Kampala - 15th March, 2017

Reference is made to the New Vision Lead Head line of March 14, 2017 “Crisis Hits Red Cross”.

The content thereafter on page 4 is a rehash of the 2013 crisis and part of the Chairman’s report to the National Council Members in an Annual National Council meeting involving URCS representatives of Volunteers and Members which sat on February 24th, 2017 at Uganda Red Cross Headquarters in Rubaga. URCS clarifies on the head line as follows:

1. The crisis mentioned was a 2013 issue where thereafter the Senior Management and the Board then were relieved of their duties and legal actions subsequently taken on those responsible. The then Board was dissolved and all staff who occupied managerial positions were laid off.

A new Board and Management was brought in office thereafter. To strengthen Board oversight functions, professional Advisors were shopped from outside the membership vis; the Director of Planning in the Ministry of Finance & Planning, the New Vision Head of Marketing, The Risk and Audit Management Specialist to mention but a few.

The Management Team is led by a seasoned Change Manager, Mr. Kwesiga Robert who had turned the Uganda RC around in late 1990s and up to 2005 and thereafter went for international engagements with the International Red Cross was brought back. The other Senior Management Team members were sourced from the Private Sector and corporates of high repute and are very professional and with the requisite experiences.

2. The Board Chairman’s reference to the debt portfolio was about informing the National Council members that by and large the Uganda Red Cross has paid off most of these bad debts acquired by the previous leadership and the National Society financial situation is now stabilizing.

3. The Institution has since then re-positioned itself again as a reliable humanitarian partner actively engaged in a wide range of humanitarian activities; Suffice to mention the following;

   - The Uganda Red Cross sorely responded and provided humanitarian assistance to the Bundibugyo tribal clashes of last year that displaced over 20,000 people.
In partnership with UNICEF during the 2nd half of 2016 rolled back the upsurge of Malaria in the 10 districts of Northern Uganda and West Nile. Furthermore, responded controlled the Cholera epidemic that hit 21 districts by the end of 2016.

With support of UNHCR, Prime Minister’s Office and the International Red Cross, Uganda Red Cross is currently the leading Agency in supporting the South Sudan refugees the processing of 450,000 through the reception centers, Camp management and further support the refugees with safe and clear drinking water, hygiene as they settled in various resettlement sites in West Nile Region.

In the last month alone through the International Red Cross Rapid Emergency Response mechanism, a Water Treatment Plant with the capacity of producing water for 40,000 people per day was installed along River Nile and mass sanitation response unit to support 20,000 refugees. This is to compliment the three water production plants that have been supplying water to the refugees settlements in the districts of Arua, Moyo and Yumbe.

With support of the Norwegian Embassy, has strengthened the Mt Elgon Region Risk Reduction intervention aimed at averting, minimizing and strengthening the emergency response capacities due to the perennial landslides and floods that periodically hit the region.

Livelihoods support to the Karamoja and Teso regions are ongoing with support of a multiplicity of partners/donors mainly from the Red Cross family.

The Blood donor recruitment, supporting advocacy for better health [funded by USAID] supporting Youth initiatives in all regions of Uganda, First Aid services, Restoration of Family Links for persons in-need, to mention but a few are being implemented by Uganda Red Cross.

4. These and other humanitarian interventions are being supported by a multiplicity of donors and partners. Some of them new and others the old ones who had left but have since then re-engaged having been certified with the change process Uganda RC has gone through.

5. The Institutional statutes, systems and procedures that were abused have since been strengthened and revised to meet the International standards, vis; Constitution, Financial, Procurement. These were some of the decisions that were taken at the forum referred to by the New Vision article.
6. Red Cross has since developed a new Strategy 2020 with strategic options highlighted below to drive its new sense of direction:

(SOP 1) Effective governance, sustainable operations and strategic partnerships.
(SOP 2) Strengthen Branch and membership management.
(SOP 3) To Improve Corporate Relations for stronger sustainable resource mobilization.
(SOP 4) Responsive programming and interventions – To Save lives, Protect Livelihoods and strengthen Recovery from disasters and crises.

With the above in perspective, Uganda Red Cross Society has outlived and recovered from the 2013 crisis. It is again a well-functioning humanitarian institution. A call is to Ugandans and Ugandan based Institutions to support Uganda Red Cross in delivering on its mandates of serving the vulnerable and fostering humanity dignity.

For more Information:

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