

Sir John Holmes

Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator

Sir John Holmes was appointed Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator on January 3, 2007. OCHA's mission is to mobilize and coordinate humanitarian assistance to populations and communities in need, including issuing emergency appeals on behalf of countries affected by disasters, both natural and man-made. OCHA aids key actors in regions around the world to develop policies and strategies designed to ensure the protection of civilians in armed conflict and respect for international humanitarian law. It is often working behind the scenes also on crises not in the media's spotlight, such as humanitarian actions on behalf of "climate refugees" and others. Somalia, DRC, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Sudan are just a few countries where OCHA is actively engaged. In 2008, OCHA supported major humanitarian operations in over 20 countries.

Sir John Holmes is a career diplomat, previously serving as British Ambassador to Paris (2001-2006) and to Lisbon (1999-2001). He has also served in Moscow and New Delhi, in addition to a wide range of roles in the British government in London including covering the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin American in particular. From 1997-1999, he was Principal Private Secretary to Prime Minister Tony Blair and British G8 Sherpa in 1998. John Holmes was awarded a Knighthood in 1999, primarily for his role in the Northern Ireland peace process and the Good Friday Agreement.

He is a graduate of Balliol College, Oxford University.