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Brussels, 27 April 2022/OACPS: The Secretary-General of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), H.E. Mr Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, extends his deepest condolences to the Government and people of the Republic of South Africa for the significant loss of life in the eastern city of Durban and the surrounding KwaZulu-Natal Province due to torrential rainfall in April. Intensified levels of rainfall by mid-April resulted in severe and devastating floods, with catastrophic impact. Unofficial reports claim that dozens of persons remain unaccounted for, approximately 443 lives were lost and over 4,000 homes were severely damaged. The Government of South Africa has declared a State of Disaster in response to the Durban floods.

On behalf of the OACPS, Secretary-General Chikoti extends solidarity and expressions of sincere regret for the mortalities, the severe infrastructural damage and the significant displacement of persons.

Secretary-General Chikoti reiterated that this latest flooding in South Africa follows the recent devastation caused by torrential rainfall across the Southern African region during the first quarter of 2022. These extreme events reinforce the fact that Members of the OACPS are amongst the most vulnerable and fragile countries in the world.

Countries and communities of the OACPS continue to be severely impacted by climate change-induced hazard risks, and multiple crises including high-levels of debt and inflation. These have been further exacerbated by the effects of the war in the Ukraine, the biodiversity crisis and the high costs of recovery efforts from the COVID-19 pandemic. They all pose harsh economic challenges and obstacles to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Secretariat of the OACPS is collaborating closely with the Government of the Republic of South Africa during this period of crisis.

Secretary-General Chikoti remains committed to collaborating with the OACPS' long-standing partner, the European Union (EU) and international partners to support the South African Government to address its priorities for humanitarian assistance and relief, and its longer-term recovery efforts. The OACPS Secretary-General also committed to continuing the Organisation's ongoing efforts to enhance access to concessional finance for the 79 Members of the OACPS, including its lower- and middle-income countries.

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