

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to begin with our apology for postponing the appeal date from what it was initially set and thank you for your understanding. It is a great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and on my own behalf to this, what has become an important annual gathering. As you all know, this is our joint forum in which we launch humanitarian needs in the country and discuss on measures needed to be taken to save the lives and livelihoods at risk.

This forum undoubtedly is important to exchange information and ponder over our successes as well as setbacks. Using this opportunity, I would like to extend my heart felt gratitude for your humanitarian assistance in 2004, that has enabled us to address the needs effectively.

**Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Please allow me to begin by presenting a brief overview on our joint efforts and achievements during the last 12 months, to reflect upon the course we traversed in tackling food security threats caused by different factors. In 2004, about 7.8 million people were in need of relief assistance.

The food requirement to assist this needy population, as you certainly recall, was 1.2 million metric tones. Thanks to the concerted efforts of all humanitarian partners, it was possible to mobilize around 980,000 MT of food aid, which is about 81 % of the requirement, of which over 92% has already been dispatched to beneficiaries.

Regarding the non-food requirements for emergency health and nutrition, water and sanitation, agriculture and capacity building, the response, we understand, was about 48% of the total requirement which was 77.30 million US Dollars. This indicates, as in previous years, that the level of response for the non-food has been less compared to that of food.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,**

As we enter to 2005, and as you know well, one of the new approaches with a successful preparation for the coming year has been the separation between acute and chronic case loads.

As this exercise was undertaken in line with our joint efforts and understandings, it is appropriate to extend just a word of appreciation to all those who were behind the success.

As we all remember, our main pre-occupation a year or two ago was how to make a demarcation between the chronic and acute beneficiaries. Our challenge today, however, is a different one: it is that of establishing an effective linkage between the two, and mobilizing the required resources for both programs.

However, since such separate treatment of chronic and acute beneficiaries is the first of its kind in the country, one can expect lots of new lessons to be learned as well as many ups and downs in the process of implementation. The need for a close coordination between DPPC and FSCB during the implementation of the programs, therefore, is seen as an essential ingredient for the achievement of the objectives. And, the presence of both of us here now together is a clear demonstration of this collaborative spirit.

The identification of chronically food insecure separately, and addressing their needs accordingly, is believed to lead the country towards alleviating the structural problem of food insecurity.

On the other hand, identification of the requirements for the acute case load has been conducted in line with the revised mandate of the DPPC that focuses on emergency relief.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished partners,**

According to the joint assessment conducted recently, performance of the 2004 Meher (main) season has been promising in most of the crop producing areas in central and western parts of the county. But, in some of the eastern parts, below average and erratic rains with significant negative impact on harvest has been reported. For instance, in Tigray, a combination of delayed on-set, low in amount, irregular distribution and early cessation of the rains have badly affected the performance of agricultural activities and production in the eastern half of the Region. This, coupled with absence of Belg rains in different parts of the Region, has led to a below average crop production compared to the last five years.

Unlike the situation in Tigray, Amhara has performed well in comparison to the past five years. In the latter, the Meher prospect is good; market prices have improved; and livestock productivity is better, implying stable situation except for few sporadic problems here and there, particularly in eastern parts of North and South Wollo Zones.

In Oromiya, even though most highland and midland areas performed well owing to favorable weather conditions and other factors, poor production prospect is reported in most eastern low lands of the Region.

As to the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR), although the overall production prospect of the Region is considered to be largely better, a significant crop loss was reported in the low lands of South Omo and Gamo Gofa Zones, Konso, Burji and Derashe Special Woredas.

Since recent months, Somali Region has been receiving close to normal rains in different areas. As the result, pasture and water availability has improved. However, there are some "hot spots", such as East and West Imi, Danan, Sheykosh, Gashamo, Aware, and Dambal woredas that require assistance due to the unfavorable rains experienced during different rainy seasons.

In Afar, inadequate seasonal rains were considerably affecting incomes from livestock and crop production. Consequently, early migration of livestock to neighboring areas in Amhara Region has been reported. In Addition to this, the failure of expected short rain in the Region, which normally occurs between November and early December, caused serious problems to the livelihoods of pastoralists.

The poor performance of Belg as well as Meher rains in Dire Dawa, insufficient and erratic seasonal rains coupled with effects of ethnic conflicts in Gambella Region have resulted in production reduction and exposed a certain portion of the population in both Regions to require emergency food assistance.

The overall food security prospect of Harari and Benshangul Gumuz Regions is reported to be better compared to previous years. Nonetheless, there are some pocket areas where agricultural performance has not been as good as one would expect. It is believed, however, that such isolated cases could be handled through close monitoring and other complementary programmes.

Although the magnitude of the humanitarian problem is expected to be relatively low in terms of the affected population and area coverage compared to events during the past few years, yet about 2.2 million people would need emergency food assistance in 2005. Besides, since the preparatory work for the implementation of Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) in Afar and Somali Regions is not yet complete, and because the needs of the safety net beneficiary categories in these Regions cannot be left unaddressed until the preparatory work is finalized, their requirements are also included under the emergency appeal. However, as soon as the PSNP takes off in the Regions during the course of the year, the resource requirements will be adjusted accordingly. The total quantity of emergency food required is, therefore, estimated at 387,482 MT.

**Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to also note here that, because there is a limited quantity of carryover stocks and pledges, particularly of cereals (only about 46,300 MT.), earlier commitment and delivery by the donor community is certainly encouraged, if we are to avoid undesirable emergency measures especially during the first part of the year.

Once we have committed pledges, we can easily secure loans from the Emergency Food Security Reserve (EFSR), thanks to our joint preparedness modality/system put in place in the past. As at December, 2004, EFSR has just over 222,000 MT, in stock. The stock level is even expected to increase close to 240,000 MRT by the end of the year. The challenge, therefore, would be how fast and how much commitment we can get.

At this juncture, please allow me to remind the donor community that, just like this graduating year, as well as in the previous years, it is possible and also desirable to provide the required food aid through local purchase. The past supports, in this regard, are very much appreciated.

**Excellencies,
Dear Participants,**

On the other hand experience and the reality on the ground proved that for the humanitarian intervention to be complete due consideration for non-food assistance is also crucial.

In general, the results of the multi - agency assessments indicate that water and pasture, human and animal health conditions are more stable compared to the past few years. However, there are pocket areas like zone 1, 2 and 4 in Afar; some areas in Fik, Degahabour, Gode and Korahe zones of Somali; lowland parts of Enderta, Hintalo Wajerat and Oflla woredas of Tigray; South Omo and lowland parts of Gamo Gofa zones as well as Konso and Derashe of SNNP, and Arsi zone of Oromia, are among areas where emergency water interventions are sought.

Emergency health care is another related issue that requires the necessary support for the needy population due to vulnerability factors like malaria, measles, meningitis, diarrhea and other communicable diseases and acute malnutrition, that are among the most common drought related diseases in Ethiopia.

According to the results of the assessment, however, there are very limited human health disease outbreak reported at the moment. No serious outbreak is envisaged either in most of the areas in the country in general. Nonetheless, increasing incidences of malaria, water born diseases and acute febrile were reported in limited areas like Fike, Degahabour and Gode zones of Somali, Jimma zone of Oromia and zone 3 of Afar.

Addressing the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable households in crop and livestock sub sectors through the provision of the much required support in their specific need is another major area of intervention.

Therefore, emergency non-food support related to health and nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, agriculture, and capacity building, estimated to cost USD 112.74 million is required for the year.

Dear Participants,

It has been implicitly noted, time and again, that the needs for non-food components received less responses in spite of their equally important roles towards meeting the requirements of the needy. Therefore, it is our sincere hope that the donor community would give due attention to our request for multi-sectoral non-food needs, unlike in the recent past.

In connection to this, the DPPC and its partners have reviewed the existing approaches and worked more seriously in order to make the requirements need-based more than ever before. We will continue to further refine through the course of time, and meanwhile, we seek your kind attention for the requirements indicated in the appeal document.

**Distinguished Guests,
Dear Participants,**

Before I bring my statement to a close, let me present once again our humanitarian appeal on behalf of our disadvantaged compatriots. The details of the assistance required for the 2005 humanitarian operations are provided in the documents we circulated. I would therefore like to request you, as in the past, to consider our request for assistance favorably. As time is always a crucial factor in emergency operations, we remain confident that your response would be both prompt and adequate.

Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation and hearty thanks for all our donors and partners for your response in the previous years; participation in the assessment of both food and non-food needs; preparation of the appeal document as members of the multi-agency steering committee and sectoral task forces. I would also like to thank the editorial-subgroup who worked very hard including during off working hours. I hope this kind of enthusiastic cooperation will continue in the future.

In conclusion, I feel it is appropriate, at this juncture, to underscore our concerted efforts and achievements as they were detailed in the Evaluation Document, in fighting the emergency situations that challenged us all in 2003 and the successes we enjoyed. All who had been behind the success deserve their due appreciation. Similar collaboration has been exercised also this out going year for which we are so much grateful. These are living witnesses which affirm that our unity for purpose can always make a difference. Effective humanitarian interventions, by no means, can be one agency shows; rather, they require a concerted multi-agency engagements.

I am confident that we will continue working together for the success of our joint humanitarian endeavors.

Thank you very much!!!