PRESS STATEMENT

_Urgent climate emergency needs in Somalia must be addressed by all – Over half a million people affected_

_Mogadishu, November 08, 2019_  Aid workers in Somalia are struggling to keep pace with immense humanitarian needs across the country in the midst of a worsening complex emergency. In recent weeks, over half a million people have been affected by floods and an estimated 370,000 people have fled homes submerged in floodwater. At the same time, the needs across the country are some of the highest in the world, with the UN reporting that in the absence of sufficient assistance, as many as 6.3 million people face food insecurity. “The crises occurring within Somalia’s borders are a global responsibility. Climatic shocks are not a local phenomenon but a manifestation of the growing environmental emergency,” said Nasra Ismail, Director of Somalia NGO Consortium.

In recent weeks, widespread damage to farmland and infrastructure has occurred against a backdrop of sustained conflict and repeated climate shocks. The interrelated impact of recurrent drought, flooding and armed conflict have displaced more than 300,000 people already this year, adding to more than four million in need of humanitarian aid through 2019.

As government officials convene in South Africa next week for the Seventeenth Regular Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), national and international organisations in Somalia reinforce the need for support and engagement from governments beyond Africa to address climate-related disasters affecting the continent. “The responsibility to take immediate action to mitigate disaster risks and meet immediate needs, in line with international instrument like the Paris Agreement, falls on all nations,” said Ismail.

As the situation in Somalia deteriorates and more people become displaced by extreme weather events, national and international aid agencies stress the need for a coordinated and well-resourced relief effort. Assistance has been expanded, but assessments undertaken by both UN agencies and NGOs in Somalia indicate that there are still significant gaps with regard to emergency shelter, food, safe drinking water, latrines, mosquito and vector control, nutrition, mobile health supplies and medicine, without which people are at extremely high risk of hunger and disease outbreaks.

NGOs in Somalia say the immediate and long-term needs across the country must be seen as part of the global climate crisis and responded to urgently. “The number of Somali people who are displaced and those who are in need of emergency assistance is extremely high and continues to grow. We have a responsibility to ensure that people in need of assistance can access it, and we call on the international community to enable it,” says Ismail.

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For more information or to arrange interviews contact:

- Abdisamad Yasin, Communications - Somalia NGO Consortium. Mobile phone: +252 634 442 928,
- Email: Comms@somaliangoconsortium.org

Notes to the Editor:

The Somalia NGO Consortium is a network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working together to improve international aid coordination and raise the presence and profile of NGO representation within the aid coordination structure for Somalia.