

Emergency in the Horn of Africa: Follow up and Response Actions

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Statement by Mahendra Shah, Director of International Planning and Communications, AQUIESS

Madam Chair, Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentleman

We appreciate the Horn of Africa Emergency Initiative by FAO and Director- General Jacques Diouf.

We want to bring to your attention AQUIESS RAINAID technology, a private sector initiative to break and end the drought and initiate the rehabilitation-recover phase in the Horn of Africa.

For sustainable recovery in the Horn of Africa, for sustainable agriculture and enhanced food security, for sustainable livelihoods, the most paramount need is that of water.

So where do we get water in this semi-arid and arid environment of the Horn of Africa, that sees recurrent droughts every two to three years. We heard this morning that only 1% of the arable land in this region is irrigated and the key to sustainable pastoralism and crop agriculture is expansion of irrigation and livestock watering locations

What is needed is reliable seasonal rain...and we at AQUIESS have the technology to deliver the rain. A number of delegates have referred to “we cannot control droughts but we can control hunger”. With the AQUIESS technology we have the potential to “end droughts and contribute to eradication of hunger”

Ever since the beginning of agriculture some 10,000 years ago, rivers on Earth have been harnessed for irrigated and productive agriculture.

Over ninety percent of the world’s rain falls on the oceans from precipitable clouds which are fundamentally atmospheric rivers. The AQUIESS technology essential uses electromagnetic waves from a number of ground and remote locations to harness these atmospheric rivers and direct them to deliver managed rain on targeted land areas. The technology has been demonstrated in Australia, USA, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

The RAINAID challenge in the Horn of Africa currently is to bring in gentle soaking rain in the coming weeks, well before the start of the next short rains season about mid October. The objective here is that gentle rain might facilitate the survival of the few remaining livestock assets of the pastoralists....a substantial number of livestock losses over the last two years of the

worst drought in 60 years has left the regions' populations with hardly any assets to rebuild their livelihoods. Beyond bringing in rain and AQUIESS aims to deliver this well within the next 45 days, our goal is to also extend the rainy season to enable some crop agriculture facilitation.

The rain delivering technology has the potential to target rain to fill up depleted water reservoirs under and on the ground as well as recharging river flows through rain delivered at/near sources and origins of rivers. For example the water levels in the Juba and Webi Shabeelle **rivers in Somalia are at an all time low and these can be recharged by delivering rainfall in the targeted highland area where the rivers originate.**

Following the 25th July 2011 Emergency in the Horn of Africa meeting here in Rome, we visited Kenya and the region around Dadaab and Wajir District. We observed and discussed the humanitarian relief operations with the UN agencies in the field as well as NGOs which were operating in Somalia.

The reality of hunger and human suffering we saw in Dadaab and surrounding areas where new arrivals were patiently waiting for days on end to register at the Dadaab camp brought back the memories of October 1984 when the international community responded to the famine across all of sub Saharan Africa. That time some 35 million people were affected. The world community promised this would never happen again and that we would tackle the underlying causes of lack of development that so often results in drought turning into famine.

The drought-famine may yet extend and engulf the whole of the Horn of Africa and beyond, especially if the next rain season in Mid-October was to be below average or fail. We cannot and must not fail to deliver timely and relevant relief aid and at the same time put in place actions that empower an early recovery.

We are in consultation with the affected countries in the Horn as well as the UN agencies and organization and NGOS operation on the ground and at head quarters.

Whilst AQUIESS does not yet have a sponsor to fund our RAIN project in the Horn of Africa, we today undertake to deliver gentle rain within the next 45 days to break and end the drought and in particular extend the coming short rainy season. This will demonstrate our proof of capability to address the challenges of ending droughts, especially in dryland countries such as in the Horn of Africa, where drought invariably turns into famine.

We at AQUIESS are committed to contribute to ending the ongoing emergency crisis in the Horn of Africa and look forward to partnering and working closely with all of you.

Thank you, Your Excellences, Ladies and Gentleman