



## PRESS RELEASE

### **Italy grants €1 million to UNHCR in support of Eritrean Refugees in Ethiopia**

ADDIS ABABA, 25 January 2019. The Italian Government has granted one million Euros to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in support of the protection and assistance needs of ethnic Afar Eritrean refugees in Ethiopia. The funds made available through the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS) will be utilized in the next 24 months, with a focus on improving the living conditions of Eritrean refugees and the host communities in and around Barahle and Aysaita refugee camps in the Afar Regional State.

**The Italian Ambassador to Ethiopia, H.E. Arturo Luzzi**, reaffirmed Italy's commitment to work closely with the Ethiopian Authorities and the UN refugee agency to support and assist the refugees in the Afar Regional State.

The UNHCR Representative in Ethiopia, Ms. Clementine Nkweta-Salami, thanks the Government and people of Italy for their generous and continued support to the refugees in Ethiopia. The funds, she said, would help protect and ensure the dignity of the Eritrean refugees in the two camps, with a focus on women and children who make up 79% of the camps' population.

**The Head of the Addis Ababa Office of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, Mr. Tiberio Chiari**, stressed that through the Italian contribution, UNHCR will implement strategic activities aimed at facilitating access to energy, supporting the protection of natural resources and environment, and improving sanitation, hygiene, and access to drinkable water for the vulnerable population.

Ethiopia is host to the second largest refugee population in Africa, sheltering more than 900,000 registered refugees and asylum seekers, mainly from South Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia.

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