

PRESS RELEASE

UNISDR 2011/25
27 September 2011

UNISDR BACKS CHARTER TO END EXTREME HUNGER

GENEVA, 27 September 2011 – The head of the United Nations’ disaster risk reduction office, UNISDR, Margareta Wahlström, today strongly backed the NGO initiative “Never Again: A Charter to End Extreme Hunger.”

“The Horn of Africa crisis is a wake-up call for aid agencies, governments and donors alike. Given the collective experience of responding to drought emergencies over the last 50 years it seems almost beyond belief that we are once more desperately fighting a drought-fuelled famine which is threatening the lives and livelihoods of 13 million people,” said Wahlström.

“As Oxfam, Save the Children, ONE and others rightly point out in this Charter, all the warning signs were there in the Horn of Africa two years ago but the warnings were not acted on. The result is that more lives will be lost and more money will be spent because there was little or no support to timely and low-cost measures that would have reduced the risk of drought turning into a famine.

“Not only must the international emergency response system become more flexible in responding to early warnings, we must have more regular support for risk reduction at national and community level. UNISDR particularly welcomes the Charter’s call for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to be put at the heart of sustainable development.”

For more information about UNISDR visit: www.unisdr.org