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**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY IBRAHIM HAGI ABDULKADIR,
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF SOMALIA
TO ROME BASED AGENCIES OF THE UNITED NATION ORGANIZATIONS
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Mr. Chair, Mr. Director-General, Honorable Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to address this 40th FAO Conference on behalf of the Federal Government of Somalia.

Since 1991, Somalia has experienced a persistent complex emergency due to widespread conflict, recurrent droughts and floods and consequently chronic food insecurity. The 2011 drought — widely regarded as the worst in 60 years — severely deteriorated food insecurity among pastoralist and farmers, resulting in famine which left, unfortunately, dead almost a quarter of million people.

One again, today Somalia is in the grip of unprecedented and devastating food crises where millions of Somalis are facing starvation across the country. Due to 2 to 3 consecutive seasons of poor rainfall in the last 2 years, most areas of Somalia are faced serious drought conditions resulting in a rapid and severe worsening of food insecurity.

More than 3.2 million people are experienced crises and emergency levels of acute food insecurity, including nearly 700,000 people facing Emergency-level acute food insecurity. An additional 3.5 million people face stressed acute food insecurity, bringing the total acutely food insecure population to 6.7 million people which is more than 50% of the total population. Compared to the 2011 drought in Somalia, this 2016-2017 drought is less severe but more widespread.

Thanks to many relief and aid agencies, especially UN Agencies FAO, WFP and UNICEF, who are on the ground proving food, water, medicine to families who are in desperate need, famine has been avoided but it is still on the brink and the food crisis continues to spread across the country.

Following poor 2016 GU and DEYR rainy seasons, the 2017 April-June GU rains began late and have been below-average across most of Somalia, slowing the regeneration of pasture and water sources and adversely impacting rain fed crop production.

Mr. Chair, Distinguished Delegates,

Despite improvements in recent months, an elevated risk of famine remains; malnutrition rates remains among the highest in the world and persistent insecurity and restricted humanitarian access in parts of southern and central of the country continue to create challenges to delivering assistances which contribute to the complex emergency in Somalia.

This means that continued large-scale humanitarian assistance will remain necessary throughout 2017 and pastoral households in particular will take multiple seasons to recover.

The Government of Somalia would like to highlight the urgent need for increased resources to scale up our responses to save more lives.

Thank you for your kind attention.