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**Press statement by Ms. Valerie Amos, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, at the conclusion of her visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**

**Kinshasa, 10 March 2011**

The DRC's humanitarian situation is not only one of the world's most serious, but also one of the most enduring. In conflict areas, millions of people have rarely known peace and security. Many live without protection, at the mercy of armed groups who do not show any respect for civilians — in violation of the most basic norms of international and national law.

Without humanitarian assistance, the most vulnerable would face hunger and disease on a regular basis. The emergency has become chronic, while development indicators are worsening. Diseases like cholera are widespread in several areas, and malnutrition rates are high in most of the country.

Even in non-conflict areas, the humanitarian indicators are alarming and humanitarian assistance is needed. This is due to endemic poverty, migration caused by economic distress, and ethnic tensions.

The UN and its partners will continue to support efforts by the Government to build sustainability and promote development.

Given the scale of the ongoing violence and abuse against innocent civilians, particularly in the east of the country, there needs to be a continued focus on building key institutions — particularly the justice sector — to enshrine the rule of law and stop the culture of impunity.

To enable the safe return of people displaced by conflict, renewed attention needs to be given to finding a regional solution, to enable the dismantling of armed opposition groups in the east, including FDLR and the LRA.

And further steps must be taken to enable the DRC to proceed further

down the path to stability and development by building capacity, strengthening institutions and reducing poverty.

People in the DRC want what millions of people around the world already have. Peace. Security. Stability. As other crises emerge around the world, we must make sure that the people of the DRC are not forgotten.

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