these commitments.

His Excellencies; Distinguished Guests;

I would like to welcome you once again on behalf of DEİK to the World Humanitarian Summit.

It is our sincere hope that these efforts will bring a durable solution for those who are desperately in need.

Thank you.