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**Remarks on behalf of Ms. Joyce Msuya, Acting Under-Secretary-General  
for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator**

**Briefing to the Security Council on the Humanitarian Situation in Sudan**

*New York, 6 August 2024*

**As delivered**

Thank you, Mr. President.

The humanitarian situation in Sudan remains an absolute catastrophe.

A staggering 26 million people are in acute hunger. That's the equivalent of New York City times three – full of starving families and malnourished children.

More than 10 million people have been forced to flee their homes due to violence, hunger and deprivation.

This includes 726,000 people displaced within and from Sennar State, south-east of the country, since 25 June following the Rapid Support Forces' advance into the state. That's three quarters of a million people displaced – in just six weeks.

Sudan's health care system has collapsed. Two-thirds of the population cannot go to a hospital or see a doctor.

Heavy rains have flooded residential neighbourhoods and displacement sites in recent weeks – including in Kassala and North Darfur – increasing the risk of cholera and waterborne diseases.

An entire generation of children is missing out on a second straight year of their education.

Khartoum – the capital of Sudan, once the beating heart of the country – is in ruins.

Mr. President,

As you will hear from my colleague from the World Food Programme, our worst fears were confirmed last week: The Famine Review Committee concluded that famine conditions are present in Zamzam camp, close to El Fasher, the capital of North Darfur.

This is the same camp that Médecins Sans Frontières warned about six months ago, where one child was dying every two hours from malnutrition.

The Famine Review Committee also found that famine conditions are also likely present in other displacement camps in and around the city.

This announcement should stop all of us cold.

Because when famine happens, it means we are too late. It means we did not do enough.

It means that we, the international community, have failed.

This is an entirely man-made crisis – and a shameful stain on our collective conscience.

Mr. President, Distinguished Members of the Council,

Hunger is not the only threat people are facing.

480 days of conflict have pushed millions of civilians into a quagmire of violence – and with it, death, injury and inhumane treatment. The conflict has also destroyed the essential infrastructure civilians need to survive.

We have grave concerns about war crimes being committed throughout this conflict.

The women and girls of Sudan continue to be exposed to the worst of the parties' conduct.

Since our last briefing, new reports have revealed horrific levels of conflict-related sexual violence in Khartoum, targeting girls as young as nine years old.

Access to emergency health care and gender-based violence services is shrinking. Suicide rates among survivors increasing. The number of children born out of rape surging.

Mr. President,

The humanitarian community in Sudan continues to work against the odds to deliver life-saving assistance to civilians in need.

Heeding the warning signs that we have consistently shared with this Council, we launched a plan in April to mount a significantly integrated response in hunger hotspots across the country – spanning food assistance, nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene.

We are expanding our operational footprint in areas where food insecurity is most acute and working more with local partners – the heroes of this response – including women-led organizations and community-led initiatives, who are at the forefront of response efforts in their areas.

We are exploring every possible avenue to reach affected communities, including through airlifts. As a first step, we do need the necessary permissions to assess relevant airstrips.

We are scaling up cash assistance in areas where markets are functioning. More than \$100 million in cash and voucher assistance is planned for distribution before the end of the year.

And we are delivering seeds and other inputs to support farmers – because while people have been able to plant in some areas, insecurity and conflict are preventing many other communities from engaging in agricultural activities.

According to our colleagues from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, more than 1,500 metric tons of sorghum seeds have reached or are en route to South, Central and East Darfur to support over 150,000 farmers. This represents only 24 per cent of the 642,000 farmers originally targeted in Darfur and Kordofan before the planting season ends in August.

Since May, I am pleased to note humanitarian partners have reached 2.5 million people in IPC 4 and 5 areas, including 1.8 million people with food security and livelihoods assistance, 800,000 people with water, sanitation and hygiene support and 237,000 people with healthcare.

Mr. President,

In short, we are pushing from every possible angle to stop this catastrophe from getting worse.

But we cannot go very far without the access and resources we need.

Aid workers in Sudan continue to be harassed, attacked and even killed. Convoys of life-saving supplies such as food and medicine, as well as fuel, have been subjected to looting and extortion. And this of course must stop.

Obstructions are widespread. In just one example, three trucks carrying therapeutic food have been blocked by the Rapid Support Forces for over a month in Kabkabiya, west of El Fasher – depriving malnourished children in Zamzam camp of assistance they desperately need to survive.

The recent escalation in Sennar has further cut off the southern route – which used to be our main crossline route for humanitarian aid from Port Sudan to Kordofan and Darfur.

Meanwhile, access via the northern route – through Ad Dabbah – has been intermittent due to active conflict, insecurity, obstruction and delayed permissions.

Life-saving supplies in Port Sudan are ready to be loaded and dispatched to Zamzam, including essential medicines, nutritional supplies, water purification tablets and soap. It is crucial that the approvals and security assurances needed are not delayed.

Relief supplies for people in Zamzam are also readily available in eastern Chad. But heavy rains have flooded the Tine crossing – the only cross-border route that we are currently permitted to use between eastern Chad and Darfur after the Sudanese authorities revoked permission for the use of the Adre crossing in February this year. As a result, we simply cannot move the large volume of supplies required to save lives and fight back famine.

The Adre crossing, with its tarmac roads and shorter distance, would be the most effective route and would allow assistance to be delivered at the speed and scale required at this crucial, critical point.

Assistance delayed is assistance denied for the many Sudanese civilians who are literally dying of hunger during the time it takes for clearances to come through, permits to be granted, and floodwaters to subside.

Meanwhile, the Sudan humanitarian appeal is just 32 per cent funded – having received \$874 million out of the \$2.7 billion needed.

We are more than seven months into the year. How can we possibly mitigate this humanitarian situation – let alone fight back famine – without adequate support?

Mr. President,

On 20 of March of this year, we assumed our responsibilities under Resolution 2417 and warned this Council about the risk of famine and widespread [food] insecurity due to the conflict in Sudan.

We have continued to sound the alarm at every one of the six briefings we have given since then.

Let me be clear: It is still possible to stop this freight train of suffering that is charging through Sudan. But only if we respond with the urgency that this moment demands.

So allow me to reiterate our four main asks – which you also heard from us back in March:

One, the conflict must stop. Silencing the guns will bring immediate relief to the civilian population and allow for the rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance across the country.

Two, so long as the fighting continues, the parties must uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law. Those who commit serious violations – including sexual violence – which I stated earlier, must be held accountable.

Third – and in line with international humanitarian law – we need rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access across Sudan, through all possible routes. Given the massive hunger crisis unfolding in North Darfur and other parts of the country, we need to reach people now – across borders, across battle lines, by air, by land.

And fourth, we need more resources– and we need them now. If we do not receive adequate funding for the aid operation – including flexible funding that can better enable the work of local partners – the response will grind to a halt.

If we had these four things, the picture in Sudan – including Zamzam camp – would be different, very different.

Mr. President,

In the 15 times we have briefed this Council on Sudan since April last year, we have used many words to describe this crisis.

But the people of Sudan desperately need and deserve more than our words.

They need this Council, they need all Member States, they need the wider international community, to act – and to pull Sudan back from this abyss.

Thank you.