

UN'S GLOBAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND PROVIDES US\$10 MILLION TO HELP MOST VULNERABLE IN ETHIOPIA

(Addis Ababa, 28 January 2018)

Emergency Relief Coordinator and Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock today released US\$10 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to urgently help the most vulnerable people displaced in Ethiopia due to the conflict along the borders of the Oromia and Somali regions. "Today I visited two IDP re-settlement sites where I saw first-hand the critical importance of scaling up our support to meet their needs, as called for by the Government," said Mr. Lowcock during his visit.

Following the escalation of conflict along the Oromia and Somali regional borders in early September, hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people have been driven from their homes and are now living in approximately 370 sites, with needs that are far greater than the response that has been able to be provided so far.

The Government has taken the lead in the response efforts and has provided life-saving food assistance to those in need. The Government has also released its plans to respond to the situation, including through efforts to facilitate voluntary returns or alternative resettlement solutions. "The CERF funds will complement the Government plan and will enable humanitarian partners to provide life-saving assistance, including shelter, clean water and sanitation services for those most in need among the displaced and host communities. The funds will also support solutions for displaced people to re-establish their lives," said Mr. Lowcock. He also added that other donors were encouraged to urgently step up their support in response to the needs of the displaced.

Over the past two years, CERF allocated \$49 million to aid operations in Ethiopia. While Ethiopia continues to be faced with acute crises, over the past decades Ethiopia has made remarkable strides in development and addressing food insecurity. However its susceptibility to drought has resulted in recurring food insecurity. Failed rains in 2016 and 2017 threatened a catastrophe that was only averted by a massive Government-led response.

Beyond the recurring crises, Ethiopia simultaneously needs to lay the foundations for recovery and long-term resilience to future shocks. The international community must seize opportunities to support Ethiopia in strengthening government-led sustainable development structures at all levels that can mitigate human risks and the threat from increasingly frequent and severe droughts, and support government and civil society in developing capacities for peace building and reconciliation. The UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner joined Mr. Lowcock on the visit to Ethiopia to solidify humanitarian and development collaboration moving forward, aimed at making joint recommendations for solutions to break the cycle of loss of development gains due to recurrent disasters.

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