

Remarks by HR/VP Mogherini on the EU's humanitarian support at the 2017 London Conference on Somalia

Check against delivery!

Thank you very much and thanks to you and to the Secretary General of the United Nations [António Guterres] for convening this meeting and also for having this focus on the humanitarian situation. Just a few weeks ago in Brussels, we gathered some of the key partners and key donors that are around this table exactly to focus on how we can step up our humanitarian support to face the risk of famine now.

The European Union, as you know well, is by far the first donor for Somalia in all different sectors. When it comes to our response to the drought, it amounts to over €460 million; still we know that this is not enough and that we need to mobilise more resources. We will do our part, we will continue to do our part, but we need others to come in and increase the level of support if we want to avoid the catastrophe.

We believe also that the availability of resources is not the only challenge we are facing in Somalia when it comes to the risk of famine. Insecurity, access constraints, extortions of aid are among the biggest obstacles to deliver aid to the most needy. Restrictive access remains for us the major impediment for the roll out of full relief operations covering the majority of the needs.

We also have a concern about the visibility of the return process of up to 250 000 Somali refugees living in Kenyan refugee camps in the current context of severe droughts.

Beyond human suffering, we believe it is important – as the Secretary General mentioned – to contain the political risks. We are in a delicate moment for the institutions, the government, which is very much absorbed by the impact of the droughts while it has started its process only a few months after the inauguration of the President. We believe it is essential that we support and help the government to be seen delivering on the expectations of the population and remain focused also on the other critical political and security challenges the population needs to find answers to because there are somehow interrelated.

Two last things. One is the regional dimension; we are focusing on Somalia here because assisting Somalia at this moment also means assisting its neighbours to limit the spill over. Yet each country in the region, and particularly Ethiopia and Kenya, deserve specific attention and support. We should not forget it.

And, last but not least, we need to take climate change more seriously. This

is true in general political terms – and I discussed this in the UN with the Secretary General in the last days- but also in our projections for the region.

Secondly, only stability and development can create an environment in which natural disasters can be coped with. And this is why the rest of the conference today will be also so important.

I thank you.