

**UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Mozambique, Myrta Kaulard**

**Press Release on the humanitarian impact of cholera and Tropical Cyclone Freddy**

MAPUTO, 16 March 2023 - The United Nations is deeply concerned by the devastating humanitarian impact of Tropical Cyclone Freddy which struck Mozambique for a second time on 11 March. “I would like to express my condolences to those who have lost loved ones and reiterate the solidarity of the United Nations with the Government and people of Mozambique at this difficult time,” affirmed Myrta Kaulard, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique.

The UN and our partners are working in support of the Government-led response. Rapid assessments are underway in the hardest-hit areas where agricultural land and critical health, sanitation and education infrastructure has been damaged and humanitarian partners are mobilizing assistance. However, operations continue to be hindered by heavy rains and strong winds, with several key roads cut-off and flooded.

“I must stress that the response is compounded and complicated by a cholera outbreak which was already spreading at an alarming rate before Freddy”, she said today in Maputo. Nearly 9,000 cases have been detected across 38 districts, with 1,114 cases reported in the last week alone. Cholera is also spreading geographically, and it is feared that rising floodwaters will only make the situation worse. The large loss of major crop is very concerning for the negative toll that it is likely to take on the food security and livelihoods of the population in areas that were already food insecure prior to this latest disaster.”

Large swathes of Zambezia Province are under water, there is a risk of worsening floods and landslides due to water discharges from river basins that are above emergency levels that may both affect more people and hamper relief operations. “I am grateful to the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Martin Griffiths, for today releasing \$10 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), to kick-start the cyclone and cholera response, and would encourage other donors to follow suit”, stressed the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Mozambique.

Separate from the climate induced crisis in the center and south of Mozambique, she “reiterated the critical importance of timely and substantial support to the Humanitarian Response Plan to the needs of 1.6 million people victim of violence in the North of the country”, 60 per cent of whom are children. The humanitarian response is currently just 12 per cent funded.

Today, as Mozambique grapples with a climate crisis not of its making, it is worth recalling that just four years ago Tropical Cyclone Idai devastated Mozambique leaving nearly two million people in need of assistance. “While lessons were learnt and since applied, the increased frequency and magnitude of extreme weather events means we must urgently double down on our efforts, provide immediate humanitarian assistance and support recovery and further resilience”, concluded Myrta Kaulard.

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***For further information, please contact:***

***Federica D'Andreagiovanni, OCHA Mozambique: [dandreagiovannif@un.org](mailto:dandreagiovannif@un.org)***