UNOPS statement – For immediate release

Nepal's floods are a warning to the world. Recovery goes beyond brick and stone

Statement from Jorge Moreira da Silva, UN Under-Secretary-General and UNOPS Executive Director following visit to Nepal.

MANILA, 20 OCTOBER 2026: I have just concluded a visit to Nepal where I witnessed first-hand the devastating impact of the ongoing flash floods on communities, homes, basic infrastructure and livelihoods in Devighat and Bidur (Nuwakot).

The scale of destruction is colossal. More than 1,500 people have lost their lives. Over 5,600 people are still missing. Eighty bridges and thirteen hydro power dams were destroyed. And 2.2 million tonnes of debris and sediment are now occupying what used to be houses, roads and rivers. The World Bank estimates reconstruction needs at nearly US$4.8 billion. The Prime Minister of Nepal pegged physical **recovery needs at about 10 percent of GDP.**

Nepal faces an enormous recovery challenge, made all the more difficult by sharp increases in prices of fuel, transport and construction, and deepening risks of food insecurity linked to the war in the Middle East.

I met people who had lost their homes and entire livelihoods in the floods, and saw the challenges they face now as they try to build back their lives. Recovery goes beyond the brick and stone. It is about supporting people to rebuild their lives, recover their losses and overcome the challenges they face.

The devastation I witnessed is a stark reminder that the climate crisis is also a development crisis, disproportionately affecting those who have contributed least to it. The impacts extend far beyond Nepal: the Hindu Kush Himalaya - of which Nepal is a core part - is a vital source of water for over 2 billion people - around a quarter of humanity. But its snow and ice is fast disappearing, with the region warming about twice as fast as the global average.

UNOPS stands with the people and Government of Nepal in their efforts to recover and rebuild. Working closely with the Government and international partners, UNOPS will contribute its expertise in resilient infrastructure, procurement and project implementation to help build a safer, more resilient future for all Nepalis.

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Notes to the editors:

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Notes to editors:

- You can find multimedia content from the visit here and here.
- UNOPS Executive Director Jorge Moreira da Silva is the most senior UN figure to have visited Nepal since the flash floods started on 26 August 2026.
- UNOPS supported communities in rebuilding after Nepal's 2015 earthquake, including in Nuwakot - and it remains committed to supporting recovery.
- For further details see UNICEF Humanitarian Situation Report No. 6 (5 October 2026), and the World Bank's Global Rapid Post-Disaster Damage Estimation (GRADE) Report (1 September 2026)

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