

SHIPMENTS WHILE STILL UNDER EPLF CONTROL, HAVE EFFECTIVELY ENDED ANY CHANCE OF SEEING THROUGH THE PRESENT CRISIS WITHOUT LOSS OF LIFE.

IT IS A SAD FACT THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE THE DELIVERY OF ESSENTIAL LIFE SUSTAINING FOOD TO THE INFLECTED OF THE REGION IF THE POLITICAL ENTITIES THAT GUIDE THEIR DESTINIES CONTINUE TO USE FOOD AS A WEAPON TO ATTAIN THEIR STRATEGIC MILITARY AND POLITICAL OBJECTIVES.

THAT IS NOT TO SAY, MR SPEAKER, THAT WE WILL NOT DO ALL WE CAN.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR PEACE AND WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE ALL CHANNELS AVAILABLE TO US IN AN ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF THIS FAMINE.

I MUST, HOWEVER RELUCTANTLY, CONCLUDE THAT WE HAVE PASSED THE POINT OF NO RETURN FOR MANY OF THOSE MOST AFFECTED, AND IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF DAYS UNTIL THOSE AGONIZING REPORTS OF STARVING ETHIOPIANS BEGIN AGAIN TO FILL OUR NEWSPAPERS AND TELEVISION SCREENS.

SINCE THE 1984 FAMINE, WHICH AFFECTED SOME ELEVEN MILLION PEOPLE, OUR COUNTRY HAS BEEN ONE OF THE PRINCIPLE SOURCES OF HUMANITARIAN AID IN NORTHERN ETHIOPIA.