



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **'MILLIONS ON THE EDGE OF SURVIVAL' SAYS ROWAN WILLIAMS, AS UK PLEDGES £100M FOR SOUTH SUDAN AND SOMALIA**

- Christian Aid welcomes DFID's aid package for major humanitarian crises
- Famine deals a 'horrific blow' to South Sudan's prospects, says Rowan Williams

**Christian Aid has welcomed the news that the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) is to provide \$100m each in emergency aid to South Sudan and Somalia.**

Announced today, the relief packages will provide food, water and healthcare to some of the millions facing hunger and starvation. It follows this week's declaration of famine in parts of South Sudan, and comes as the situations in Nigeria and Yemen remain dire.

Christian Aid's Head of Humanitarian Nick Guttman said: 'The International Development Secretary Priti Patel is right to say the world's response to these unprecedented crises has been inadequate. Whether it's Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia or Nigeria, the magnitude of suffering is unlike anything we've seen for a long time. And yet, for too long, these humanitarian disasters have gone unnoticed, underreported and underfunded.'

'That is why we are delighted that the UK Government is sending a strong message to the world, that it's high time we "step up our support". If more funding comes quickly, including to local NGOs, and if agencies can get access to remote areas, then the spread of famine could be averted in South Sudan.'

'However, hundreds of millions of pounds are still needed, if we are to prevent further catastrophe. We can only hope that the international community does not ignore its duty – not just to fund the aid response, but also stick with communities for the long-haul, and help them to address the root causes of the emergencies we are seeing today.'

Despite a challenging environment for humanitarian access, by working through local partners, Christian Aid has been able to provide relief to communities in hard-to-reach parts of

South Sudan but its ability to respond is far outstripped by the need. Christian Aid's partners have also been working on emergencies in places such as Nigeria, Kenya, Ethiopia.

Commenting on the famine declaration, Chair of Christian Aid the Rt Rev Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, said: 'The declaration of a state of famine in parts of South Sudan is yet another horrific blow to the hopes and security of the people of this war-ravaged country, already coping with huge levels of displacement as well as violence.

'Christian Aid has long been stressing the urgency of the situation, and, with this latest announcement, we hope that the attention of the world's governments and peoples will be drawn again to South Sudan.

'The crisis in South Sudan is just one of a number of humanitarian catastrophes the world is facing. Millions more are on the edge of survival – in countries like Somalia, Yemen and Nigeria – and we must continue to do what we can to help our sisters and brothers in dire need.'

Dr Williams, who travelled to South Sudan with Christian Aid in 2014, issued a plea for support for Christian Aid's fundraising appeal for South Sudan.

He said: 'The country desperately needs peace and stability; it also needs immediate practical support, and the Christian Aid appeal is a chance to respond to this, for the sake of a generation of South Sudanese whose hopes have been cruelly betrayed in the conflict and barbarity of the last few years.'

#### **Notes to Editors:**

**1. Christian Aid works in some of the world's poorest communities in around 40 countries at any one time. We act where there is great need, regardless of religion, helping people to live a full life, free from poverty. We provide urgent, practical and effective assistance in tackling the root causes of poverty as well as its effects.**

**2. Christian Aid's core belief is that the world can and must be changed so that poverty is ended: this is what we stand for. Everything we do is about ending poverty and injustice: swiftly, effectively, sustainably. Our strategy document [Partnership for Change](#) explains how we set about this task.**

**3. Christian Aid is a member of [ACT Alliance](#), a global coalition of more than 130 churches and church-related organisations that work together in humanitarian assistance, advocacy and development.**

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