

## Press release

# Afghanistan and Somalia on Climate Brink - Major New Study to Reveal

***LONDON, 28 November 2010 - A major new piece of climate change research being launched in London on 3<sup>rd</sup> December will show Afghanistan and Somalia part of a small group of the world's most vulnerable countries.***

*The groundbreaking report – called the Climate Vulnerability Monitor – was built to zero in on the world's fast increasing vulnerability to changes in the climate. It will detail estimated climate effects on health issues, weather disasters, losses of habitat and wider economic stresses as they affect the more than 180 countries assessed by the report. Afghanistan and Somalia are both rated in the highest category on the majority of the criteria.*

*Each has extremely widespread disease including malaria, diarrheal infections and malnutrition that are spurred on by higher temperatures caused by global warming. Just as influenza strikes in winter because it reacts to cold, leading research shows many diseases do just the opposite. Mountainous Afghanistan in particular faces diseases spread by mosquitoes to higher altitudes as its alpine ranges heat up.*

*The core of Afghanistan and Somalia's economies is agriculture. Highly sensitive to changes in climate, according to the report less rain, less water, and more heat are a battle for farmers trying to keep yields up.*

*The head of DARA who leads the report's development is Ross Mountain, and headed the UN's operations during the Iraq War, commented:*

*"These countries are at the brink. The harshest places on earth are also open wounds. Research implies significant climate stresses already today. That's a dangerous trigger in a seriously unstable environment."*

*The new report outlines the explosive and unstoppable growth in climate change over the next 20 years. Worse is said to come beyond then if global warming is not held back by immediate reductions in greenhouse gas emissions that are still growing steadily on a global level.*

*"Added pressure like this fuels more hunger, poverty and desperation that can only breed violence and crime like piracy. The ramping up of that pressure is adding up.*

*We can spend billions policing these places or on emergency assistance for disasters waiting to happen. Or we can shift the focus and fight disease, promote education and take preventative measures. All of that is relatively cheap and effective. Dangers and costs can only grow if we ignore these pressures," said Ross Mountain.*

ENDS

Notes:

*The full report is being published in London on 3rd December at the Commonwealth Club, 25 Northumberland Avenue.*

*President Mohamed Nasheed of the Maldives, former Costa Rican President and WEF CEO José María Figueres Olsen along with world leading climate scientists and humanitarian experts will be present for the launch.*

*In order to express an interest in the report, attend the press conference or for more information, please contact James Drewer on 0207 467 9238 or [jdrewer@daraint.org](mailto:jdrewer@daraint.org)*

#### **About the Climate Vulnerability Monitor**

*The Climate Vulnerability Monitor is an independent global assessment of the effect of climate change on the world's populations today and in the near future. It will also contain an effectiveness review of some key measures that can be taken now to adapt to climate change and limit impacts that harm people, their economies and the environment.*

*The report targets some basic questions about climate change, including where the most serious impacts are being felt? To what degree? And what measures can minimize its harmful effects? In doing so it will clarify the extent of the main impacts of climate change on human society, and what some of the most effective responses to that impact are known to be. It will clearly highlight the scale of what is at stake in the Cancún climate talks and for all the world's populations if action is not taken in greatest urgency to deal with climate change.*

*The report has been brought together by expert panels of key international authorities and will be launched at a press conference in central London in parallel to the Cancún climate conference.*

#### **DARA**

*Founded in 2003, DARA is an independent humanitarian organization committed to improving the quality and effectiveness of aid for vulnerable populations suffering from conflict, disasters and climate change. Its activities have spanned over 40 countries across 5 continents.*

[www.daraint.org](http://www.daraint.org)

#### **Climate Vulnerable Forum**

*The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is the first global partnership of nations from Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific united against by a common threat as some*

*of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. CVF countries have contributed least to a problem that threatens, in many cases, their very survival.*

*The CVF first convened in the Maldives in November 2009 and adopted a declaration that expressed alarm at the pace of change to the Earth caused by climate change and sealed the commitment of participating nations to work in concert towards strongest action tackling global warming and its negative effects.*

*Participant nations include Bangladesh (future chair designate), Barbados, Bhutan, Kiribati (incoming chair), Ghana, Kenya, Nepal, Rwanda, Tanzania and Vietnam as well as the Maldives (first chair).*

### **2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference**

*The 2010 United Nations Climate Change Conference will be held in Cancún, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010. The conference is officially referred to as the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 16) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the 6th session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (CMP 6) to the Kyoto Protocol.*

<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>