

**HORN OF AFRICA: THE CONTINUING FOOD, REFUGEE, AND  
HUMANITARIAN CRISIS**

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**HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
**TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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MARCH 8, 2012

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## HORN OF AFRICA: THE CONTINUING FOOD, REFUGEE, AND HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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THURSDAY, MARCH 8, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,

*Washington, D.C.*

The commission met, pursuant to call, at 10:00 a.m., in Room B-318 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James P. McGovern [co-chairman of the commission] presiding.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Thank you very much. I am Congressman Jim McGovern. I want to welcome everybody here to this important hearing on the Horn of Africa, the continuing food, refugee and humanitarian crisis. This is an important hearing, and as I said this is co-sponsored by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and by the House Hunger Caucus. In August last year, the House Hunger Caucus held one of the first briefings on the famine crisis in the eastern Horn of Africa, so we very much appreciate the sponsorships of both the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the House Hunger Caucus.

I want to thank my fellow co-chair, Congressman Frank Wolf, for encouraging the Commission to hold this hearing and reminding us all that the food crisis in the Horn of Africa is far from over. I want to thank our administration, U.N., and NGO witnesses for testifying today, and I would also very much like to thank Rupal Mehta and Jordan Tama and the staff of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for organizing this hearing today.

It is impossible to begin a hearing on the Horn of Africa without remembering our dear friend and colleague, Congressman Donald Payne, one of the great leaders in Congress on Africa policy and on foreign policy more broadly. I was terribly saddened when I learned earlier this week that he had passed away. For over two decades, Congressman Payne pushed hard for the United States to prioritize human rights and humanitarian assistance in Africa and other regions. He was remarkably effective in advancing these goals, and we will miss his leadership greatly.

The Horn of Africa's worst drought in 60 years has created catastrophic food shortages. Last year, these shortages were so extreme in southern Somalia that the United Nations characterized them as a famine. Since then, the provision of large amounts of humanitarian aid and the arrival of some rain have improved conditions somewhat, but drought conditions persist, and 250,000 Somalis remain at risk from starvation. Millions more are in a situation of severe food insecurity as a result of the failure of crops and death of livestock caused by the drought, as well as soaring prices for staple foods. Nearly 10 million people still need food assistance.

The insecurity generated by this terrible food crisis has been compounded by the ongoing conflict involving the Al-Qaeda-linked militia, Al-Shabaab, and the governments of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. This conflict has featured extreme brutality, particularly but not only by Al-Shabaab, leading many Somalis to flee their

homes in search of safety elsewhere. The conflict has also further disrupted food production and commerce, exacerbating food shortages.

As a result of the combination of war and hunger, some 2.5 million Somalis have migrated within Somalia or to a neighboring country in search of security and food. This extraordinary movement of desperate people has created an extraordinary refugee crisis in the region. More Somali refugees are living in camps just across the border in Kenya and Ethiopia, and some of these refugee camps' conditions are extremely poor.

For instance, in the massive Da'daab camp in Kenya, nearly half a million refugees are crowded into a camp that was constructed to hold just 90,000 people. As a result of this severe overcrowding and great insecurity in and around the camp, including widespread sexual assault against women, the United Nations has only been able to provide very limited lifesaving services in the camp.

There are also staggering numbers of internally displaced people within Somalia, including several hundred thousand people living in IDP camps in Mogadishu. Conditions in these camps vary, but most of them have no formal management and are quite dangerous. The terrible conditions in these camps increase the likelihood of communicable diseases spreading rapidly.

I take heart that the United States and the international community have responded strongly to the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. I remember meeting last July with USAID Administrator Raj Shah and other State Department and USAID officials on how to respond rapidly and effectively to the growing crisis in the eastern Horn. Over the past seven months, food aid and other humanitarian assistance from the United States and our international partners have saved countless lives in the region.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many U.N., international, and non-governmental humanitarian and relief organizations who have been working to provide food, water, medicine, shelter, emergency assistance and psychosocial support to the millions of people in the eastern Horn of Africa suffering from this famine and food crisis. Their staff in the field often work in very perilous conditions, especially inside Somalia. Some have even lost their lives in trying to save the lives of others. They do not seek the spotlight, and they rarely are acknowledged for their great service, and I would just like to take a moment and recognize their work here today. No one knows better than the workers in the field how much more remains to be done.

It is essential that we remain focused on this continuing crisis, even as new crises emerge elsewhere. We must also do all we can to ensure that food and other essential aid are being delivered to the Horn, to as many people as possible. At the same time, we must invest in longer-term programs that can boost the resiliency of communities and make it less likely that new humanitarian aid disasters will occur in the Horn in the future.

I hope this hearing will shed light on the continuing human rights and humanitarian challenges in the Horn of Africa, and generate ideas for acting to address these challenges. There will probably be other Members of Congress who will be coming in and out of here. We will have votes at probably the most inopportune time -- I am just going to give you a heads-up on that -- which may delay things a little bit. But this is an important subject. This is on the internal House network, so that people can watch this in their offices. But it is our intention, because this issue is so important -- I don't want people to forget what is happening here, given the fact that there seems to be a new crisis every day. But we can't neglect what is happening here, and so we are, in

addition to that, going to make sure -- we are going to send out a link to every House Member so that they can -- if they can't see the hearing as we are doing it right now, they will be able to download it and be able to hear what the witnesses have to say.

So with that said, I want to welcome our first panel: Nancy Lindborg, the Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, the U.S. Agency for International Development; Deborah Malac, Director, Office of East African Affairs, U.S. Department of State; and Margaret McKelvey, the Director, Office of Assistance for Africa, U.S. Department of State.

And before I begin with Ms. Lindborg, let me just say to all of you that I am really proud of the work that our government has done in trying to respond to this crisis, and I think it not only is the morally right thing to do, but I think it also is the type of intervention that I think most Americans, regardless of where they are on the political spectrum, actually support. So I don't always get to say thank you to government witnesses, because we are usually questioning some of the things that we are doing. But I want to say thank you to all of you, and let me begin with Ms. Lindborg. Welcome. [The Statement of Rep. McGovern Follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES P. MCGOVERN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS AND COCHAIRMAN OF THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

**Rep. James P. McGovern (MA)**

**TLHRC Hearing: Horn of Africa: The Continuing Food, Refugee, and Humanitarian Crisis**

**B-318 Rayburn HOB**

**Thursday, March 8, 2012**

**10:00AM- 11:30AM**

Good Morning. Thank you all for being here today for this important hearing on the continuing food, refugee, and humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. This hearing is co-sponsored by the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the House Hunger Caucus. In August last year, the House Hunger Caucus held one of the first briefings on famine crisis in the eastern Horn of Africa, so we very much appreciate their sponsorship of today's hearing.

I want to thank my fellow Co-Chair, Congressman Frank Wolf, for encouraging the Commission to hold this hearing and reminding us all that the food crisis in the Horn is far from over. I want to thank our Administration, U.N. and NGO witnesses for testifying today; and I would very much like to thank Rupal Metha, Jordan Tama, and the staff of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission for organizing this hearing.

It is impossible to begin a hearing on the Horn of Africa without remembering our dear friend and colleague, Congressman Donald Payne, one of the great leaders in Congress on Africa policy and on foreign policy more broadly. I was terribly saddened when I learned earlier this week that he had passed away. For over two decades, Congressman Payne pushed hard for the United States to prioritize human rights and humanitarian assistance in Africa and other regions. He was remarkably effective in advancing these goals, and we will miss his leadership greatly.

The Horn of Africa's worst drought in 60 years has created catastrophic food shortages. Last year, these shortages were so extreme in southern Somalia that the United Nations characterized them as a famine. Since then, the provision of large amounts of humanitarian aid and the arrival of some rain have improved conditions somewhat. But drought conditions persist, and 250,000 Somalis remain at risk of death from starvation. Millions more are in a situation of severe food insecurity – as a result of the failure of crops and death of livestock caused by the drought, as well as soaring prices for staple foods. Nearly 10 million people still need food assistance.

The insecurity generated by this terrible food crisis has been compounded by the ongoing conflict involving the Al-Qaeda-linked militia Al Shabaab and the governments of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya. This conflict has featured extreme brutality – particularly, but not only, by Al Shabaab – leading many Somalis to flee their homes in search of safety elsewhere. The conflict has also further disrupted food production and commerce, exacerbating food shortages. As a result of the combination of war and hunger, some 2.5 million Somalis have migrated within Somalia or to a neighboring country in search of security and food. This extraordinary movement of desperate people has created an extraordinary refugee crisis in the region.

Most Somali refugees are living in camps just across the border in Kenya and Ethiopia. In some of these refugee camps, conditions are extremely poor. For instance, in the massive Dadaab [Duh-DAAB] camp in Kenya, nearly half a million refugees are crowded into a camp that was constructed to hold just 90,000 people. As a result of this severe overcrowding and great insecurity in and around the camp – including widespread sexual assault against women – the U.N. has only been able to provide very limited, life-saving services in the camp.

There are also staggering numbers of internally displaced people within Somalia – including several hundred thousand people living in IDP camps in Mogadishu. Conditions in these camps vary, but most of them have no formal management and are quite dangerous. The terrible conditions in these camps increase the likelihood of communicable diseases spreading rapidly.

I take heart that the United States and the international community have responded strongly to the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa. I remember meeting last July with USAID Administrator Raj Shah and other State Department and USAID officials on how to respond rapidly and effectively to the growing crisis in the eastern Horn. Over the past 7 months, food aid and other humanitarian assistance from the United States and our international partners have saved countless lives in the region.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the many U.N., international and non-governmental humanitarian and relief organizations who have been working to provide food, water, medicine, shelter, emergency assistance, and psycho-social support to the millions of people in the eastern Horn of Africa suffering from this famine and food crisis. Their staff in the field often work in very perilous conditions, especially inside Somalia. Some have even lost their lives in trying to save the lives of others. They do not seek the spotlight, and they rarely are acknowledged for their great service – and I would just like to take a moment and recognize their work here today.

No one knows better than the workers in the field how much more remains to be done. It is essential that we remain focused on this continuing crisis, even as new crises emerge elsewhere. We must do all we can to ensure that food and other essential aid are being delivered in the Horn to as many people in need as possible. At the same time, we must invest in longer-term programs that can boost the resiliency of communities and make it less likely that new humanitarian disasters will occur in the Horn in the future.

I hope this hearing will shed light on the continuing human rights and humanitarian challenges in the Horn of Africa, and generate ideas for acting to address these challenges.

With that said, I want to turn to my fellow Commission and Caucus Members and ask whether they would like to make opening statements.

#### WITNESSES

I would now like to turn to our witnesses for this morning. I would like to note that along with their oral testimony, I would submit into the Record any written testimony provided by our witnesses today.

I would like to welcome our first panel of witnesses. They are:

Nancy Lindborg, Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance at the U.S. Agency for International Development



Margaret McKelvey, Director of the Office of Assistance for Africa at the U.S. Department of State

Deborah Malac, Director of the Office of East African Affairs at the U.S. Department of State

Ms. Lindborg – if you would please begin.

STATEMENT OF NANCY LINDBORG, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR THE BUREAU FOR DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. LINDBORG: Great. And thank you, Chairman McGovern. It is with many, many thanks for your unwavering attention to this issue, and thank you for inviting us to speak on this continuing crisis today. And I would also like to add, before I begin, our deepest condolences on the loss of our friend, your colleague, Congressman Donald Payne. He was a long time champion of development. He inspired great action and hope. He will be missed. I am pleased, however, that Administrator Shah was able to announce, just as Congressman Payne entered the hospital, a new USAID Fellowship named in his honor that will encourage members of minority groups who have historically been under-represented in development careers to join USAID, and I am told he was greatly pleased to have heard that.

Your continued leadership and vigilance on this issue has been enormously important, and really the top line is that, in the face of one of the worst droughts in 60 years, we mobilized and we made a difference. And the support of you and members of this Commission were key. And since, also, this is international women's day, I wanted to also just take a moment to salute the many courageous women that I met on my many visits over this past year who are really holding their families together and moving their children towards a better life, even in the face of crisis.

You know, we have been intensely focused on this current crisis since we got the first early warning systems in August 2010 and were able to preposition food. This drought, the worst drought in 60 years, actually triggered three interlocking crises. First is in the drought-affected communities throughout the region, that because of ever-increasing cycles of drought, they have depleted their resources. They are no longer able to withstand shock. Secondly is the crisis that turned into famine in Somalia, where drought was coupled with the longstanding conflict and lack of governance. It underscores why at USAID we have got Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance assembled into one Bureau. And thirdly is the refugee crisis of Somalis flooded across the border that my colleague Margaret McKelvey will address. And each of those crises has different characteristics, even as they coexisted in the Horn.

So in Somalia, where 20 years of conflict and lack of government has really taken a heavy toll on families and communities, and compounded by the fact that humanitarian assistance was blocked by Al-Shabaab in parts of south and central Somalia, triggered this massive flood of refugees, and by June of last year thousands were arriving in Afgooye corridor and in Mogadishu. Twenty thousand were arriving each week in the refugee camps.

We focused on three critical approaches. The first was direct food assistance where we were able to have access. Second was cash and voucher programs, and supports that allowed Somali families to access markets that were already functioning. And third, and very importantly, were public health interventions and vaccination campaigns, because we know that the largest killer of children in famine situations is preventable disease.

When the U.N. declared famine in early July, and it was about the time that we first began the conversation with you all, we already had our disaster assistance response team in the field, working with other donors, with the U.N., with our NGO partners, to really focus on mounting a fast and coordinated program. We prioritized efforts to reach

out to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and to Turkey, and ensure that their efforts were fully brought into a coordinated effort.

Very encouragingly, in November we began to see data that confirmed that this massive international mobilization of assistance was working, and we heard that famine conditions had abated in three of the six areas in Somalia. Then, the good news. On February 3rd, because of this massive mobilization of assistance, and because of good rains during the short season, the United Nations declared that famine was no longer present in Somalia.

That is an amazing and important story to tell, and it is thanks to support from those of you on this Commission, your personal commitment to addressing hunger, and the American people with our NGO and U.N. partners, that we have been able to contribute to that kind of impressive accomplishment.

Last year, and so far this year, the United States has contributed 210 million dollars in aid to Somalia, and saved and touched countless lives in the process. This is an extraordinary accomplishment. And we know the crisis is far from over. World leaders met in London two weeks ago to discuss options for stabilizing Somalia. This is ultimately the answer and solution to this crisis, and we convened a side meeting just to discuss humanitarian issues. Everyone there agreed it is still extraordinarily fragile. The situation requires continued vigilance. The rains ahead are uncertain.

And we have to underscore that even as famine has abated, the situation is still one of the most severe crises globally. We are continuing to stand by the people of Somalia, and to ensure that we have assistance programs that can reach areas even where access is difficult.

I want to touch briefly on the much more positive story of Kenya and Ethiopia, because it underscores that where you are able to work in partnership, where you are able to invest in resilience, that you can help people from falling into an even more severe crisis. And for example, we supported Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net program. That effectively kept 7.6 million people from requiring emergency assistance. We provided nutritional supplements throughout the Horn for malnourished children, emphasizing the importance of the right nutrients in that critical first thousand days when children's minds and bodies are developing.

And we have emphasized assistance that enables people to rebuild their assets, and to build resilience even as they receive emergency assistance. That is livestock vaccinations, it is alternative livelihoods. In both Kenya and Ethiopia, I visited programs where we are working with our NGO partners to help women produce and manage markets from their herds, and better care for their herds. And these women are in charge, and it was their earnings that were helping their families survive this drought, help their children get the right nutrition, and send their children to school.

As a result of what we were able to do over these last 18 months, we have reached 4.6 million people, mainly women and children, with direct food assistance. With the 935 million dollars that we have provided to date, we have had also emergency health care for nearly a million people, cash and vouchers for 700,000 people, clean water, proper sanitation and hygiene, for more than 3.3 million people, and helped about 400,000 people diversify their livelihoods. These are critical programs that will help build resilience for the inevitable droughts that will occur.

At the end of March, we are co-hosting a meeting in Nairobi with our relief and development donors, donor partners, to mobilize around African-led planning for risk reduction and the sustainability of resilience and growth in the Horn of Africa. This is an important international call to action. It says "We cannot afford to let people slide into crisis every couple of years and respond just with massive humanitarian assistance." We commit to building resilience, we commit to encouraging growth and supporting the African-led plans.

Our ultimate goals over the next five years, as part of the President's Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative, Feed the Future, is to help half a million people in Ethiopia permanently escape poverty and hunger, and improve nutrition for more than 430,000 children. And in Kenya, we aim to raise incomes and improve nutrition for more than 700,000 people.

Just to flag that on the other side of the continent, in the Sahel region, from where I have just returned, we also have a drought and a rising emergency. And fortunately, the lessons learned in the Horn and the collective commitment of the international donors are enabling us to apply the key lessons and commitments from the Horn to the Sahel: early action in response to early warnings, targeting our emergency programs, building resilience, and connecting to the longer-term development solutions.

The United States is changing the way that we do business, to place strong emphasis on building resilience and connecting our humanitarian assistance to increased investments in agriculture and nutrition. It is so important to have the continued attention of Members like yourself, the continued vigilance. And that will enable us to help ensure that we move out of chronic crisis and onto pathways for development. Thank you.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Well, thank you. And I appreciate your testimony, and all of you being here, because quite frankly, you have more choice of powers than I do.

So you are up here, in large part, because I want to make sure people understand what has happened, the progress that has been made, and the challenges that are still there, so that as we legislate and decide where some of these monies are going to go, that we understand that this is still a priority.

Ms. McKelvey?

STATEMENT OF MARGARET MCKELVEY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF REFUGEE ASSISTANCE FOR AFRICA BUREAU OF POPULATION, REFUGEES, AND MIGRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. McKELVEY: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I would like to add my thanks for your invitation to appear on this panel as well, and to talk about the situation of refugees in the Horn. As you have noted, as other emergencies have arisen and grabbed international and public attention, it is really important to keep a highlight on this particular ongoing crisis. And despite the welcome news that famine is officially over, the ongoing conflict is continuing to drive Somalis from their homes and to seek asylum in the neighboring countries.

As you know, there are nearly one million Somali refugees currently registered in the greater Horn of Africa region. By greater Horn we include Yemen, Djibouti, in that.

But in 2011 that was a 30 percent increase in the number of registered refugees, primarily in Ethiopia, Kenya, Yemen and Djibouti. Also in some of the countries slightly further afield.

Last summer, we were seeing combined daily arrival rates of about 3,500 refugees, new refugees, per day. Today we are seeing about 3,000 new arrivals per month registered across the region. But I should note that because registration of new arrivals in the Da'daab Camp Complex in Kenya was suspended last October and remains suspended at this point, that figure does not capture the new arrivals who are simply moving in with others who are already in the camps in Da'daab.

Last year's emergency was extremely challenging, as many refugees arrived in appalling health and with extraordinarily high levels of malnutrition, sometimes registered in the 50 percent range. Moreover, as Nancy has said, they were arriving in areas where the local population was also suffering from the worst drought in living memory, so those populations were also in need of urgent humanitarian aid. The existing infrastructure really was not adequate to accommodate the thousands pouring in, so there were three new camps established in Ethiopia's Dolo region. Two new camps were added to the Da'daab complex in Northeastern Kenya.

The Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and other international and many non-governmental organizations, too many to name quickly, worked tirelessly to address those needs. And my Bureau at the State Department, the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, alone programmed an extraordinarily large sum for us, 106.74 million in the last fiscal year from our two accounts, the regular MRA account and then the President's Emergency Fund.

I would say that while the refugee situation has stabilized somewhat, at this new, higher level we still have very significant challenges confronting us. The precarious security situation in the Da'daab complex has severely limited humanitarians from providing the same level of assistance that was being provided before the kidnapping of the care and MSF workers last fall. And then the IED bomb explosions in the camp, and the outright killing of the police and refugee leaders that followed the Kenyan incursion into Somalia, further limited assistance.

The Kenyan Red Cross has done an admirable job of maintaining the health systems while other organizations had to suspend operations temporarily. Also, the refugee incentive workers themselves have been key in keeping a number of the services running. And a number would say that the increased reliance on the refugee community itself will ultimately strengthen self-reliance and sustainability of operations.

UNHCR is cautiously optimistic that the security situation is improving in Da'daab, and as a result it is gradually, along with partners, resuming operations there. UNHCR does credit our recent contribution of 3 million to the Government of Kenya and UNHCR's security package with improvement in the policing in the camps. The government has agreed in principle to resume registration of new arrivals, but that has not happened yet. But we hope, very soon, that it will.

Insecurity in Da'daab has also stalled our U.S. refugee resettlement program there, as partners cannot interview refugees until the security environment improves. And the resettlement of Somali refugees is a major initiative of UNHCR, and an effort shared by a number of other countries. We think it is an important aspect of providing protection to particularly vulnerable individuals, and to offer a new life to many here in the United

States. In 2011, we resettled more than 3,100 Somali refugees from all over the world, not just from Kenya.

In Ethiopia's Dolo Ado Complex, the persistently high rates of global malnutrition continue to plague some of the camps. Reorganization of the services, nutrition as well as the other help services, as well as intensified efforts to change some of the contributing behaviors -- for example, food that is meant to be given to children is shared among family members, sanitation practices are not fully adequate, and sometimes even sharing of the general ration with people back in Somalia who are also in need. Tackling all of these are all part of the effort to bring down the malnutrition rates. As you have noted, women continue to suffer from sexual violence. The disabled lack necessary access to all of the services. So all of this calls for increased programming in these areas.

I think, though, the greatest challenge we face in the region is maintaining first asylum for refugees. For example, Djibouti continues to be reluctant to accept military age Somali males, and Kenya continues to push for the creation of humanitarian zones in what are called the liberated areas of Somalia, where potential asylum-seekers could be assisted and discouraged from crossing the borders.

We most certainly don't want vulnerable Somalis to have to trek to neighboring countries to receive aid. At the same time, the ongoing conflict means that there are many in need of protection which just cannot be provided inside of Somalia. As I think everyone knows quite well, we do everything possible to keep humanitarian assistance non-politicized.

At the same time, everything about refugees and humanitarian assistance has its political angle. So this challenge is obviously not limited to Somalia, but it is particularly acute there, where mixing political and humanitarian endeavors can lead to life-threatening circumstances for humanitarians and for those they seek to assist. We have seen that through the attacks on Da'daab, within the camps themselves, and with the truly despicable efforts of Al-Shabaab to impugn the motives of humanitarian agencies.

I would like to note that this refugee emergency has taken place within what is a protracted Somali refugee situation dating back to -- we count it back to 1988, when Somalis in northern Somalia were fleeing to Ethiopia and Djibouti to escape attacks by their own government. On February 21st, UNHCR recognized the 20 year anniversary of the Da'daab camp complex, and before this latest crisis we had decided once again to try to focus on the potential durable solution of local integration of the refugees in the countries of asylum, as well as providing assistance in potentially different and better ways.

We have held two colloquia with three of the host countries, Djibouti, Kenya, Ethiopia, donors, international and non-governmental organizations. And this addressed both the concern about creating conditions inside Somalia that would mitigate the flow of refugees, as well as efforts to make refugees more self-reliant, particularly focusing on education and livelihood support. And we will be holding additional colloquia with a focus on programming that could both support self-reliance and better prepare people for voluntary repatriation when that time comes.

I would just say that not all of the host countries approach these issues in the same way, so I count this among the challenges ahead. While there has been some recent small-scale spontaneous repatriation, we don't yet see large-scale return as we saw in the 1990s, which was largely to the Somaliland and Puntland areas.

And I would like to conclude by noting that all of the countries in the Horn of Africa, including Somalia, also host refugees from other countries, and these refugee numbers are also growing. The current conflict along the South Sudan/Sudan border, and the internal violence inside South Sudan, has already driven some 30,000 new Sudanese refugees into Ethiopia, and over 1,800 new refugees from Sudan and South Sudan into Kenya, into the Kakuma camp in the northwest part of the country. There are some 10,000 Kenyan refugees in Ethiopia.

And while we know very little, really, about conditions inside Eritrea, increasing repression there has led to continued and steady numbers of Eritreans seeking asylum, including a growing number of unaccompanied minors, which is challenging. And many of these people are trying to migrate further, to Europe, to Israel, to the Gulf states, and too often they don't survive that treacherous journey, as they fall into the hands of smugglers who exploit them.

So I would like to thank you once again for the opportunity to highlight some of our work and the challenges ahead, and, as the others, will be happy to answer any questions that you may have. Thank you.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Thank you very much. I appreciate your testimony. Ms. Malac?

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH MALAC DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF EAST AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. MALAC: Good morning. Thank you, Congressman McGovern, for this opportunity to appear before you and to tell, I think as you have noted, what we believe is a very good story in terms of what the U.S. has been able to do in response to this crisis, along with our partners, obviously, in the international community, the non-governmental organizations, international organizations. It has been a difficult task, but I think we have a lot of good things to say.

I also would like to add, on behalf of the Africa Bureau and the Department of State, our condolences as well on the passing of someone who was a very great and good friend to our relationships with Africa and up here on the Hill, Congressman Payne. He will be sorely missed, I can tell you, in the halls of the State Department and the Africa Bureau, certainly.

Along with him, along with you and other members of this Commission, we share the concern about the ongoing crisis in the Horn where more than 10 million people, as you pointed out, are still in need of humanitarian assistance. We are very much aware that this is an ongoing crisis, and despite the fact that we have a good story to tell about what happened over the last several months, we need to be vigilant that we not lose sight of the fact that we need to renew our efforts.

The United States itself continues to urge donors to support the U.N.'s 2012 Consolidated Appeal for Somalia, which we understand is currently funded at only about nine percent of the appeal. So there is clearly more work to be done in terms of raising awareness about the need.

As you have heard from Nancy and Margaret, the good news is that famine is over in Somalia, and it is due primarily to the recent rains and harvest, and the effective delivery of significant humanitarian assistance. But let me be clear. As you have heard,

Somalia is not out of the woods yet. We hear that we should anticipate at least some deterioration in conditions once the impact of the current harvests recede later this spring, and the ongoing conflict that disrupts agricultural production, impedes humanitarian access, could also have a significant impact on the humanitarian conditions in 2012. While we do not yet anticipate a return to famine conditions, the situation is extremely fragile and requires continued assistance and access in order to prevent backsliding.

Today I am going to take a few minutes to describe the regional context in which this crisis unfolded, and the U.S. Government's immediate response, and what steps we are taking to address longer-term food security in the Horn of Africa. I also want to describe what we at the State Department, and others in the U.S. Government, are doing to help the Somali people to resolve the chronic political instability that bedevils that country.

While Somalis have borne the brunt of the current crisis, the Horn of Africa drought has also affected Kenya, Ethiopia, and other parts of the region. With the nearly one million Somali refugees in the region, more than 300,000 of these have been forced by famine and conflict to leave their homes. This exodus has placed enormous pressure on our neighboring countries, contributing to the refugee camps, as you have heard from my colleague -- this is a critical security situation as well for us.

We are grateful to the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia, which face their own challenges, for hosting these refugees. And we are committed to doing what we can with other members of the international community to help them cope with the increased numbers of refugees requiring assistance, but it is a difficult conversation to have with those governments as they look at the growing sort of security threat that this presence of a large number of foreigners presents to them. So it is a constant conversation that we must have to ensure that we maintain that right of first asylum.

The displacement of people inside Somalia is also very troubling. In the last month alone, an estimated 10,000 internally displaced persons fled the Afgooye corridor outside of Mogadishu into the city itself, which has added to the already very large presence of IDPs in that city. As the African Union Mission in Somalia has looked to expand its control and security within Mogadishu, there is also an ongoing risk that those IDPs, who have already been displaced once, will be displaced yet again in the face of those continuing efforts.

This will very likely overtax the existing humanitarian infrastructure, which is already quite fragile inside Mogadishu, and we have certainly urged the force commanders of AMISOM to be mindful of the impact that their operations have on IDPs and the civilian population in general.

Somalia continues to be one of the most challenging places in the world to provide humanitarian assistance. The security situation remains fragile in many, many parts of the country. We are encouraged by the recent security gains in some parts. We hope that this will enable humanitarian actors to operate more freely and deliver more assistance to people.

We are now seeing that some humanitarian assistance -- food, water, medical supplies, shelter -- previously barred by Al-Shabaab in parts of south central Somalia have now been able to make their way in. However, there are still a lot more people who need to be reached in those areas. We are looking also for how we can help work to expand that access in the areas that have been newly liberated, but it is a very difficult



environment, as you can imagine. So we are cautiously optimistic that as we can make progress on the security side, that we will open up greater access for those in need.

I would like to also make a comment about Al-Shabaab. You know, droughts are a natural occurrence. Famine is often largely manmade. This recent drought, certainly the worst that they have seen in the region in 60 years, already had a negative effect, obviously, on food security in the region. But it was Al-Shabaab's actions in the areas of Somalia that it controls that turned this emergency into a full-blown humanitarian crisis.

Years of conflict and instability have broken down the resiliency of most southern Somali communities. Al-Shabaab's brutal insurgency against the Somali Transitional Federal Government, as well as its own people and against regional local governing authority, have made this situation worse. And it continues to get worse as Al-Shabaab continues to refuse to allow U.N. agencies and other international actors and humanitarian organizations to have access to those in need.

It stood by and watched while people died. The emergency thus became a famine. And let us be very clear that Al-Shabaab is responsible for much of the pain and suffering inside Somalia. It has proven time and time again that it is not on the side of the Somali people, it is only on the side of its own ideological agenda.

The United States has led the international humanitarian response throughout this crisis. Secretary Clinton recently announced at the February 23rd London Conference on Somalia that the United States was going to increase our humanitarian assistance to the Horn of Africa by an additional 64 million dollars. This brings our total emergency assistance to the region since 2011 to more than 934 million, including the 212 million for lifesaving programs in Somalia.

When the U.N. declared the famine in parts of Somalia last summer, Secretary Clinton directed the State Department to establish a Horn Of Africa Working Group to coordinate State and USAID's response to the crisis. The HOAG ensured that State, USAID, and all the other interagency partners were synchronized and working together effectively. In addition, as you have heard from Nancy, the USAID activated their regional DART team, Disaster Assistance Response Team, out to the region, which helped us greatly to monitor the drought conditions, identify needs, and coordinate response activities with other donors. And in addition, as they usually do in these crises, they established their response management team here in Washington, which was a wonderful partner for us at the State Department to determine what was happening on the ground.

Through this coordinated effort, the State Department worked with the embassies, our embassies overseas, and together here in Washington with other agencies to encourage that all countries and organizations make efforts to contribute to the relief effort, and to increase bilateral assistance. There was a great deal of outreach to a number of non-traditional partners in many cases, to ensure that they could also be providing assistance and perhaps have better access in some areas of Somalia that we would not have been able to achieve.

At the very early stages of the crisis, Secretary Clinton emphasized that the emergency assistance alone will not solve the underlying problems in the region. The international community needs to also address longer-term food security in order to help them respond to future crises.

With that in mind, we are working to develop and implement a longer-term food security program in Kenya and Ethiopia through the President's global hunger and food security initiative, Feed the Future. In Ethiopia and Kenya, the United States is helping carry out comprehensive strategies with the goal of helping more than half a million people in Ethiopia escape from poverty and hunger, and in Kenya to raise incomes and improve nutrition.

As an example of our effective efforts, as you heard from Nancy, the number of Ethiopians threatened with starvation fell to 5 million in 2011, from 13 million in the previous 2002 to 2003 drought. So we have much to be proud of, but much, much more work to be done.

The United States will continue to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to those in need in the Horn of Africa, and to work with the U.N. and the region to address the longer-term food security issues. On the diplomatic and political front, however, we must also work -- and we are working -- to address the underlying causes of instability in Somalia.

We need to be very realistic about the challenge. If the situation in Somalia remains chaotic and unstable, as it has for the past 20 years, humanitarian crises will continue and will occur again and again, and that will continue to require international assistance, contribute to these protracted refugee crises, and place an undue burden on Somalia's neighbors.

With this in mind, we are working with the international community, the United Nations, the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia, and other Somali leaders to achieve a common vision: a stable Somalia, at peace with its neighbors, at peace with itself, that is not a safe haven for terrorists and whose government can provide, itself, for the needs of its people.

Our near-term political approach has had three pillars, which are guided by our overall dual-track policy. First, through our support to AMISOM and the Somali National Security Forces, we are working with regional partners to fight Al-Shabaab and improve security throughout the country. Without security, long-term solutions cannot take root. We welcome the February 22nd unanimous decision by the U.N. Security Council to expand AMISOM, AMISOM's mandate and force strength, and are exploring additional ways to build capacity of Somalia's own security sector.

Second, through programs such as USAID's Transition Initiative For Stabilization, we are helping the Transitional Federal Government, as well as some local administrations, to bring services and good governance structures to areas freed from Al-Shabaab's control. We want local Somalis to see that there is, in fact, a credible alternative to Al-Shabaab.

Third, we and our international partners are working with Somalis to ensure that ongoing efforts towards transition to a more permanent governance structure succeed. There is an arduous road ahead, but the Transitional Federal Government is working hard to implement a roadmap to end the transition by August of this year. So we are on a very, very short timeline.

The roadmap is the internationally agreed-upon document that sets out very important transitional tasks, including finishing a new constitution, reforming parliament, and holding indirect elections for a President and Speaker. Once the roadmap is implemented, Somalia will have the foundation for credible governing structures,

although it will not be a permanent situation for many years to come, given the last 20 years.

I am certainly happy as we go forward to answer any questions that you may have, or to go into more detail on what we are doing on the policy side, should you so desire. But thank you again very much for the opportunity to speak today.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Well, thank you all very much. I appreciate your testimony. I am going to -- can I do an abbreviated kind of question and answer period here today? Because again, I want to get all of the other panels in before we get votes, because who knows when they will ever end?

But let me again thank you for the work that you do. Let me also acknowledge the great work of Secretary Clinton and Administrator Raj Shah, and this whole Feed the Future initiative, which I think is the way we need to be moving. And I want to get to a point where everybody in Congress knows what Feed the Future really is. Because I think what we are trying to figure out as we move forward is a way to avoid these disastrous humanitarian crises in the future.

And I was in Ethiopia a few years back. I got to see the Productive Safety Net projects. And investments in those types of initiatives, I think, as bad as this crisis has been, it would have been a hell of a lot worse had we not invested in some of those programs like the Productive Safety Net. Trying to find ways for communities to be able to withstand droughts and other natural disasters are very important. And I also appreciate the emphasis on nutrition, because when you talk about programs to provide food to people who are hungry or food-insecure, it is not just about food, it is about nutrition and helping people be healthy.

And I will just say one more thing before I ask a few questions, and that is, when we have these G8 summits coming up, it is really important, I think, for there to be a statement coming out of that meeting on the issue of ending hunger and promoting food security around the world. These are solvable problems. You know, there are some things we can't solve. This is not one of them.

And again, I, like you, over the years, have seen summits and U.N. gatherings and all kinds of meetings, where everybody says "We are going to -- by ten years from now, we are going to be here" in terms of ending hunger, or "In two years, we will be here." People make lofty promises they don't always keep, and I think this administration, to its credit -- I mean, what you outlined here today, and why I wanted you here, is to tell the story about what we are doing that is working. And there is a need for Congress, I think, to be supportive, because these are not just humanitarian initiatives. I think they are national security initiatives as well.

Let me just ask, are the funds appropriated for emergency U.S. food aid for FY12 adequate to meet the anticipated needs that are identified for the Horn of Africa, as well as other emergencies around the world? And what changes in programming and aid to the Horn of Africa can we expect to see as a result of the 2013 administration budget request.

Sorry, that is not working. Sorry about that.

Ms. LINDBORG: That is all right.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: We should give that microphone to witnesses we don't like.

Ms. LINDBORG: That is right. Thank you.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: So we want to make sure that they shouldn't be there. That's for another panel.

Ms. LINDBORG: Thank you. And I wanted to just preface my response by saying that you made the comment about how important it is to tell the story. And one of the challenges that we have is that, because of how complicated this is and how far away it is, it has been more of a challenge to grab attention.

I mean, 13.3 million people is a huge number, and it is hard to get people's heads around that. It is more than Haiti and the tsunami-affected population combined. It is more than the combined population of New York and Los Angeles.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: I think sometimes, because these numbers are huge, that we have lost, kind of, our human ability to feel them.

Ms. LINDBORG: That is right.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: You know, you hear all these statistics on the news, and I know for me, visiting troubled areas, refugee camps, and seeing firsthand some of the challenges and the difficulties that people face -- I mean, it is heartbreaking. But with statistics that are constantly thrown at us, I think people just get numbed when you say 13 million people.

And so I agree with you. I think this is unfortunately -- this shouldn't be that tough of a story to get out there, but it is something that we need to respond to. I mean, if we stand for anything in this country, it ought to be for human rights. And this is -- human rights means making sure people don't starve to death. And I think the work that you and some of the U.N. agencies have done, and non-governmental organizations, has really been quite incredible. We just need to keep doing it and, also, as I said before, kind of figure out way, as we are responding to this crisis, to see whether we can strengthen some of these local communities in a way where they can withstand natural disasters in the future.

Ms. LINDBORG: Amen to that. And part of what we need to do -- and we are making big progress on this -- is make sure that we don't lose attention in between the crisis cycles.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Right.

Ms. LINDBORG: And I am very encouraged by the efforts that we have made over this past eight months to create joint planning groups, so that our development and relief people are sitting together and making plans, as of last July, for what will come on the other end of the emergency program. And looking at how to build on the resilience that was created by the emergency programs, and taking that forward. And there has been a real commitment to do that, and we want to be able to tell the story both of the unacceptable heartbreak of women bringing in two year-olds who weigh ten pounds, as well as the extraordinary progress that can be made with the focused attention and assistance that is enabled by the assistance from the American people. So we are looking very hard at how to make all of our emergency dollars count, by improving the nutrition

of the food that we do provide and building resilience where we can, even as we provide emergency assistance.

And as we look ahead, we are hoping that we can continue to move people out of chronic crisis, as we did with the productive food safety net, into something that begins to emerge.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: I think, again, this G8 meeting provides an opportunity to help tell the story, and to also come up with a very strong challenge to the world community, that here is something that, if we work together on -- and I always tell people, this is not just the U.S. responsibility. It is an international responsibility. But if we take the leadership in the global community, telling this story -- but also explain to people, there is a way -- there is a different way, too. There is a way to invest now in strengthening these local communities, helping communities be able to build up resistance to some of these natural disasters, that will severely -- that will impact in a very positive way what we have to do in the future.

Again, what was going on in Ethiopia, what was invested on them, helped make it not as bad. You know, we should have been doing this for years before this. But I appreciate that.

Ms. McKelvey one of the things that we have heard a lot about and that we are troubled by is that Ethiopian authorities have severely restricted humanitarian access to refugee camps in Ethiopia. And what are we doing in the international community to try to encourage the Ethiopian authorities to provide greater access to these camps? Because that is an issue that I have heard a lot about.

Ms. McKELVEY: Okay. I think we have a pretty good partnership with the Ethiopian government. They have their Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs, of course, that is a major implementing partner of the U.N., along with the NGOs. So I don't think we would necessarily share the view that there is a great deal of restriction on access to the camps.

There is, perhaps, a greater degree of central government control in Ethiopia than in the neighboring countries over which agencies are allowed to operate --

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Right.

Ms. McKELVEY: -- in the country. And the issue of malnutrition that we were talking about earlier has led ARRA to insist very strongly on choosing the partners that will be in the chain of activities that all result, hopefully, in better nutritional outcome. And I know there has been some dyspepsia among some of the agencies that have found that they were told "Well, we really don't want you operating in this particular element of refugee assistance. We will put you in another element."

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Right.

Ms. McKELVEY: Or there were some harsh statements made that the malnutrition is intolerable -- which it is, of course -- and therefore that those that were working on it are out of a job and new partners will be brought in. But that hasn't, I don't think, really translated into a lack of humanitarian access to the camps. There is one area -- we didn't bring maps, but the longest-term Somali refugees are in the Jijiga area, the Ogaden, next to Somaliland, if you will. And those people have been there, many of them, since 1988.

Then the newest camps are really over by where Kenya and Ethiopia come together in the western corner. In between, there is an area called Gode, where we have had refugees crossing, and that is an area that is a security area for the government. And they have been less willing to see refugee camps set up there. But again, UNHCR and others have been able to travel there to assess the condition of the people who are pretty much integrated into local villages. We have had very good access to the Eritrean camps, very good access to the Sudanese camps.

I think maybe this question arises from what some would say is the heavy-handed central government --

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Right.

Ms. McKELVEY: -- dictating who is going to be able to operate.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Ms. Malac, it is an encouraging sign that the United Nations is moving an office from Nairobi back to Mogadishu. Does the United States have any plans for reestablishing a permanent diplomatic presence in Mogadishu?

Ms. MALAC: Chairman McGovern. Thank you. Secretary Clinton actually addressed this issue in London at the conference. I think we are very happy that the U.N. has moved its offices back into Mogadishu. We encourage them to move all of their staff, because if they really hope to influence the political progress that needs to happen over the next six to seven months, they need to be present in order to do that.

We ourselves are looking very carefully at how and when we can have people more present in Somalia. However, of course, we have to take into account the security situation which, in some cases, is very different for us as the United States than it might be for other actors. But certainly we are looking at every possible way to have people travel in, even for short periods of time. But we are probably a while, a ways away before looking at a more permanent structure.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: And let me also just say to everybody here -- I mean, all of us -- I said this in our opening statement, but I want to say it again. I mean, we are grateful to the people on the ground who are in refugee camps, who are dealing with some of these humanitarian challenges. I mean, it is dangerous for a lot of workers who represent our government, and we are very, very grateful for that.

I guess my last point and question is this. I am grateful for the work that our government has done. I am proud of our government for being involved in this effort. I want us to take a greater leadership role, even beyond the great things we are already doing, because I am very impatient on the subject, as I know you are.

I mean, that is why I think this G8 summit is an opportunity. We have a U.N. annual meeting in September. That's another opportunity. I mean, there are lots of things that it is hard for us to come to agreement on. It would seem to me, on these issues of not only responding to emergencies, but coming up with a comprehensive global plan to try to prevent these emergencies from happening to begin with -- I mean, an all out statement that we are committed to ending hunger in the world, which is a big idea, but it is something that we can do.

I remember a bunch of groups who operate humanitarian relief efforts all across the world came together and did a roadmap to end hunger. You can do it. And I am

going to tell you, it is a hell of a lot cheaper than fighting a war, and I think a lot more in our national security interest. So that is what I want. We need this leadership. And again, I appreciate Secretary Clinton. We need the President to be talking about this stuff, too.

And so my question to you is -- my final question is, what else can we be doing up here? What are we not doing that we should be doing? And you can say whatever you want, because it is just amongst us in this room.

[Laughter.]

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: And the cameras.

Ms. LINDBORG: Well, I would just say that we share your passion and your conviction that these are solvable problems, and the urgency to do so. And I think there are sometimes moments of opportunity that arise out of these enormous crises, and there is a focusing moment when 13 million people are unacceptably in crisis that helps define the problem and the solution set.

I think building on what happened with the commitments in L'Aquila that led to Feed the Future, connecting that to what we are doing at the end of March in Nairobi, where it is a very specific set of problems and a call to action, where there is a lot of momentum for the international donor community to say "We will stay engaged even after that first mobilization of humanitarian assistance, to address hunger in the Horn" -- and USAID is convening this conference as a response to plans developed by the African nations, to support and to have mutual accountability.

And this will lead to the G8, where we are absolutely seized with highlighting this and highlighting some specific solutions. So I think you are doing exactly what needs to be done, which is to continue to help us keep the spotlight on both the urgency and the opportunities to really move forward on this problem. So we thank you, and would welcome the opportunity to continue the conversation and to ensure that we are able to do these kinds of programs, to ensure that we have what we need to be the world leader on ending hunger.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: If no one else has anything else to add, let me say that I would just throw one other thing out there, too, and that is that this issue, to me, is so essential, this issue of ending hunger is so essential to our national security, to global security, that this is the kind of thing that, perhaps, the Secretary of State might think of asking for a joint meeting of Democrats and Republicans, our two caucuses getting together, and actually helping people understand what we have been able to do, working with the international community, working with the United Nations, and reintroducing this idea of Feed the Future, and about "We have a plan, but we need some congressional buy-in."

You know, these are tough budgetary times. I get it. But you can't let people starve in emergencies. It is just immoral. And we are doing it better, I think, than ever before in terms of kind of approaching some of these humanitarian issues. But I want there to be bipartisan buy-in, and I want people to understand what we have done, because too often I don't think they do.

And so I don't know if my colleague, Donna Edwards --

Ms. EDWARDS: I do. Thank you, Mr. McGovern. And I apologize that I am late. There is always something else to do. But I wanted to make sure to be here, and I

appreciate Mr. McGovern's leadership. And I wanted especially to be here to hear you -- and I will be able to see the record -- and particularly to pay respects to my good friend, Nancy Lindborg. I haven't seen you in such a long time, but I have been following all the work that you have been doing and just continue to admire you, and all of you, in your efforts.

I was thinking earlier this week about our colleague that we lost, Donald Payne, who enlightened me in so many ways about the needs of the continent, and understanding that in these places that have endured conflict and people are displaced, that the human needs are ever so important. And so I know that all of us are also remembering him and his advocacy this morning, but it reminds us, I think as Mr. McGovern said, that when you feed people, they like you. And you like them. And it makes it much more difficult for there to be future areas of conflict and disagreement.

And I think for the United States, our interest -- of course our interest is in making certain that humanitarian needs, deep humanitarian needs, don't go unaddressed. But it is in our national security interests that those needs don't go unaddressed. And as people are displaced, as they suffer, there is some culpability there, and responsibility that we have as a developed nation.

Now this morning, I spent time actually out at an elementary school in my congressional district. We were at a breakfast program for students who need to receive breakfast, lunch, and dinner at school. We know that this question of deep hunger goes throughout our world, and we try to take care of those needs here at home. Sometimes we don't do such a great job of that.

But we also have a collective responsibility to take care of those needs outside of our homes, outside of our own borders. And so I just appreciate the work that you are doing, and I think that there is an opportunity that we have, actually, to act more collectively, in addition to being aggressive about the ways in which we deliver assistance, but that we stabilize regions and help people figure out for themselves, over some period of time and with assistance, how to meet their own needs.

They want to. And so it is not just about asking, but it is also about preparing people in this generation and the next to meet their own needs and capacities. And so I thank you very much for bringing us here, and I look forward to the other panels, and to continuing to work with my colleagues to do, as Mr. McGovern has said, to make this a call, not just for a handful of Members of Congress who happen to share an interest, but to make it a call for all of us as Members of Congress, because it is in our own interest as well as the interests of the world.

So thank you very much for being here today.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Okay. Thank you again. And my colleague, Congressman Frank Wolf, who is also very much committed to this, I know wanted to be here today. So thank you, and please tell the people you work with thank you. This is probably the only hearing you are ever going to be at where anyone says thank you, but we are just here to cheer you on. And I appreciate the time. Thank you.

We are now going to hear from Allan Jury, the Director, U.S. Relations, United Nations World Food Program. And we are grateful that you are here, and we are also grateful that no bells have rung yet for votes. So please feel free to be brief if you want, and again we appreciate all the work that the U.N. World Food Program does, and thank you.



STATEMENT OF ALLAN JURY, DIRECTOR, U.S. RELATIONS OFFICE, UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAM

Mr. JURY: Thank you, Congressman, Members of Congress, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to brief the Commission today on the United Nations' perspective on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. And let me add my voice to those who have expressed condolences and admiration for the work of Congressman Payne. I mean, his work on Africa, for all of us who have dealt with the humanitarian and foreign policy aspects of Africa is long-lasting and admirable, and will be deeply remembered and appreciated by those of us who work there, and more importantly by the people of Africa themselves.

The Horn of Africa is one of the most serious situations in the world today, affecting over 10 million people. As other speakers have said, the strong international response to this crisis over the past nine months has had a significant positive effect, saving lives and improving health and nutritional status. But the international community nonetheless needs to remain vigilant in light of potential challenges in the months ahead that could slow, or even reverse, the progress achieved to date.

My written statement will have more details on the current situation, but in light of the comments of many others I will be rather brief on the sort of situational update. I think it is encouraging that so many of the speakers already, and my own report from the U.N. side, show such a commonality of views. I think that is already an encouraging sign for coordination.

As people have said, all the countries in the region have faced a severe drought that had its most severe impact in the middle part of 2011. The drought has been further exacerbated by conflict and governance challenges in Somalia. Long-awaited rains and a good harvest have brought relief to some drought-affected areas of the Horn, but millions still need food assistance.

Since the beginning of July 2011, when famine was declared, the World Food Program has reached over 9 million people in the Horn of Africa with direct assistance. In Somalia, WFP is assisting 1.3 million people. It is providing food and nutritional support to 556,000 refugees in Kenya, and 298,000 refugees in Ethiopia. And finally, WFP is also assisting 5.7 million drought-affected people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti and Uganda, down from the peak of over 7 million in the heart of the crisis in late 2011.

WFP food assistance is providing the nutritional support that communities need to rebuild their lives and build resilience against future droughts. We have heard a lot about nutrition from previous speakers. WFP has increased the number of nutrition programs for both refugees and drought-affected people using specialized products to both prevent and treat malnutrition, especially in children, pregnant women, and nursing mothers. Longer-term programs supporting communities to build sustainable food security are an equally crucial part of our work in Ethiopia and Kenya. Our MERET program, a joint effort with the government of Ethiopia, improves livelihoods by enabling chronically food-insecure communities to generate income through environmental rehabilitation activities.

As others have said, the situation in Somalia poses special challenges among the Horn. It is one of the most dangerous places to work. The mortality and malnutrition rate is among the highest in the world, particularly in southern Somalia, and humanitarian access in the south has deteriorated considerably in recent months. WFP is focusing its efforts on distributing food to as many people as it can reach in areas in Somalia where we have access. Currently we have access to Puntland in the north, the central north, Somaliland in the north, the central regions, Mogadishu, and some border areas of the south. We have also coordinated closely with other non-governmental international organizations, which have in the past been able to deliver food and nutritional assistance to areas where WFP has not had access.

Even though, as many have already said, famine is no longer present in Somalia, 2.3 million people remain in crisis, unable to fully meet their essential food and non-food needs. There are two factors that raise concern that the improvements in the food security in Somalia could be jeopardized in the month ahead.

First, there is uncertainty about the rainfall in the Horn generally, and in Somalia specifically. The seasonal forecasts from institutions such as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development suggest an increased probability of below-average rainfall in northern Kenya, southern Ethiopia, and most of Somalia during the March to May 2012 season. As a result, large numbers of people are likely to remain in crisis until the August 2012 seasonal harvest.

A second factor of concern, as I said, is reduced humanitarian access to southern Somalia. The pull-out of the International Committee of the Red Cross from southern Somalia in January, and the expulsion of 16 humanitarian groups by armed elements in southern Somalia in November, will leave approximately 1.7 million people without access to food assistance. WFP is very concerned about the well-being of people in areas beyond the reach of international humanitarian aid.

I would also like to call attention to the situation in South Sudan, which hasn't been mentioned much. A country that is not always considered part of the Horn of Africa, but suffers from some of the same factors that have produced widespread food insecurity in the rest of the Horn, South Sudan faces a cereal deficit of 470,000 metric tons, half of its national requirement and 60 percent more than last year's deficit. Delayed and erratic rains, as well as political instability and conflict, are major factors leading to this food deficit. It is estimated that as many as 4.7 million people could suffer from food insecurity in South Sudan in 2012, with an estimated 1 million people severely food-insecure.

South Sudan also currently hosts more than 100,000 refugees, with more expected to arrive from the Republic of Sudan as the humanitarian situations in southern Kordofon and Blue Nile continue to deteriorate. And I want to comment Congressman McGovern for his speech recently on the floor of the House, calling attention to the serious situation in South Kordofon and Blue Nile and its implications for the humanitarian situation in the Horn.

Let me conclude my remarks by going over what I see as the three main positive achievements of the international assistance effort to the Horn, and the three greatest challenges we face in the months ahead. And I think it is interesting that in these challenges, they are quite similar to what was identified by previous speakers.

The first of the positive achievements, as many have already said, is that famine is no longer present in the Horn of Africa. And it is significant that Somalia had famine

appear in July of 2011, but had been declared no longer present as of February 3rd of this year, through significant international assistance and somewhat better rain. But as others have said, perhaps even more significant is that famine conditions never appeared elsewhere in the Horn, despite drought conditions in much of Ethiopia and Kenya at least as severe as in Somalia. Long-term programs such as the Productive Safety Nets and WFP's MERET program reduce the number of people needing emergency food assistance in Ethiopia, and the willingness of the governments of Kenya and Ethiopia to permit humanitarian access to drought-affected populations allowed international food assistance to be scaled up rapidly, preventing serious food insecurity from reaching famine levels.

Secondly, the U.N. and NGO community has come together to address collectively the enormous challenges in responding to the crisis in the Horn. Joint food assessments through coordinated U.N. and U.S. institutions in the Horn of Africa represent one of the best examples of coordinated food security analysis we have seen in a long time in addressing a major emergency, and I think it has been significant that throughout this crisis, the assessment information has been consistent across the board, quite detailed, and shared by a wide variety of stakeholders.

The Somalia Food Assistance Cluster, led by WFP, has brought together all the NGOs and international organizations working in Somalia. The Cluster has enhanced coordination and information sharing in order to maximize opportunities to deliver vital assistance to southern Somalia, within an environment where international humanitarian access is extremely limited. And close cooperation between the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Program and NGOs assisting refugees has proved essential in meeting the challenges posed by a rapid increase in Somali refugee populations in Ethiopia and Kenya.

And the third positive is that the international community, led by the United States, has responded generously by contributing significant resources to the humanitarian assistance community's needs in the Horn of Africa. WFP, for example, has received 800 million dollars in contributions from more than 40 donors since famine was declared in Somalia in July 2011, although it does still require an additional 81 million through July 2012 to ensure that the needs of food assistance are met in the Horn.

But the big three challenges, as I conclude, the most important is that millions of people still need food assistance and the rains are uncertain. Food security outcomes will depend heavily on the performance of the March to May 2012 rains, and there is a real possibility that drought conditions could worsen in the next several months.

The second major challenge is that limited humanitarian access to southern Somalia I mentioned, leaving 1.7 million people without access. And while the harvests are good now, as we hit that lean season in the late spring, that lack of access could be crucial to the people and could lead to a new crisis.

And the third challenge is to make sure that the international community supports programs for resiliency and recovery in the Horn as robustly as it has supported emergency relief programs over the next nine months. As the situation in Ethiopia shows, long-term investments in agriculture, community development, and disaster preparedness can reduce the need for emergency assistance when drought hits the region. The next crisis in the Horn can have a less severe impact if the international community stays engaged in the region and supports the long-term investments needed to reduce chronic hunger and increase capacity to cope with future shocks.

Thank you for this opportunity, and I look forward to responding to any of your questions.

[The statement of Mr. Jury follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALAN JURY

**Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission**  
**“Horn of Africa: The Continuing Food, Refugee, and Humanitarian Crisis”**  
**March 8, 2012, Rayburn House Office Building**  
**Allan Jury**  
**Director, U.S. Relations Office, United Nations World Food Program**

Members of Congress, distinguished guests, ladies and gentleman, thank you for the opportunity to brief this commission today on the United Nations perspective on the humanitarian situation in the Horn of Africa. This situation is one of the most serious humanitarian situations in the world, affecting over ten million people in four main impacted countries – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The strong international response to this crisis over the past nine months has had a significant positive effect, saving lives and improving health and nutritional status. The international community nonetheless needs to remain vigilant in light of potential challenges in the months ahead that could slow or reverse the progress achieved to date.

### **CURRENT SITUATION IN THE HORN**

All the countries in the Horn of Africa are facing the effects of a drought that produced its more severe impact in second half of 2011. The humanitarian impact of that drought have been exacerbated by conflict and governance challenges in Somalia that affect not only Somalia but the neighbouring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya, which host large Somali refugees populations that grew significantly in 2011. Long-awaited rains and a good harvest have brought relief to some drought-affected areas of the Horn of Africa but millions still need food assistance. Good rainfall in the short rainy season has improved water and pasture conditions and reduced trekking distances.

However, food access will remain difficult for millions of poor households due to low market prices of animals and high prices of local cereals. At the end of 2011, local maize prices were still significantly higher than the previous year’s prices. In two regions the rains were below normal– northern Ethiopia and parts of northern Somalia (Puntland and Somaliland).

Since the beginning of July 2011, the World Food Program (WFP) has reached over 9 million people in the Horn of Africa with direct food assistance. WFP is providing a critical lifeline to vulnerable Somalis in three countries. In Somalia, WFP has provided 1.3 million people with life-saving food assistance. In addition, WFP assists an increasing number of Somali people who fled to escape the famine and has extended its food assistance in Ethiopia to include newly arrived Sudanese refugees fleeing conflict in Blue Nile state. Food assistance and life-saving nutritional support are currently provided to 556,000 refugees in Kenya and 298,000 refugees in Ethiopia. WFP is also currently assisting 5.7 million drought affected people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Djibouti and Uganda. WFP food assistance is providing the nutritional support that communities need to rebuild their lives and build resilience against future droughts. WFP has increased a number of nutrition programmes using specialised products to both prevent and treat malnutrition, especially in children, pregnant women and nursing mothers. Longer-term programs supporting communities to build sustainable food security are a crucial part of WFP’s work in Ethiopia and Kenya. Our MERET program, a joint effort with the government of Ethiopia, improves livelihoods by enabling chronically food-insecure communities to generate income through environmental rehabilitation activities.

### **SOMALIA**

The situation in Somalia poses special challenges for the international community. Conflict and denial of access to civilian population in parts of Somalia makes it particularly difficult for international assistance efforts to reach all those who need food and nutritional assistance, particularly in Southern Somalia. Somalia is one of the most challenging and dangerous environments to work, largely due to insecurity, poor

infrastructure and a widely scattered population. Mortality and malnutrition rates remain among the highest in the world throughout southern Somalia, where humanitarian access has deteriorated considerably in recent months.

WFP is focusing its efforts on distributing food to as many people as it can reach in areas of Somalia to which we have access. We have been reaching around 1.3 million people and will continue to assess and address the needs where we have access. Currently, WFP has access to: Puntland, Somaliland, the Central regions, Mogadishu and some border areas of the south.

We have also coordinated closely with other non-governmental (NGOs) and international organizations which have in the past been able to deliver food and nutritional assistance to areas where WFP has not had access. The combination of these coordinated food assistance efforts and a better harvest in the latter part of 2011 led the UN led Food Security and Nutrition Assessment Unit (FSNAU) and the US-supported Famine Early Warning System (FEWSNET) jointly to declare on February 3 that famine is no longer present in Somalia. Mortality and malnutrition rates remain, however, among the highest in the world throughout southern Somalia.

Even though recent analysis by FSNAU and FEWS NET indicates that Somalia is no longer in famine, the study warns that 2.34 million people remain in crisis, unable to fully meet essential food and non-food needs. There are two factors that raise concerns that the improvements in the food security situation in Somalia could be jeopardized in the months ahead.

First, there remains considerable uncertainty about the spring rainfalls in the Horn generally and Somalia in particular. The Intergovernmental Government Authority on Development (IGAD) Climate Prediction and Application Center's seasonal forecast for the Greater Horn of Africa indicates an increased probability of below-average rainfall in northern Kenya, southern Ethiopia, and most of Somalia during the March to May 2012 season. As a result, large numbers of people are likely to remain in crisis until the August 2012 seasonal harvest.

A second factor of concern is reduced humanitarian access to Southern Somalia. The pull-out of the ICRC from southern Somalia (12 Jan) and the expulsion of 16 humanitarian groups (28 Nov) by armed elements in control of much of the territory of Southern Somali will leave approximately 1.7 million people without access to food assistance. WFP is very concerned about the well-being of the people in areas beyond the reach of humanitarian aid.

### **South Sudan**

I would also like to call attention to the situation in South Sudan, a country that is not always considered part of the Horn of Africa but suffers from some of the same factors that have produced widespread food insecurity in the rest of the Horn. More than six months after the birth of South Sudan—the world's newest independent country—a series of emergencies are unfolding that require urgent humanitarian response.

The recent Crop Food Security Assessment (CFSAM), released by the Food Security and Livelihood Cluster in South Sudan, projects a cereal deficit of 470,000 mt, half of the national cereal requirement and 60% more than last year's deficit. Delayed and erratic rains, as well as political instability and conflict, were cited as the major factors leading to the current cereal deficit. It is estimated that as many as 4.7 million people could suffer from food insecurity in 2012, with an estimated 1 million people severely food-insecure.

Potential macroeconomic shocks resulting from the continuing political stalemate between the Republic of South Sudan and Sudan may further contribute to the deteriorating economic conditions in the country. The Republic of South Sudan, which previously derived 98 per cent of its budgetary revenue from oil exports, lost this source of foreign exchange following shutdown of oil production earlier this year. The expected pressure on the South Sudanese pound and related price inflation for essential commodities is expected to have additional impacts on the food security status of the population.

In addition to these structural socio-economic concerns, South Sudan currently hosts more than 100,000 refugees, with more expected to arrive from the Republic of Sudan as the humanitarian situation in

Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile continues to deteriorate. During the past 15 months, more than 360,000 people have returned from the Republic of Sudan. Furthermore, an additional 120,000 people have been registered in Sudan to date who have indicated that they do not possess the financial means to return to South Sudan. It is expected that hundreds of thousands more will return if the moratorium period for residency of South Sudanese is not extended beyond April 2012. Inter-communal violence has also been on the rise, with the looming threat of renewed conflict in flash point areas, such as northern parts of Jonglei state.

Let me conclude my remarks by summarizing what I see as the three main positive achievements of the international assistance effort to the Horn of Africa and the three greatest challenges the international community faces in the region in the months ahead.

### **POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS**

The first of these positive achievements is that **famine is no longer present** in the Horn of Africa. It is significant that international assistance and an improved harvest led the international community to declare that famine conditions that first appeared in Somalia in July 2011 were no longer present in that country as of February 3, 2012, although millions of Somalis remain highly food insecure and in need of international assistance. But perhaps even more significant is that famine conditions never appeared elsewhere in the Horn, despite drought conditions in much of Ethiopia and Kenya at least as severe as in Somalia. Long-term programs to mitigate the impact of drought and increase resiliency such as Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) and WFP's MERET program reduced the number of people needing emergency food assistance in Ethiopia. The willingness of the Governments of Kenya and Ethiopia to permit humanitarian access to drought affected populations allowed international food assistance to be scaled up rapidly, preventing serious food insecurity from reaching famine levels in these countries.

Secondly, the UN and NGO community has come together to address collectively the enormous challenges in responding to the humanitarian and food crisis in the Horn. The joint food assessments by the FSNAU and FEWSNET in the Horn of Africa represent one of the best examples of coordinated food security analysis in addressing a major food emergency. The Somalia Food Cluster led by WFP that brought together all the NGOs and international organizations working in Somalia enhanced coordination and information sharing in order to maximize opportunities to deliver vital assistance to Southern Somalia within an environment where international humanitarian access was extremely limited. Close cooperation between the Office of the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), the World Food Program (WFP), and other NGOs and international organizations assisting refugees proved essential in meeting the challenges posed by a rapid increase in Somali refugee populations in Ethiopia and Kenya.

Thirdly, the international community, led by the United States, has responded generously by contributing significant resources to the humanitarian assistance community's needs in the Horn of Africa. WFP has received US \$800 million in contributions from more than 40 donors since famine was declared in Somalia in July 2011, although it still requires an additional US\$ 81 million to July 2012 to ensure the critical supply of food to millions of people who continue to suffer from drought and famine in the Horn of Africa.

### **CONTINUING CHALLENGES**

The most critical challenge in the Horn is that millions of people remain in need of international humanitarian assistance at least through the middle of the year and food security outcomes will depend heavily on the performance of the March to May 2012 rains. These rains are the major rainfall period for pastoral and agricultural areas of northern Kenya, southern Ethiopia, and most of Somalia, accounting for 50 to 60 percent of annual rainfall. There is a real possibility that drought conditions could worsen in the next several months.

The second major challenge is the limited international humanitarian access to Southern Somali. Currently, there is virtually no humanitarian access to 1.7 million food insecure people in Southern Somalia, many of whom are likely to need international assistance during the upcoming lean season between harvests.

The third major challenge is to make sure the international community supports programs for resiliency and recovery in the Horn as robustly as it has supported emergency relief programs over the past nine months.

As the situation in Ethiopia shows, long-term investment in agriculture, community development, disaster preparedness/mitigation, and resiliency to shocks can reduce the need for emergency assistance when drought hits the region. The next crisis in the Horn of Africa can have a less severe impact if the international community stays engaged in the region and supports the long-term investments needed to reduce chronic hunger and increase capacity to cope with future shocks.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Thank you, Mr. Jury. And I have known you for a long time, and I am a big fan of WFP. And I am not going to ask any questions.

I want to get Mr. Yarnell in before we have to adjourn this hearing. But I do just want to say that I think it is kind of refreshing that everybody seems to be reading off the same sheet of music. And that is encouraging.

We need to provide the resources, and we need to challenge the world to provide the resources. But I just want to conclude by saying that I not only appreciate the work that you do, and what WFP does. I am really grateful to the people in the field. Because I have seen what they do up close and personal, and it is oftentimes at great risk to themselves. So I thank you for that, and I will not have any questions right now.

I don't know whether --

Ms. EDWARDS: I do know we have to leave. I just have one question. I am trying to reconcile the fact that we spent -- in the last fiscal year, two thirds of our humanitarian assistance went to emergency food assistance, and then this last fiscal year it was closer to about 80 percent, with your statement about the movement from emergency assistance to other kinds of assistance over the long term. Am I misunderstanding that?

Mr. JURY: Well, a lot of the longer-term assistance that I think we are talking about doesn't necessarily have to involve direct distribution of food. A lot of it is cash and development programs of the type that Ms. Lindborg talked earlier about, in Feed the Future. And I really do think that has been one of the achievements of the administration over the last several years, is we are not trying to use food aid for everything.

Food aid is really critical in emergencies, and in certain select circumstances it can be the right tool in development. But having the full toolbox of assistance -- of cash, of vouchers, of long-term agricultural development -- really gives us a much better opportunity than a world in which we try to deal with hunger only with food aid. And I say this even as an organization which makes at its core food aid: we have tried to broaden our toolbox ourselves, to address hunger in multiple ways.

And I think the administration's move in that direction -- so that when we look at the long term, we should be looking at Feed the Future and the development assistance accounts, and how they integrate, and how we can think about the transition even in food aid more explicitly. Because too often we end up with a situation where there is one pot for development, one pot for emergencies, and people aren't thinking enough about the transitional time that kind of falls between the gaps.

And I think the Congressman, earlier, said "What more can we do?" I think continuing to focus and work -- and I am sure there are ideas from NGOs and others about how to deal with this -- on how we can resource that transition is a critical need.

Thank you.

Ms. EDWARDS: Thank you. I appreciate that. And I do think that the third challenge -- this is why the third challenge that you laid out is probably the more complicated one to figure out in this body. But thank you very much.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: And just before you go, let me also just thank WFP, you in particular, Josette Sheeran, and others, friends of the World Food Program as well, for -- at very key moments in terms of what we were going to do in terms of funding and stepping up to the crisis, to deal with what was happening in the Horn of Africa, WFP was very persuasive.

And I would urge you to continue to do that. This is a place that constantly needs to be persuaded, even on these kinds of issues. And I think that while there is not as much funding and not as much resources going as I would like, I know it would be a lot less without WFP's leadership here in the United States and around the world. So please thank everybody for us.

Mr. JURY: Thank you. And I can assure you, you have my continued commitment to continue to work on those levels.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Thank you very much.

Our final witness is Mark Yarnell, advocate of Refugees International.

Thank you for coming. Appreciate it.

#### STATEMENT OF MARK YARNELL, ADVOCATE, REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL

Mr. YARNELL: Well, thank you. Thanks very much for having me. And I know you have to attend to your legislative duties, so I will --

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: That is okay. This is actually more important than the things we are voting on on the floor.

Mr. YARNELL: First of all, thank you very much for holding the hearing, and for drawing attention to this ongoing critical issue, both to you and your staff for holding this hearing and to Representative Edwards for being here as well.

Just for those who don't know, Refugees International is an independent humanitarian advocacy group focused on refugees, IDPs and statelessness. I also have to begin by expressing sadness at the tragic loss of Representative Payne. He was a true champion for Africa, constantly displayed leadership, used his authority to address these kinds of issues. And certainly as we navigate the challenges of the current crisis, his passion and leadership will be sorely missed.

I just returned a couple weeks ago from a research trip to Kenya and Ethiopia, so I will just hit on a few key observations and then answer any questions you might have. Just to echo what my fellow panelists expressed, the situation in Somalia remains absolutely critical and fragile. There have been food security gains, but they could change depending on the impact of the next rains.

And also, there is conflict on multiple fronts. While last year we saw displacement as a result of famine and drought, in January and February in this year we are seeing major displacement as a result of conflict. In January and February alone, there were 63,000 Somalis internally displaced as a result of insecurity. And since we



won't expect conditions conducive to large-scale return of Somalis to their homes anytime soon, I think significant and sustained attention on refugee population is necessary.

So I will just make a few quick comments about Kenya, which is home to some 520,000 Somali refugees, and to discuss the challenges in Da'daab. It has been rocked by a series of security incidents, which has made access to aid far more challenging, but the UNHCR and NGOs are working to find creative ways to lessen the international staff footprint, hand over some responsibilities to refugees, and are working through how to think of some creative solutions.

What is exacerbating the challenges, and what has been mentioned, is that Kenya still hasn't resumed registration of new refugees. Kenya deserves serious credit for hosting so many refugees for so many years, but the lack of registration is unacceptable. And while there have been comments that they intend to resume soon, I really want to impress upon the Congress and the U.S. Government to really call on Kenya to begin registration immediately.

Without registration, the refugees are not entitled to services from the U.N. Refugee Agency, such as food and shelter. There is no system for identifying who the most vulnerable are as they arrive, such as unaccompanied children, women who have been sexually assaulted. And third, there is no security screening to identify those who might pose a danger to the camp's residents, aid workers, and police. So this is something that really must be solved immediately, and can't wait any further.

Of additional concern has been periodic statements by Kenyan officials that they intend to return Somalis to Somalia in areas that they claim to have cleared militarily. We must stress that any return by Somalis to Somalia must be voluntary, safe, and dignified. There is no refugee right more fundamental than that of voluntary return. So these comments are concerning, and you must continue to impress upon the Kenyan government to abide by its commitments of international law.

But what I think is more likely than a kind of overt movement of Somalis from Kenya up into Somalia under the eye of the international community is that conditions within Da'daab are being made so harsh that refugees feel that they have no choice but to return. And this is happening more sort of quietly and with less attention, but it has the same impact of refugees who are forced to return to conditions that aren't safe.

One issue that is contributing to this is the harassment by Kenyan police of refugees, including mass arbitrary arrests, sexual assault, physical abuse. According to one Kenyan refugee we met, "We suffer two times. We suffer harassment by Al-Shabaab in Somalia, and then we suffer again in Kenya because people think we are Al-Shabaab."

Now, we must rely on the Kenyan police, because they are the ones that are responsible for securing the camp, for securing the aid workers, for securing the refugees themselves. But this kind of behavior is actually unacceptable, and I think the U.S. Government must ensure that Kenya has the proper resources and capacities to train its police in prevention of abuse, in protection of refugees, and ensure that there are investigations and due process when abuses occur.

Now just a couple of points on Ethiopia, which is also hosting a very high number of refugees. I will respectfully disagree with a fellow panelist who indicated that there weren't any challenges regarding restriction of space for humanitarian actors. Certainly at the beginning of the crisis, in the summer moving into the fall, Ethiopia was quite

strong in terms of keeping its border open, registering new refugees, opening space for new actors who had high capacity to deal with the onset of the crisis.

Morbidity and mortality were brought under control, but as mentioned malnutrition is still very high. I mean, the emergency threshold for global acute malnutrition is 15 percent, and we are seeing rates of upwards of 40 and 50 percent in some of the camps, alarmingly high. And within this context, we are seeing Ethiopia beginning to restrict access by aid workers, an effort to reclaim implementing authority when we don't think they may have the capacity to effectively address the needs.

I might be biased, but my colleague and I were denied access when we tried to visit the camps. I know some high-level donor representatives that weren't allowed to go. And I guess the concern is that, as Ethiopia restricts the space, there will be less information coming in out of the camps. And it is more than kind of bickering in terms of NGOs competing with each other over control, that we are seeing more challenges in terms of understanding what is actually happening on the ground.

And I think that the fact that the U.S. is such a close ally with Ethiopia, tremendous bilateral donor, there must be some diplomatic leverage to ensure that there is oversight. The U.S. funds a large portion of UNHCR's budget, which itself directly funds virtually the entire budget of Ethiopia's refugee agency. So to sort of -- yes, there might be a close relationship between the U.S. and the Ethiopian government, but there must be some level of oversight.

So I will end there, because I know there is more to get to, but just to conclude, the challenges are obviously extremely complex. But where we do have control, and where we do have access, it is our responsibility to ensure that the needs and protection of the most vulnerable are being met. Thanks very much.

[The statement of Mr. Yarnell follows:]

**PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARK YARNELL**

**Testimony for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission  
“Horn of Africa: The Continuing Food, Refugee, and Humanitarian Crisis”  
March 8, 2012, Rayburn House Office Building  
Mark Yarnell  
Advocate, Refugees International**

Co-Chairman McGovern and Co-Chairman Wolf: thank you for the opportunity to appear today. I returned recently from a research trip to Kenya and Ethiopia, and I appreciate the opportunity to share my observations.

Despite the declaration that famine conditions in South Central Somalia no longer exist, the number of displaced Somalis remains staggering. There are nearly one million Somali refugees residing in neighboring countries. Within Somalia itself, the UN estimates there are currently between 1.3 and 1.5 million Internally Displaced Persons (or IDPs) displaced by conflict, violence, and the impact of famine and drought.

As attention toward the latest crisis wanes, there are fears that international aid allocations aimed at supporting these displaced populations will be diminished.

To be clear, Somali refugees living in neighboring countries such as Kenya and Ethiopia face difficult conditions, but we do not expect large numbers of voluntary returns to Somalia anytime soon. Recent food security gains remain fragile and military operations various fronts - continue to cause displacement. Today

my testimony will focus on Somali refugees, since substantial and sustained attention on the part of the international community is necessary.

Let me begin with Kenya and the challenges for Somali refugees there.

Since 1991, Kenya has hosted the Dadaab refugee camp, now the world's largest refugee settlement with a population totaling nearly half a million in Northeast Kenya, one of the least developed regions of the country. Due to a spate of security incidents late last year in and around Dadaab – including attacks on Kenyan police, the assassination of two refugee community security leaders, and the kidnapping of several aid workers (potentially by Al-Shabab sympathizers in retaliation for Kenya's military incursion into Somalia last year, though details are not entirely clear) – the operating context in Dadaab has changed dramatically. The movement and activities of aid workers has been restricted and will probably never return to “normal.”

Dadaab has long been an overcrowded, challenging environment for refugees, but these mobility constraints pose a serious new challenge to operations in the camp. Some water projects are stalled, food distributions are more difficult, and high-level medical care is less available.

Aid is still being provided, however, and to adapt to the new environment, UNHCR and NGO staff are devising ways to empower refugees to take on more responsibilities and build their capacity to manage and supervise services. This involves strengthening relationships with refugee leaders; giving refugee incentive workers more responsibilities; expanding training programs; and beefing up remote communications between the camps and the Dadaab staff compound. These steps, which decrease the in-camp footprint of international aid workers, present an opportunity to shake up the way aid has long-been delivered in Dadaab. It also creates programs that focus on development and skill-building for refugees.

This strategic shift has its difficulties. First, with decreased international supervision marginalized groups within the camps could become more vulnerable. Second, without the kind of technical help the UN and its partners can provide the health and wellbeing of residents could be affected. And third, though refugees may receive small sums of money for work done in the camp, they cannot be paid regular wages without work permits from the government. But this is Dadaab's new reality. Therefore, UNHCR, its implementing partners, and the international community must continue prioritizing the development of creative alternatives for providing services to Dadaab's refugees, and donors must continue to support this refugee assistance operation despite the change in circumstances.

Last October, the challenges in Dadaab were exacerbated by the Government of Kenya's decision to suspend the registration of new arrivals to the camp due to concerns regarding security and overcrowding. Kenya deserves serious credit for hosting so many refugees for so many years, but halting registration is unacceptable—without registration, refugee families are not officially eligible for assistance from the UN Refugee Agency. It means there is no official system for identifying refugees who are the most vulnerable, including unaccompanied children, women who have been abused, or refugees in particularly poor health.

We believe it is, in fact, in Kenya's own national interest to restart registration. The government's decision to halt registration was part of a security effort to restrict members of Al-Shabab from taking residence in the camp. Since that time, however, the security situation in Dadaab has deteriorated, and lack of registration is contributing to the problem. No registration means there are no security screenings to identify new arrivals who might pose a threat to camp residents, police, and aid workers.

Kenya's Department of Refugee Affairs has given positive indications that it may reopen registration soon, but we are still waiting. We ask Congress to urge the Government of Kenya – a major recipient of U.S. bilateral funding – to re-open refugee registration in Dadaab immediately.

Another note of concern are the periodic statements by some Kenyan officials that they intend to return Somalis potentially to areas in Southern Somalia that the Kenyans claim to have “cleared” militarily. At the UK-hosted London Conference on Somalia in February, Kenyan President Mwai Kibaki called for a “firm and durable” solution to the refugee crisis that includes “the return of these populations to their home

country.” It must be stressed that any return by Somalis to Somalia must be voluntary, safe, and dignified. Any forced returns – by Kenya, or other nations – would be a violation of international refugee law and could possibly trigger further instability.

While mass forced returns (or “refoulement”) of Somali refugees is a legitimate worry, what is more likely (and currently happening) is that some refugees in Dadaab will be made to feel so unwelcome, and will have such difficulties in accessing basic services that they will essentially feel forced to return to Somalia. We heard numerous reports of abuse of refugees by Kenyan police – including arbitrary detention and sexual abuse – and about some camp residents who have fled Dadaab because of this abuse. One Somali refugee we met in Kenya said: “We suffer two times. We suffer harassment by Al Shabab in Somalia, and then we suffer again in Kenya, because people think we are Al Shabab.”

In the past, my organization, among others, has called for an increased police presence in Dadaab – to provide security for aid workers and refugees alike. But those police must be properly trained in refugee and humanitarian protection before arriving in Dadaab. To this end, the U.S. government must encourage and work with the government to ensure that Kenyan police training programs for protection of refugees are funded adequately and receive proper and ongoing oversight.

Turning to Ethiopia, it is now home to some 189,000 Somali refugees, many of whom arrived at the Dollo Ado camps in southeastern Ethiopia during the height of the 2011 famine in Somalia in very poor health.

Initially, death rates among refugees were very high. Fortunately, last summer when thousands of Somalis were streaming in to Ethiopia each month, the Ethiopian government and its agency overseeing refugee services (known as ARRA) kept its borders open, screened and registered new arrivals, and opened up space for numerous humanitarian agencies to operate and help manage the critical needs of refugees – the Ethiopian government should be commended for that. The morbidity and mortality rates have been reduced, compared to the height of the crisis. However, malnutrition rates in several of the camps are still disturbingly high, with recorded Global Acute Malnutrition rates of over forty percent, far above the emergency level of fifteen percent.

In a worrisome change of approach the Ethiopian government is moving to restrict the previously opened humanitarian space and reclaim implementing control over some activities. Refugees International is concerned that this action would weaken capacities to address the still high malnutrition rates. Further, we note the general lack of transparency about the needs of refugees in Dollo Ado and about how those needs are being met. Ethiopia could further enhance its reputation for respect for the rights of refugees if it would remedy the current inability of international UNHCR protection staff to oversee the registration of new refugees.

As a major bilateral donor to the Ethiopian government, the U.S. has and must use its diplomatic leverage to insist that agencies with the proper capacities be allowed to operate in internationally funded refugee operations – and that there is transparency about the needs of refugees – so that the adequate provision of services can be ensured.

Serious investments and diplomatic and donor attention toward refugee populations are necessary because large-scale, voluntary returns to Somalia are unlikely anytime soon. Despite positive comments by politicians and officials at the UK Somalia Conference in London two weeks ago heralding political and security advances, much of the country remains insecure and unstable.

First, though famine conditions no longer exist, several regions in Somalia remain on the edge, and could return to famine if the long-rains – from April to June – do not come through. Second, there is conflict in Somalia on multiple fronts. Kenyan forces (now operating under the umbrella of the African Union peacekeeping force in Somalia, AMISOM) is fighting Shabab from the South, Ethiopia is attacking Shabab from the West, and Ugandan and Burundian peacekeepers are fighting a Shabab insurgency in and around Mogadishu.

While last year, Somalis were displaced primarily as a result of the drought and famine, this year they are fleeing their homes as a result of conflict. In January and February alone, 63,000 Somalis were displaced – some newly displaced and some re-displaced. For example, in the Afgoye corridor, outside of Mogadishu, thousands of Somalis who fled Mogadishu for refuge in Afgoye were displaced back to Mogadishu last month when AMISOM engaged in an offensive against Al-Shabab in the Afgoye corridor.

Refugees International urges all parties to the conflict - and this is particularly salient for those forces that are bank-rolled by the US government - to take all measures necessary to reduce harm to civilians.

Additionally, as our colleagues observed during their visit to Mogadishu last fall, militias allied with the Somalia's Transition Federal Government (TFG) are acting essentially as the "gate keepers" of IDP camps and engaged in harassment and abuses of IDPs themselves. The U.S., which backs the TFG, must hold the TFG accountable regarding its mistreatment of IDPs.

The challenges in Somalia and the Horn are complex, but where we do have control, and where we do have access, it is our responsibility to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are being met and that international military efforts to stabilize Somalia do not cause more harm than good.

Thank you for your time.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: First of all, thank you very much for being here. And I think the perspective from the refugee vantage point is very, very important as we talk about this crisis, because it is a very, very serious issue. You mentioned the challenges with the Kenyan police and not registering refugees. You know, that is obviously of great concern.

Let me go to the issue of Somalia. What can the United States and the international community do better to protect and assist internally displaced people within Somalia?

Mr. YARNELL: I think the main thing is that, given the tremendous numbers of displaced within Somalia, hundreds of thousands of displaced in Mogadishu, as you mentioned --

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Right.

Mr. YARNELL: My colleagues were in Mogadishu in October, and witnessed -- while there was some positive delivery of aid, a lot of the camp management is run by the Transitional Federal Government, which often has its allied militias who are in control as sort of the gatekeepers of the camps. And they have been involved in sort of systematic abuse of refugees and corruption, and avoiding the delivery of services.

And since the TFG is a government that the U.S. and the international community is supporting and is boosting, to allow this kind of activity to happen without oversight, without it being in the public eye, is quite concerning. And I think working more closely with the TFG on ensuring that those who are displaced in areas that, at least, it does control can be a positive step.

And obviously there are areas where there is difficult access in south central Somalia, and those are challenges that many of us are working to try and figure out how best to address. I mean, certainly it is discussed often that the OFAC restrictions don't help. And even if there isn't access now, when access becomes open we are concerned

that the continuing restrictions surrounding OFAC may inhibit groups from moving into where they are able to now operate.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Just one final thing. Going back to Kenya, you mentioned that the Kenyan government deserves credit --

Mr. YARNELL: Yes.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: -- because they have had to accept a lot of refugees over the years. But nevertheless, you highlight some important problems. One, for those who are in camps, what services are they not being provided? And just for the record, again, if you are not registered, what does that mean to people who enter the area?

Mr. YARNELL: Right. So if you are not registered, you essentially do not have eligibility to receive refugee benefits that are provided by the U.N. Refugee Agency. And so food, shelter, non-food items, health screening, healthcare. I think the agencies that are there are doing their best to try and reach those populations, but there are certainly people who are being missed. And it is tragic, given these circumstances.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: I appreciate that. I just wanted to have that for the record.

Ms. EDWARDS: Thank you very much for your testimony, and just a couple of questions in terms of Kenya. What is the United States doing, or the international community doing, in terms of police training? Do we have an effective police training mechanism?

Mr. YARNELL: As far as I know, there has been in the past police training, some of it done through the U.N. Refugee Agency, on protection. The challenge is that often, once police are trained, there is no guarantee that they are actually going to go to the camps. And there hasn't been, I think, strong follow-through on whether the training has been effective.

And I think given the acuteness, or the severity of what is going on in Da'daab and how much we must rely on Kenyan police for security, that there must be kind of closer oversight of these training programs. Because they have been happening, but obviously they haven't been too effective, given what we are seeing on the ground.

Ms. EDWARDS: And with respect to both Kenya and Somalia, does this, with the sort of gatekeeping that you have described, is 100 percent of the assistance getting through?

Mr. YARNELL: I wouldn't say 100 percent, no. That is -- in a complex crisis such as this, it is going to be impossible to --

Ms. EDWARDS: Is a substantial amount of the assistance getting through? I am just trying to figure out -- you know, obviously there is a more organized mechanism, particularly with respect to Somalia, the control of the camps. And I am just trying to figure out what that means with respect to the assistance that does get through.

Mr. YARNELL: I think it depends. I think my colleagues who are in Mogadishu, some camps that were very well run were receiving strong amounts of aid, particularly those run by Turkish agencies. But then right next door, saw camps that were in devastating conditions. And I think that is a concern. Because when you have some aid

that is very strong, and some that is very poor, it can create competition between the groups.

So it is really a diverse level of assistance that is reaching through, and that in itself is problematic. And so obviously the need for more comprehensive coordination is essential.

Ms. EDWARDS: And again to this question, I understand what leverage points there might be with respect to Kenya. That's a bit of a different circumstance.

Mr. YARNELL: Yes.

Ms. EDWARDS: I am just trying to figure, though, what if any leverage points we have with Somalia.

Mr. YARNELL: With Somalia? I mean, the Transitional Federal Government certainly controls a very small area of Somalia. Essentially, just Mogadishu. But that is an area where there is a very large number of internally displaced people, and since we are supporting that government, I think we do have the opportunity to try and push them on the way that they are behaving regarding IDPs. And even if it doesn't -- there are still challenges for Puntland and South Central -- they do control parts of Mogadishu, and that is where you need to have stronger oversight and pressure.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: Thank you very much for your testimony. We appreciate your work. And thank you to Refugees International for all the work that it does.

Mr. YARNELL: Thanks.

Co-Chairman McGOVERN: We are grateful for you to be here. This is a very important hearing. And this will not be the last hearing on this issue, I can assure you, but I think it is important that we have raised some awareness today. And we are going to continue to do so. Thank you.

Mr. YARNELL: Thanks again. Thanks so much.

[Whereupon, the Commission was adjourned.]

# **APPENDIX**

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MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD





**Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission (TLHRC)  
Hearing**

**Co-Sponsored by the House Hunger Caucus (HHC)**

**Horn of Africa: The Continuing Food, Refugee, and Humanitarian Crisis**

**Thursday, March 8, 2012  
10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
B-318 Rayburn House Building**

Please join the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and the House Hunger Caucus for a hearing on the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa.

As a result of the worst drought in 60 years and continued armed conflict between Al Shabaab and regional governments, a humanitarian emergency of massive proportions has unfolded over the past year in the Horn of Africa. More than 13 million people are currently affected, including 250,000 who need immediate food assistance. Somalia has been hardest hit by the conflict and food shortage, which have resulted in 1.5 million internally displaced people and nearly 1 million refugees crowded into camps across the region. In some of these camps, refugees face further violence and insecurity.

Although the drought has eased this year, the conflict, food insecurity, and large refugee flows continue. This is particularly pronounced in southern Somalia, where conditions are among the worst in the world.

**The following witnesses will participate:**

Panel I

- Nancy Lindborg, Assistant Administrator for the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance, U.S. Agency for International Development
- Deborah Malac, Director, Office of East African Affairs, U.S. Department of State
- Margaret McKelvey, Director, Office of Assistance for Africa, U.S. Department of State

Panel II

- Allan Jury, Director, U.S. Relations Office, United Nations World Food Program

Panel III

- Mark Yarnell, Advocate, Refugees International

If you have any questions, please contact the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission at 202-225-3599 or [tlhrc@mail.house.gov](mailto:tlhrc@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress  
Co-Chair, TLHRC and HHC

Frank R. Wolf  
Member of Congress  
Co-Chair, TLHRC

Jo Ann Emerson  
Member of Congress  
Co-Chair, HHC