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TRANSCRIPT

Online Event

**“Implications of the Concurrent Conflict and Drought in
the Horn of Africa”**

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FEATURING

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David Del Conte Good afternoon, everyone, and thank you for joining us today. I'm David Del Conte, senior fellow with the Humanitarian Agenda at CSIS. We're joined by Ghada Eltahir Mudawi, OCHA's director for operations in New York, and Jeremy Taylor, regional head of advocacy and communications for NRC, calling in from Nairobi. Thank you both for making the time.

The Horn of Africa is experiencing a particularly dangerous combination of conflict and drought, the likes of which has not been seen in decades. Ongoing conflict in northern Ethiopia has driven millions from their homes and millions more requiring humanitarian assistance. With little expectation for a cessation of hostilities that would allow aid to flow, this now protracted war will likely to consumer humanitarian assistance and donor funds. In Somalia, steady Al-Shabaab attacks threaten the safety of civilians and aid workers, impeding the delivery of life-saving assistance. The entry of this group into southern Ethiopia poses additional risks to civilians and aid agencies in Ethiopia and eastern Kenya.

In November of this past year, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, or IGAT, reported that the seasonal rainfall for a large swath of the Horn of Africa was at its lowest since reporting began in 1981. This reflects the impact of an unprecedented four consecutive poor rainy seasons in the region that has already displaced some three million people and killed more than 1.5 million livestock, so critical for nutrition and livelihoods. In Somali, ad hoc encampments for the internally displaced around Baidoa already stretch as far as the eye can see. In Ethiopia, irregular migration and competition over scant resources is climbing in central, eastern, and southern regional states, threatening development gains and contributing to unrest.

Whilst a robust aid response is necessary to prevent a repeat of the 2010-2011 drought that took the lives of more than a quarter of a million people, this comes at a time when crises elsewhere, particularly in Ukraine, dominate headlines and donor budgets. Moreover, the invasion of Ukraine has implications on food security and food prices around the world. Food prices are already higher than during the food price crisis one decade ago. Wheat futures jumped 40 percent with Russia's invasion, and fuel prices have followed a similar trajectory.

The challenge of triaging humanitarian assistance and the political ramifications for not meeting the moment is coming into stark relief now. Historically in the Horn, drought preceded regular – or, major irregular migration and overthrows of governments. In preparing for this event, two areas of thought continue to surface. First, in the immediate term, with six published appeals for this drought, what are the needs? Where are the needs and when will aid be delivered to them? And the commodities themselves –

wheat, corn, oil, and the like – are they available on the international market? Can donors and host countries afford these ever-climbing prices?

Second, and in parallel, the absence of rural development, particularly in response to climate change, drives conflict and migration. And yet, the international system has not made the fundamental changes necessary in the way in which it works in the Horn, and other areas beset by climate change. Can this be the crisis that triggers a review of humanitarian development and governance approaches to climate-driven crises? And last, an overstretched donor pool cannot come close to meeting the financial requirements. Yet, there are a number of countries of political security or economic interests in the Horn that are not regular humanitarian donors. What options are there?

I'm pleased to hand over the floor to our esteemed panelists to speak to these and other points. Jeremy, first, I hand the floor to you.

Jeremy Taylor

Thank you, David. Hi, everyone. Thanks for inviting me in this afternoon.

David, I'm going to start by trying to build a little bit on what you were saying, to unpack it a little bit, as it were, and to try and explore what this impact looks like for civilians in the Horn. And I think I should start by saying that my key message here today is that the Horn of Africa region, and for the purposes of this conversation we're talking about Somalia – south-central Somalia in particular – the southern parts of Ethiopia, and the eastern-northeastern parts of Kenya. This region faces an unprecedented crisis.

Now, the region has experienced droughts before. It experiences cyclical droughts. So you might ask, why is it unprecedented? Why am I saying that it's unprecedented? And I think there's a couple of points to raise on this. The first is the severity of the drought itself. Now, we've been through three seasons – three rainy seasons that could be defined as "failed" or "below average" or "significantly below average" rainfall. And what we are approaching is the possibility of a fourth failed rainy season. This would be unprecedented.

What we're looking at now are forecasts that are showing a greater likelihood of a reduced or abnormal or below-average rainy season. And this is the rainy season from March to June. It differs slightly across this quite large geographic region. And it starts at different stages. But overall, what we're seeing so far is that the rainy season is delayed, cropping is delayed, and in the past few months there's been a lot of activity amongst meteorologists looking for models and looking for forecasts that will give some kind of an indication as to what this rainy season might look like. And until quite recently, they tended to differ.

But what we're starting to see now is that all the different forecasts are starting to align. The bad news is that that alignment is starting to show that they all agree in one way or another that this – that this rainy season's looking like a below-average rainy season. So what we're seeing is the compounding impacts of four such failed rainy seasons has an immense impact on the livelihoods of millions of people, especially pastoralists and subsistence agriculturists. We estimate around 20 million pastoralists will be impacted one way or another, as well as millions of agricultural communities. This is unprecedented, the scale and the severity of the drought itself.

I think the next thing to consider is the convergence of factors. And you mentioned this in your introduction, but it's really important and I think we need to unpack it a little bit, because what we're talking about is the convergence of factors such as conflict and instability. In Somalia, for example, the last decade since the last significant drought – and I'll talk a little bit about that later – has seen a continued instability. We continue to see violence. We continue to see conflict displacement. In fact, in the last year alone we've seen almost a million people displaced by conflict in Somalia. And so this drought is layering on top of that.

We have the economic impacts of COVID-19. This is an impact that impacts the economies of the region, but it also impacts the economies of the donor countries and the sort of the global economy that needs to rally around and provide the support. We've seen record desert locust infestations. In 2019-2020 the Horn region experienced very severe infestations of desert locusts, with significant impact on crops, and across large parts of Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, and then, you know, even beyond.

There is also decades of environmental degradation. In particular, I think the charcoal industry has been highlighted as something, especially in Somalia, that has had an incredibly detrimental impact on the environment, and what this means is that the environment is just degraded. It is not able to withstand the shocks in the same way. So we've seen a lot of green cover loss, a lot of deforestation. This results in soil erosion. And even if there is a rain, the soil might not be able to absorb that rain. So all of these things compound. I think another important factor for Somalia would be quite intensive upstream agriculture in Ethiopia, for example, which means there's less water coming down the rivers.

And then – and then there's the sort of overarching compounding factor of weak governance. And again, we're talking about three countries with very different levels of governance, admittedly. But certainly in the case of Somalia, you would say that, you know, looking at a timeframe of 20 years Somalia's governance has improved drastically. But it's still not as resilient and as capacitated as it needs to manage and mitigate the sort of

compounding factors that I'm talking about and how they impact communities.

So when you think about all of this, we again come to the conclusion that it's unprecedented. And then a third factor, I think, that we really need to speak to, and as a humanitarian this is, of course, the focus of my attention and the attention of my organization. And that's the impact – the scale of the impact on people. And it is extraordinary. I think the latest estimate is that somewhere between 13 ½ and 14 million people are likely to be impacted in terms of experiencing acute food insecurity in the first quarter of this year. This is now. This is not a projection. We're talking about these people are experiencing this right now as we speak.

This obviously include severe limitations on access to water. And that's what's driving displacement. And I think this is where we're starting to see really shocking numbers. And I can talk a bit about this perhaps in the Q&A, but research that ourselves at NRC and UNHCR are doing – we've been able to track displacement. And we've seen that in January alone of this year more than 400,000 people moved as a result of drought. This is unprecedented. This is the highest single month that we've recorded in the 10 years that we've run this particular program.

So when you look at these figures, along with, you know, the data that's coming out from governments in the region, the Kenyan government estimates 1 ½ million head of livestock have died in recent months, the same for Ethiopia, Somalia doesn't have this data, but we've been doing – we have anecdotal evidence from the people we speak with. We've been off to drought-affected areas with drones and we've got incredible footage of mass deaths of livestock. So we know this is happening in Somalia as well, so we can assume that Somalia is reaching similar levels of livestock death.

This is – this is an incredible impact on the lives of pastoralists in particular, because it is – it is their sustenance, this is their livelihoods. I think if we also – we look at the data on malnutrition in children, it's expected to reach almost 6 million in this first quarter as well. So these are profound and immense impacts on communities across the region. And again, it allows us to say that it is unprecedented. We haven't seen this level before at this scale before, with all of these factors aligning as they are.

And the unfortunate aspect that's also unprecedented is the lack of donor funding and of international response to the scale of this drought. And you mentioned that in your introduction, and I think that's important, because the fact is that we have, as an aid community – as an international community we have been here before with the drought in the Horn. In 2010 and '11, there was an incredibly devastating drought in which around

260,000 people died. And as a community, we coined the term of, you know, the need to act with no regrets, and to act fast.

A well-known report that followed that drought was known as The Dangerous Delay. And I think the challenge we face now as an internationally community is that we are living that delay again. We are in the same delay. We are in the period where we know how bad it's going to be, because we know what the last three failed rainy seasons mean for the coming season. The best science is telling us that there is a strong likelihood that the coming rainy season will also fail. So we know what to expect. And yet, the response hasn't matched previous responses. It hasn't met the level of response, for example, in 2016-17, when there was also significant drought across the region.

And so, you know, for all of these things we have to say that the situation is unprecedented. It is extremely urgent, and it is unprecedented. And perhaps I'll leave it there, and I can dig into some of these a little bit more in the Q&A section. But I think that would be my opening intervention on this. Thank you.

Mr. Del Conte Thank you very much, Jeremy.

And how perhaps we'll hand over to Ghada Eltahir Mudawi. Thank you very much, Ghada, for attending. And we look forward to hearing from you.

Ghada Hatim
Eltahir Mudawi Thank you so much. Thank you so much, David. And thank you, Jeremy, colleagues, for having me. I think I will continue to – from where Jeremy had left it. You highlighted the situation very, very well. And I cannot emphasize more than what you said on the severity and on the urgency of the situation. Maybe I will – I will take the figures that you said, that I will just try to put in perspective, just for our all sake. When we say 1.5 million livestock had been reported that had died already, one of our colleagues was saying today that in Kenya, in the north of Kenya, one woman used to have 250 livestock; today, she had seven.

Based on this, we can imagine how the life had impacted – if you take the village as a whole, if you take the family, and if you are considering also how these families are depending on the livestock. And you build on that what you were saying, Jeremy, rightly, about the severe, acute malnutrition, knowing that most of these communities are depending on the livestock and cattle to survive. What also we need to consider – what does it mean for families to consider desperate measures to survive? What does it mean for woman in terms of sexual and gender-based violence? What does it mean for girls and boys in terms of dropping from schools, leaving from one place to another?

We need also to put this into perspective, and to say that this is not – as Jeremy rightly said – this is not the first drought. These are number of droughts with increasing frequency that's happening one year after another, which is severely affecting and making it difficult for those communities to recover. We had 2010-2011, we had 2016-2017, and now we have 2020-2021. So it's – by the time the one drought is finished, before the community's managed to get out of it, another round will happen and will come.

You rightly mentioned as well the combined drought with complex humanitarian access issues. The famine, which we dealt with before, I think we need to be at high alert of what we are dealing with this year and consider it with real urgency. That's coming with the flooding, with the conflict, with the COVID, with the desert locust upsurge. There is a lot of other factors that were not before, but we need this year to consider seriously and to consider them urgently. With regard to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, and can we avert the situation or not, the main message here is that this is something that we had been doing in the past. We know how to do it if we receive the funding in the right time. It's a matter of time.

And the window is closing, if it's not closed already. If there's any mass scaleup that needs to be done, it needs to be done now. And if you ask any of our humanitarian colleagues in Somalia, in Ethiopia, in Kenya what they need to make this happen, we need the funds. What are the activities or what is the typical response that we need in this regard? We need to increase water trucking to affected community. We need to repair the nonfunctioning boreholes and rehabilitate water points. We need more access to health centers and health services to be allowed to the population. That means these health centers and health facilities are able to provide the service needed, including vaccinations. And we need to safeguard the remaining livestock through treatment and vaccination.

These are activities that are doable. The expertise and knowledge is there. We averted before, 2017, a famine. And we can do it now. The question on the table is to what extent we are ready to respond with the correct right funds. I know that there is – and maybe, David, you will come again to the argument around the funding with the increasing caseload on the humanitarian portfolio. Difficulties, crises, conflicts – Ukraine is case in point – which is keeping to this crisis thinning and particularly our resources and donors' capacity. This is understood, but what we are talking about here is human lives. And we just – we cannot choose either, as humanitarian.

If a doctor have to make a triage and find it difficult to save one life while keeping the other waiting, it's the same for humanitarian. And as Jeremy's saying, the time is now. The coming – the rainy season, it's already predicted

to be below average. We cannot wait to see more signs than what we have now to tell us that we run out of time to avert a catastrophe in the Horn of Africa. I'll stop here. Over to you, and we can elaborate more on the questions and answers. Thank you.

Mr. Del Conte

Thank you very much, Ghada. And you know, one of the things I think comes up in both of your statements was that urgency, based upon the severity. We've done this before and we've seen it before, and we know what a successful aid response looks like, and what a less than successful aid response looks like in the Horn, looking at 2016-17 versus that of 2010-11, '12. We know what they look like. I think also it's important that you pointed out the timing, whether or not it's in time or a little bit too late. It's never too late.

But one of the questions that came in – and, perhaps, Ghada, I'll ask you this first question. Now, how can we – how can we advocate for additional funding given that many countries are concentrated on what's happening in Ukraine or concentrated on other areas, and not the Horn. Is it possible to have – or is there a funding appeal for the Horn, an event planned that can raise money to address this issue? Ghada, over to you.

Ms. Mudawi

Thank you, David. Thank you.

The humanitarian partners have appealed already for more than 4.4 billion (dollars) to provide lifesaving assistance and protection to about 29.1 million people. That's in Ethiopia, in Kenya, and in Somalia. The fact that Ukraine has happened and most of the funds and world's attention is being there, I don't think that this should be an excuse for any of us. We are the same organizations. We are the same actors. We are the same humanitarian partners who are working in Ukraine, who are working in Ethiopia, in Somalia, and in Kenya. We are seeing firsthand the impact of humanitarian crises everywhere and we are seeing firsthand humanitarian thought to this.

And this is where donors also are with us, I think, on the same context, wherever we are, and we need to deal with this situation without triage based on context or humanitarian situation. What we are dealing with is 13.5 (million) to 14.5 million people. These are a lot of lives at stake, and it can be averted. So any excuse or debate and discussion about where to put the funds, or robbing Peter to give to Paul, it should not be our approach.

What we can discuss later is what can we do to prevent this in the future. Is it early warning? Is it anticipatory action? Is it – what are the – because now what we – as you are saying, this is a recurring event, it's a recurring thing. What can we do? And also, we don't underestimate the impact of the climate.

These are climate change impacts. So what can we do toward this? This is – now we need to deal with the emergency situation which we have.

From our side, just to give one last point additional, since 2021 SERV have allocated over 93 million (dollars) for early anticipatory action to address the drought impacts in the three countries. And this is a small amount, although it's big for our side. But considering the magnitude, and dealing with three countries at the same time, we need to have a bigger investment. And we need to have a collective effort and a collective address to this to be able to avoid and avert in the coming years. I leave it here. Over to you, David.

Mr. Del Conte OK, thank you. Thank you, Ghada.

I want to turn to Jeremy. You mentioned in your statement 400,000 people had moved in January of this year, and your work with UNHCR monitoring this. Nearly a million moved to Ethiopia and became refugees in 2010-11, '12. With the migration and the irregular migration you're seeing internally in Somalia right now, what do you project ahead? What does this look like if we're not receiving the aid response necessary to address this? What is your projection on that?

Dr. Taylor Thanks, David.

The projection, unfortunately, is not a great one. It's about increased numbers of people on the move. So I think there's two parts to this question. The first part is around the danger of being on the move and the second part is where do they go and what happens when they go? So I think one of the key things we learned from 2010 and '11 was that the vast majority of fatalities occurred when people were on the move. And this is the critically dangerous time for people, because of the incredibly harsh conditions under which they are moving. And so this is where we see the majority of fatalities. So especially for children, and the elderly, and, you know, those that are not as strong, perhaps.

So this sort of, you know, loops back to the urgency of the need to act now, because what we're seeing is that people are on the move now. I think the latest estimate is that the total number of people who've moved in Somalia is around 670,000 people. But if you consider that 400,000 of those were in January alone, we've seen a marked increase in the rate of people moving. So if we project that over the next few months, and we see that this rate will increase and it will reach 750,000 by April, I think, is sort of the projection at this stage.

And if that continues to grow even worse, increase – the rate increases yet further, we'll see even more and more people putting themselves in real

danger. So the urgency of the response is to get to people where they are to hopefully be able to provide support before they need to move, because once they're on the move this is when it becomes – it becomes critical. I think that, for me, is the – kind of the key message, is this understanding that we need to move fast because being on the move is the risk.

The second part of your question is, well, where are people going? And what we're seeing currently is that a lot of the movement, certainly in Somalia, is towards urban centers, places like Baidoa has received hundreds of thousands of people. In talking to a colleague who was there last week, and I'll be going in two weeks' time, is describing these IDP settlements as very difficult to actually identify one from the other, because it's becoming kind of a vast swath of displaced people. Bearing in mind that many of these new climate displaced, or people who are moving due to drought, are moving into spaces in which there are already high numbers of IDPs who have been displaced by violence and conflict over the last year, and over the preceding years.

So these are urban centers that, by definition, can't absorb these numbers of people. They don't have the services. They don't have the services in the short term, but they also don't have the longer-term offerings that people who decide not to return to their places of origin, who decide that they can't afford or can't manage to return to a pastoralist lifestyle for example, the cities don't have the jobs either. You know, it's not as if there's an urban economy into which they can be absorbed.

So there's a real challenge here, both in terms of the immediate lifesaving response but also in terms of thinking about, well, what are we going to do about these urban centers and these, you know, really heavy populations that they're hosting currently? And so the focus of our work currently is very much on the emergency response, but I think there is a real gap in terms of thinking about the longer term sort of programming and response and support that can be mobilized to deal with these huge populations.

One other point on this, just to say that, you know, one other aspect that we encounter quite often in our work is issues around forced displacement and land disputes, because these people are displaced from rural areas, they're coming into urban areas, but they're often coming onto land which is owned by someone. And this creates legal complexities. It creates violence in some instances. And also it creates the cycles of renewed displacement even within urban centers, where people settle and then they're evicted from that land. They settle somewhere else and they're evicted again, which just creates, you know, yet further hardship.

Mr. Del Conte

Thank you for that. If it's OK, I want to pass back to Ghada. I couldn't help but notice the appeal for 4.4 billion (dollars) for the Horn for emergency

response is somewhat tailored. Ten times less than the 44 billion (dollars) for global humanitarian funding. And the fact that we are so desperate for relief assistance to go out to all of those in need – as you so rightly pointed out – we need to make sure that we're walking and chewing gum, so to speak. But we have an ever-shrinking donor pool.

And what are we doing as a humanitarian system to bring in governments that have political, or security, or economic interests in countries that they are – that they're involved in, certainly in the Horn? What is being done to expand the donor pool? Not to treat them as an ATM, but treat them as a partner in addressing issues in countries that they are invested in, politically or otherwise?

Ghada, could you answer that one?

Ms. Mudawi

Thank you. Thank you, David.

I think – so, as you said rightly, we do have a bigger humanitarian appeal this year globally, and definitely for the crisis which was not expected – was not part, actually, of that appeal when it had been launched at the beginning of the year, talk about Ukraine and now with the drought. The traditional classic list of donors is reaching its limit in terms of resources being available. And definitely we are conscious to that. Efforts are in place already, not this year before, but to approach different partners to increase the pool of donors. And that's taking different activities.

One, you have the private sector that have been considered and have been approached. Within the private sector with the corporate responsibility, how we can create a long-term sounding partnership where there is a committed, predictable fund which is coming, and at the same time flexible. Because the flexibility of the fund is also one of the main issue, predictability which would allow us to do. There is other thing also of the way we function.

What are the – how we create this culture with new donors coming to the market as – and joining what does it mean in keeping also the impartiality, observing principles of humanitarian work and, at the same time, being able to absorb the new caseload with new donors – with new donors coming. Other countries which were not part of the donors with a significant contribution are being approached. And we see an increased contribution in some contexts. I refer, for example, to the Gulf countries as newcomers.

It is a long effort and needs to be consistent, needs to be also across the system. And as we are seeing it, I think humanitarian caseload is proving to be the number-one concern, not only today for this year, but as we go. What we have in resources are not enough. And investing in new donor approach definitely is needed. I leave it here. Thank you.

Mr. Del Conte Thank you for that. It's a difficult question, and often becomes chicken and egg. Do we go now or do we go later? And unfortunately, we have to do both. We have to do both at the same time.

Jeremy, you brought up the no regrets approaches. And response in Somalia are challenged by the presence and activities of Al-Shabaab. Are you and other organizations able to move freely and safely across areas that are affected by this drought? And can you deliver with Al-Shabaab being present in these areas? That's one of the question marks about this response, as it has been in previous responses as well.

Dr. Taylor Thanks, David. Yeah, I think this is an overarching challenge to the response in Somalia in particular. But where there are similarities with Somalia would be Nigeria, Afghanistan in the past, Syria. And some of these challenges are what you might call obvious. These are the challenges of safety and security and access and so on. But I think we should also consider the implications of donor policies here, in particular countering violent extremism policies, which in many instances constrain, provide sufficient restrictions such that aid agencies effectively self-censor, or make their own decisions not to operate in places where they might face a backlash from donors.

So it creates an incredibly complex environment, especially in a situation like Somalia where frontlines are often somewhat blurred and the definition of what providing assistance to a designated terrorist group might actually look like, when the various interlocutors that we work with, or the various gatekeepers at local authorities, where their role is not necessarily very clear. So that is to say that all of these things together mean that areas – and the control of Al-Shabaab – tend not to receive aid, certainly from international agencies, directly.

Mr. Del Conte All right. Just to follow on from that, do not receive aid directly. For organizations that are operating in south-central Somalia, certainly there would be an opportunity or an ability to deliver assistance through partners or through other organizations to reach those in need, correct?

Dr. Taylor Yes, but that has to be managed in terms of these countering violent extremism regulations and restrictions. So it depends on the nature of partnerships with local agencies, and to what extent, yeah, it's a partnership or you're acting as a kind of a donor or in between these kinds of complexities come into play. But in a sense, international agencies can't – cannot operate in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. For all the reasons from security right through to those donor regulations.

But of course, in a country like Somalia, a huge amount of the actual distribution of aid is done either by national staff or partner organizations.

And so there are – I guess there are workarounds. But overall, I think it is fair to say that Al-Shabaab areas are underserved significantly.

Mr. Del Conte

Thank you for that.

Ghada, I want to pass back over to you, if that's OK. Many of today's crises are protracted in nature, as we've been talking about today. And as a result of the current climactic events rather than the sudden onset emergencies that we used to see in the past, how are we as humanitarian organizations or the humanitarian system looking to address this new type of recurrent emergency, particularly climactic events that you see in the Horn of Africa?

We just mentioned three massive droughts over the last decade just in the Horn, but there were more in – over this period as well. If you take a trip down to southern Africa with the floodings, which often result of drought in the Horn, with massive flooding in the likes of Mozambique and Madagascar. But for these recurrent climactic events that require emergency responses, what is this system trying to do to look at this a little bit differently, to say these are different and need a different type of structure, systems, to meet them, that it's not just falling on the humanitarian treasuries but on systemwide responses? Back to you.

Ms. Mudawi

That's exactly, I think, the point, David. We start by saying the humanitarian appeal this year was unprecedented in terms of amount of money that we need for humanitarian crisis. The question is where we will draw the line and where we will say this is what we identify as humanitarian crisis, and this is where a systemwide intervention need to be in place to prevent the next one, while we address the current, which is happening. Having it year-in and year-out, whether it's in terms of – whether there are floods or droughts – and the displacement, mass population movement, and impacts that we have every year on this – this is our part to respond. But the rest, this is where we need to have the system wide.

And when we talk about the systemwide we talk about government responsibilities, we talk about development partners, we talk about other than the humanitarian. How we can move from reactive – action every year to the crisis, to limited. Big projects, like dams and rivers and repairing riverbeds, and securing water resources, infrastructure, this is bigger than our portfolio, as something that humanitarian can contribute to. But we are raising the alarm that this is now happening every year. It comes with a price tag. This price tag is very expensive because it's reoccurring. Better, a good investment one time that will reduce if not deal with the situation, with these problems, once and for all.

Are we the ones who can make this call and at the forefront of leading it? No. But we are definitely raising the alarm and talking. One of the

approach that we did is anticipatory action to say: this had been happening, we are trying to save lives before it happened, avert famine before it happened, respond to crisis before it gets aggravated and it gets worsened. But it's definitely where other partners and other actors needs to step in and to take it seriously. In Somalia I think part of this, if we are not talking about the security aspect of the challenge, the infrastructure and the development projects will address most of it. Over.

Mr. Del Conte Thank you for that.

One of the things – one of the topics that we did not touch on yet so far today is the impact of Ukraine on commodity availability itself. WFP sources 70 percent of their wheat for Africa from Ukraine or Russia. And the availability of that will come into question, not just for WFP but for a number of African countries, a number of Middle Eastern countries, a number of European countries that rely upon those cereals for their populations. Should we have a situation by where the availability of these items aren't able to provide for the markets? What discussions are happening at the U.N. headquarters to look at this challenge and to see what could be done in the immediate term for emergency response for this drought, if wheat or oil or corn is not available?

Ms. Mudawi Thank you, David. And I think it's not only the availability of the – of the grains or wheat, but also looking at the increasing prices. Because what's happening in Ukraine is also affecting energy. So affecting cars and fuel. And accordingly, cost – increases the cost of transportation and hence even if it's available it's going to be at an extra cost. And what used to cost us previously a certain amount of money, now you need to look at the double or triple to buy or to secure the same quantity, if it's available. So this is one.

Second point, we definitely need to look back at – people will have to – somehow to change also their diets, moving from wheat, to maize, to – if something is not available, another commodity need to be available to provide, which is in some cases where we are talking about the failure of three seasons, that means there is no harvest that had been successful to sustain these countries – to have it self-sustain. It needs to be provided from somewhere else. So far, we are already looking at that. And we are trying to see what can be done.

WFP has continued to deliver, so we are not in a situation where delivery is not possible. It is affected, but it is still continuing. The financial resource is definitely going to support that, and to provide this immediate – needs to be covered for the short period. In the long run, that's a question definitely to be answered. And it's a huge concern for what we are going to face, not only in the Horn, as you rightly addressed, but actually in a number of countries in terms of availability of wheat. And what are other alternatives that can be

provided to the population to change diets or to be able to cope with the situation?

Mr. Del Conte It does affect everybody. It's a global issue. I very much agree with you. It's a global issue.

Jeremy, I have a question that may or may not be unfair to you. So I apologize in advance. With 22 million nomads, pastoralists, in the Horn of Africa, and the massive impact of consecutive droughts on their populations and on their herds, what can be done to address the needs that are specific for pastoralist communities? What can be done to support not just the relief assistance to them, but the relief assistance to their remaining animals? What can be done to support the protection of those animals? And should we be able to get on the other end of this – other end of this drought, how can, if we can, rebuild those herds? Ghada was speaking about a woman in northern Kenya who has, what, seven animals left after three years of drought. What does it look like for NRC and for organizations working in south-central Somalia, with regards to pastoralists?

Dr. Taylor Thanks, David.

I mean, essentially this is an incredibly challenging question, because it also points to issues around the long-term viability of pastoralism in some parts of the region that may not actually be possible. That we're not necessarily in a position to make that determination for sure. I mean, I think we start by thinking about this in two – in two ways. I mean, there's the short term, there's the emergency lifesaving response. And that's what we're kind of gearing up for now. And that's about getting, you know, emergency water and sanitation, food – getting it in place to where people are.

But I think the nub of your question is the longer term one. It's about rehabilitation. So I guess there's a couple parts to this. Firstly, I think there is enough evidence to say that resilience programming, if it's to support communities, networks, the ability of communities to recover – these programs, they do work, in the sense that we can see that the communities that have had these – this kind of intervention tend to be better capable to respond to the next drought. The challenge, of course – and this speaks to what Ghada was referring to earlier – is the increased frequency or the shorter spaces between droughts. And that's what's making it more and more difficult.

So that part means that even if we are doing useful interventions that are reaching a large number of people, we're probably not reaching enough. We're not reaching the scale that's necessary, because if you consider climate change across the entire region, if we look at it, you know, not just about isolated patches but huge swaths of territory, it's unlikely that there's

enough interventionist type programming that can actually put in place enough resilience. So that's a – that's sort of the unfortunate reality.

I think also if we look at the scale of displacement and the scale of livestock lost that we've seen with this drought thus far, we already know that we're talking about many years before those – you know, those flocks and those herds can be replenished. You know, I've seen some indicators that they talk about, between five to 12 years. Well, if we look at the drought cycle, and we layer that on top of this established norm of how long it will take to replicate or rebuild these livestock herds, that's telling you that there's likely going to be another drought or some other kind of climate shock in between, which makes it that much more difficult.

So I think we face a reality where a lot of people probably won't return to pastoralism, just because they won't be able to replenish those herds. And then I think there's the bigger issue about, you know, how do we address resilience in a more kind of comprehensive way? How do we think about it more than just at donor intervention or at development agency intervention? Because realistically, if we're going to make resilience matter, if we're going to make it truly sustainable, we have to address the drivers.

And this is where it gets super, super complicated, because this is where it includes things like conflict resolution. You know, how do you build that into the reality that conflict still is the primary cause of displacement certainly in Somalia and if we look across, you know, in Ethiopia. These types of factors. You know, how do we address governance capacity? How do we address the resources that governments have, especially at the local level, to be able to implement policies and to build infrastructure, and to educate communities on, you know, water preservation, you know, approaches? And how do you – how do you shift agricultural practices?

So this is where it gets super complicated, because it's very easy to say, oh, well, we got to address the drivers. But that's the really complicated part. That's the expensive part. So I think when you consider that, along with the scale of the problem, along with the fact that there are these increasingly frequent climactic shocks – bearing in mind we've also seen flooding. We're talking today about droughts, but there have also been floods in recent times, both in Somalia and in Ethiopia. And this is also part of the reality. So if we have these increasing shocks, increasing frequency across a greater number – a greater geographical area, we're talking about a much greater scale.

So, yes, we can program better. We can program smarter. We can perhaps secure more funds from nontraditional donors. We can perhaps do more. But will we, as international external actors, will we ever be able to program this problem away? No. I suspect not. I think we really need to think much more

in sort of a more deeper, systematic, systemic way, in fact, and try and address these drivers. But that's where it gets really difficult, because, you know, it's – as I said, it's conflict. It's governments. It's community ability to – on a scale that remains the real challenge.

Mr. Del Conte

Yeah, certainly. Certainly, for the Horn the competition over scant resources has been a driver for conflict, and given rise to the types of violence that we've seen kind of repeat over and over again. And to put it in a box that maybe is a little bit unfair, but a development problem bearing remarkable humanitarian characteristics does require an entire system reboot and review as to how we are approaching not just the humanitarian side, but the governance side, the development side, the political side of these challenges, so that we can have something that at least meets or matches the context in which we are working. Because we have such gross humanitarian need at a time such as this, we are obliged to put forth maximum effort to deliver upon those needs.

But I think it's also worthwhile to say that we need to, in parallel, start having conversations that can look at places like the Horn of Africa and say: This is a problem that is getting bigger. And the humanitarian Band-Aid didn't work then, and it's certainly not working now, to really solve the issues. So how do we start looking at these challenges through a climate change lens that includes many of the points that you were talking about – conflict resolution or resource support for water catchment, et cetera – from the macro all the way to the micro. And it is a massive challenge that I think warrants effort in parallel to getting a response underway.

But I just want to – we only have a couple minutes left here. And I just wanted to give the floor back to Ghada to see if she has any final comments. Once to you, Ghada.

Ms. Mudawi

Thank you so much, David. And thank you, Jeremy. I think they have been – the challenges and the complexity of the situation have been covered very well for me. I just want to end by coming back to the current situation, the current crisis which we are facing, the severity of it, the urgency of it. And to say that while different crises are definitely taking the world's attention, we should not lose sight of what's happening in the Horn. And we should be in a position to respond adequately to avert a catastrophe which has already started to unfold. So thank you so much for the – for having me. And thanks for the opportunity. Over to you.

Mr. Del Conte

Well, thank you very much, Jeremy. Thank you, again, Ghada. We know what happened last time, in 2010-11, '12, when we had a late response that did not meet the needs of the population. We lost more than 260,000 souls. And this response, to a far greater and bigger drought, is lacking. And it's below what was needed six months ago, or eight months ago.

So the hope is that putting a spotlight on this situation with this webinar helped answer some questions about the political security situations, the depth and severity of the crisis, the capabilities of the humanitarian community to meet the moment, and the efforts to bring more donors into the fold to have these discussions, because it does impact multiple other countries, not just – not just the three we mentioned today. But irregular migration occurs across a lot of Africa because of climate change, and the Horn of Africa climate change in particular. And the need to look at this from a wider perspective while maintaining a great focus on the situation today, in hopes of getting a response up and running.

I would like to thank Jeremy and Ghada once again for taking the time to speak with us today and lend your knowledge. And thank you very much for joining the webinar.

Ms. Mudawi Thank you very much, David. Thank you.

Dr. Taylor Thank you. Thanks for inviting me.

(END)