I. Key Messages

1. The humanitarian situation in Somalia is critical and needs to remain high on the agenda of the international community. Although famine conditions are no longer present in the country and we are reducing our funding request for the remainder of this year, some 2.5 million people are still in crisis. Mortality rates in Somalia are still among the highest in the world, and the fragile gains that have been made could be reversed without continued and generous support.

2. There are already warning signs that the situation could quickly deteriorate again. The April-June rains began late and were distributed unevenly. As a result, the harvest will be smaller and later than usual. People in southern Somalia are likely to experience emergency levels of food insecurity later this year.

3. In addition to addressing urgent needs, we are helping hundreds of thousands of people to build sustainable livelihoods by providing seeds and tools and improving wells and irrigation channels. People have no resources left after years of drought and conflict; we must help them to rebuild their lives if we are to break the cycle of repeated crises.

4. I am deeply concerned about the effects of the ongoing conflict on civilians. Recent military operations in the Afgoye corridor showed that measures to minimize civilian casualties by choosing specific routes of attack and requiring multiple verifications of targets can be successful. All parties to the conflict should be making every effort to use these measures so that civilians are protected.