17th March 2017

Dear Colleague,

**Appeal for Food Crisis in East Africa**

In recent weeks, aid agencies have been warning that millions of people are at risk of food shortages and possible starvation following the worst drought to hit East Africa in over half a century.  Parts of South Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have all suffered two seasons of prolonged dry spells and crop failures leaving a shocking 16 million people at risk. Famine was declared in parts of South Sudan in February– making it the first official famine in any part of the world in the past six years.

Given the scale of this disaster, and following consultation with colleagues, **today I am launching a special Moderator’s Appeal towards the emergency relief effort**, and would take the opportunity to encourage our members to respond in a generous and timely way, just as you have on many previous occasions.

Background information to assist you with highlighting this Special Appeal in your congregation is attached and also available on the PCI website [www.presbyterianireland.org](http://www.presbyterianireland.org).

In anticipation of your generous response we are immediately releasing £60,000 to be distributed to PCI’s partners, Christian Aid, Tearfund and the Presbyterian Church of South Sudan’s Relief and Development Agency (PRDA). All are already engaged in longer term sustainable development work in the affected regions, and all are now well-placed to direct additional efforts to the unfolding crisis. Despite this challenging situation, these agencies / church will ensure that your contributions are used wisely in the provision of immediate relief of those struggling the most in East Africa.

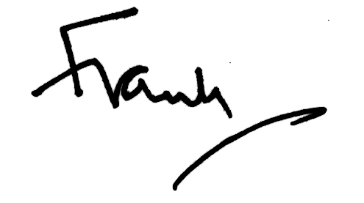
Congregational contributions for East Africa may be sent to the Financial Secretary’s Department in Assembly Buildings. Cheques should be made payable to ‘the Presbyterian Church in Ireland’ and designated for the ‘Moderator’s Appeal for East Africa’. Where possible, members should be encouraged to contribute to their congregations under the Gift Aid Scheme, with congregational treasurers sending in a total amount. The closing date for contributions to the Appeal will be 31st July 2017.

Those who may wish to contribute specifically to Tearfund or Christian Aid programmes in East Africa should send their contributions directly to these partners.

I would encourage you to continue to pray and to give during this period of Lent and Easter so that we may play our part in saving lives and restoring hope to the many caught up in this catastrophic situation.

With huge appreciation,

Yours most sincerely,



Rt Rev Dr Frank Sellar

Moderator