**Call to Action to End Famine**

Today we, members of more than 100 global, regional and national faith-based organizations and churches representing more than one billion people of faith, are gathered in our communities of worship to observe the Global Day of Prayer to End Famine on 21 May 2017.

We are mobilizing prayers and actions to end famine, as we are deeply disturbed that more people face famine today than at any time in modern history. Famine has been declared by the United Nations in South Sudan, while Somalia, Nigeria, and Yemen are on the brink of famine. The situation has been precipitated by a deadly combination of drought, conflicts, marginalization and weak governance. Across these four countries, 20 million people face starvation and many millions more across the world are experiencing alarming levels of hunger. Malnutrition is having a disastrous impact and, as ever, children are among the worst affected, becoming increasingly vulnerable and affected negatively for life. In fact, 1.4 million children could die of severe acute malnutrition in the coming months. Additionally, 27 million people lack access to safe water in the four countries at risk of famine, increasing the threat of cholera and other water-borne diseases.

In spite of sincere efforts by many, there is great danger that on its current course, the response to this global crisis will be hugely inadequate and will lead to unimaginable suffering and death.

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”* Matthew 25:35

We are commanded to see the divine in those who are suffering and to respect their dignity. At the same time we are called to appreciate people’s resilience and the solutions they provide. Food is more than a human right; it is a divine gift that cannot be impeded. We are calling on all our faithful, to mobilize their congregations and organizations, the wider society and governments, to make a difference during this unprecedented period of suffering.

But the most disastrous effects of this crisis can be avoided if we act together to:

1. ***Respond to the acute and urgent need for resources.***

There is huge shortfall in resources being committed to fund life-saving aid. So far only $1.3 billion of the $4.9 billion needed has been received. The rest is urgently required. We have to hold ourselves, our societies and our governments accountable to marshall the resources needed to address this crisis and get those resources on the ground as soon as possible.

2. ***Commit to work for peace through addressing the drivers of conflict and injustice.***

We resolve to foster peace in communities before and after conflicts breaks out; hold governments and others who are in power accountable for perpetrating human rights abuses and escalating, rather than de-escalating conflicts; and partner with governments to build up institutions and civil society for respecting the rule of law.

***3. Address the root causes of extreme hunger over the long term through sustainable development.***

We resolve to address the issues of:

*a.* Climate change, which impacts the poor disproportionately

*b.* Gender inequity, which perpetuates injustice and impoverishment of families and communities

*c.* Support for male and female smallholder farmers, who produce the majority of the world’s food but often lack secure rights to the productive resources, such as land, water, seeds, markets and financial means, which would help them to have food security and to live with dignity.

*d.* Peacebuilding and conflict resolution at the community, national and global levels.

*May the grace of God dispel the droughts and famine within us and surrounding and transform the world, reflecting the love and faithfulness of God. May God’s mercy make even the driest land become a garden, and restore life to dry bones within us and around us. (Ezekiel 37:1-14).*