I would first like to thank Mr. Børge Brende [Norwegian Foreign Minister] for his personal commitment to the people of South Sudan, and thank the Government of Norway for its continued commitment and their generous pledge.

Excellencies,
Ministers,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all very much for coming to Oslo today to show support to the millions of South Sudanese people who are in desperate need.

Three years after independence, South Sudan was a country on a positive trajectory. A country with significant challenges but also one with significant resources and good will. A country which should have been moving from reliance on humanitarian aid to longer term economic and social development. All that changed on the 15th of December when the country was plunged into a conflict which has claimed the lives of thousands of people and where by the end of this year, half of its twelve million people will either be refugees, displaced inside their own country or facing severe food insecurity if we are not able to prevent further bloodshed. The conflict has already devastated communities and has stretched people's resilience and coping capacity to their limits.

And it is a crisis with a significant regional dimension. Violence and fear have forced over 1.3 million people from their homes. More than 325,000 have sought refuge in Ethiopia, in Kenya, Sudan and Uganda. Countries which are already vulnerable for a variety of reasons. There are even reports of Sudanese refugees who were sheltering in South Sudan returning to areas of
Darfur, South Kordofan and Blue Nile in Sudan. It is an appalling situation for people caught in border areas with no safe refuge in any direction.

When I visited South Sudan in January and met with displaced families in Juba and Malakal, the first thing people told me was that they wanted the UN to help them to leave South Sudan. I was shocked. They were terrified and could not conceive of a safe return to their homes. They had lost all confidence in the ability of the security forces to protect them.

And their fears are well founded. We have all seen the gruesome footage and heard the terrible stories. People killed in their beds in Malakal hospital. Dozens of dead bodies lying in the streets and piled up in the marketplace in Bentiu. In the six months since fighting broke out, there has been extreme violence and deliberate attacks on civilians, often based on ethnicity or political affiliation. Medical facilities have been destroyed. There has been widespread sexual violence, in fact a targeting of women and children; the arming of previously demobilized groups; the recruitment of young people for military operations and the use of cluster munitions.

It is clear that the fighting has to stop. The parties’ re-commitment to the ceasefire on 9 May must be respected. If South Sudan continues its descent into ethnically-based violence and cycles of revenge killings, humanitarian access will become even more difficult; the displacement crisis will grow; communities will continue to live away from their sources of food; and up to four million people could face alarming levels of food insecurity.

The staff of the UN mission in South Sudan opened their gates to more than 80,000 people and humanitarian workers have provided assistance to more than 1.3 million people. But UN bases were not designed to hold so many people. They are not camps and there is not enough space for adequate sanitation and other facilities. We fear disease outbreaks and as the Minister said, the emergence of cholera in Juba is extremely worrying. The start of the rainy season is making conditions even worse.

Over 90 per cent of displaced people are outside UN camps, living with host communities or in displacement sites. We must continue to protect them and provide them with food, clean water and healthcare if we are to prevent malnutrition and epidemics.

The UN, of course, is continuing with its humanitarian operations. So far 1 million people have received medical services. 1.3 million, as I said, food assistance. Nearly half a million people have received household items and shelter support. Nearly twenty thousand children under 5 have been treated for severe acute malnutrition and a quarter of a million children have been vaccinated against measles. But it is not enough.

We are losing time; farmers should be planting their crops right now. If they don't and if livestock herders aren’t able to migrate to grazing areas, people will run out of food. There are
The mission of the United Nations Office for the Co ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

already signs of a major food security crisis. Food reserves are exhausted in areas isolated by conflict and the prices for staple foods are soaring. If we don’t turn the situation around by December, some parts of the country will be at risk of famine, nearly a quarter of a million children under five could suffer from severe acute malnutrition, and 50,000 of them could die.

That’s why we need your urgent support now. If we wait until the harvest fails, it will be too late. That’s a mistake that we in the international community have made before. In the Horn of Africa four years ago, the warning signs were there and we raised the alarm, but humanitarian agencies didn’t receive the resources required to help prevent a famine. A famine that went on to kill a quarter of a million people, half of them children. South Sudan remains one of our highest priority operations worldwide. We are determined that this will not happen in South Sudan. Donors have already been generous to South Sudan but we are asking you to do even more, given the massive extra needs generated by the conflict and displacement.

We need around US$1.26 billion out of a total of $1.8 billion from now until December to provide four million people in the country with desperately needed aid.

Every million dollars we receive will go towards this life-saving work.

One million dollars will provide life-saving treatment for thousands of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition. It will buy emergency health kits for 10,000 people or provide shelter, blankets and household items for 8,000 displaced families. It will pay for 3,000 tons of humanitarian supplies to be transported by river barge.

The regional refugee plan covering Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Kenya requires $371 million and is currently funded at just 23 per cent.

Neighbouring countries also need support.

But we need more than funding. We need political will. We need the parties to honour their commitments to peace and to hold accountable those who have carried out war crimes and crimes against humanity. And we need our Member States to support the work of the UN peacekeeping mission, UNMISS, so that they can fulfill their mandate to protect civilians across the whole country.

We must act now. I look to your support. The people of South Sudan are in desperate need of our continued support.

Thank you.