

**Press Release****HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES ON STANDBY FOR SCALED-UP CYCLONE RESPONSE IN WESTERN MYANMAR**

(Myanmar, 14 May 2023)- The United Nations and its humanitarian partners are standing ready to provide lifesaving disaster assistance to communities hit by Cyclone Mocha which is forecast to make landfall in Myanmar's Rakhine State later today.

"Communities are bracing for the arrival of this extremely severe cyclone which is expected to be packing winds gusting to 210 kmph when it crosses the coast," Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. Ramanathan Balakrishnan said.

The cyclone is forecast to bring strong winds and significant storm surge to coastal areas in Rakhine and evacuations of low-lying areas are already well underway through local authorities. The large weather system is expected to then move inland, bringing heavy rain in areas where there is a high risk of landslides and flooding.

Even before the cyclone, an estimated 6 million people are already in humanitarian need in the states where impacts are currently projected (Rakhine, Chin, Magway and Sagaing). Collectively, these states in the country's west host 1.2 million displaced people, many of whom are fleeing conflict and are living in the open without proper shelter. It will also be a dangerous 24 hours for hundreds of thousands of refugees in camps in Bangladesh who are also likely to face strong winds and heavy rain as the cyclone passes just over the border in Myanmar.

"For a cyclone to hit an area where there is already such deep humanitarian need is a nightmare scenario, impacting hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people whose coping capacity has been severely eroded by successive crises," Mr Balakrishnan said.

The humanitarian community activated its Emergency Response Preparedness Plan at the start of the week and has been engaging with all stakeholders to ensure readiness to respond. Aid organizations have been working around the clock to get humanitarian assistance to the areas most likely to be impacted and make sure affected communities know how to keep themselves safe.

"We have done everything we can to prepare by pre-positioning personnel and available stocks across the affected area so that we are ready to respond as soon as the cyclone has passed. Access to affected people and increased funding will be critical to making this assistance possible over the critical days ahead," the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. noted.

United Nations



Nations Unies

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

The [Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is [less than 10 per cent funded](#) with some essential sectors not yet receiving any funding yet this year.

“An urgent injection of funding is desperately needed so that we can ensure no one is left behind as a result of this cyclone but also so that we can keep responding to the 17.6 million people already in need as a result of other crises nationwide. I urge donors to give generously in support of the people of Myanmar at this difficult time,” Mr Balakrishnan said.

ENDS

For further information, please contact:

Danielle Parry, Officer in Charge, parryd@un.org, +95 9797002713 (Phone/Signal)

Suhad Sakalla, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, sakalla@un.org, +95 9797007815, +972 054433 4202 (Signal/WhatsApp)

Pierre Peron, Regional Public Information Officer, peronp@un.org, +66 614 200 390 (Phone/Signal/WhatsApp)

For more information, please visit www.unocha.org | <https://reliefweb.int/country/mmr> | <https://www.facebook.com/OCHAMyanmar>