I would like to thank Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership in convening this UN summit on refugees and migration. His call for international action to address the challenges and opportunities of large movements of people, and to uphold the safety and dignity of refugees and migrants worldwide, is exactly the right message at exactly the right moment.

Today we are in the midst of multiple crises, and in addition to dramatically increasing our financial support for refugees, we at the World Bank Group are approaching our work in four ways that are completely new for us.

First, we are responding to the realization that we need much better data and analysis about refugees, migrants, and internally displaced people. With UNHCR, we are improving our data collection to learn what happens when refugees leave their country, what happens when they return, and who among them is more likely to return. Already our analysis is helping refocus our approach. For instance, we know that most of the refugees don’t live in camps but are integrated in urban areas. While there have been many reports about the average time a refugee is uprooted, with estimates as high as 17 or 26 years, our new research has determined that in fact half of today’s refugees have been displaced for four years or less, and half for more than four years.
This means that development interventions focused early after a crisis could have great impact on large numbers of refugees.

Second, with our partners, we are developing advance warning systems so that we can anticipate where people will be moving and then respond quickly. In Yemen, we are working with UNDP to finance a public works program to help people cope and earn money. We’re also working with UNICEF to strengthen public health interventions. For displaced people in Yemen and elsewhere, security is of utmost importance. But, unlike in the past, we continue to implement development programs even in the context of active conflict, believing that if we can increase the resilience of communities, we can prevent even greater displacement, which in turn will reduce trauma.

Third, we are working during crises to help host countries improve the business climate and use the private sector as a driver to stimulate economic growth. In Jordan and Lebanon, we are bringing to our Board in the coming weeks our first operational projects using concessional finance for middle-income countries. In Jordan, we want to help create special economic zones to generate in excess of 200,000 new jobs for Jordanians and Syrian refugees, and in Lebanon, we’re planning an education project to allow 200,000 Syrian children to enroll in Lebanese public schools.

Finally, we are now looking for longer-term solutions in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, Kenya, and Somalia, on issues ranging from increasing agricultural productivity in areas hosting refugees to helping refugees return to their countries.

We will continue to strengthen our engagement with the United Nations, other multilateral development banks, the private sector, and civil society to address the needs of so many millions of displaced people. Much is riding on the outcome of this summit, especially for the people who have fled their homes. We are shaping both their future and our common future.

Thank you very much.