MALAWI GOVERNMENT

MINISTRY OF LABOUR

PRESS RELEASE

ADVISORY NOTE ON TROPICAL CYCLONE FREDDY

The Ministry of Labour has noted with great concern the effect of the Cyclone Freddy that has brought unusual torrential rains that are accompanied by devastating winds and flooding in some parts of the Southern Region, notably, **Blantyre, Chikwawa, Chiradzulu, Mwanza, Neno, Nsanje, Phalombe, Thyolo and Zomba districts**. According to the Department of Climate Change and Meteorological Services, these weather conditions will persist for the next two days up to Tuesday 14th March, 2023.

The Ministry of Labour would like to advise all employers and workers to be alert for the possible damaging effects of the cyclone that may cause a risk to the safety, health and welfare of persons within or outside the workplaces or cause dangerous occurrences or render access to workplaces impossible.

Under Malawi's labour-related laws, it is the duty of an employer to take reasonable care for the safety of his or her employee. This duty extends to the safety of the premises and the plant and to the conduct of the work. In other words, the employer's duty is to take reasonable steps to avoid

exposing her or his employees to reasonably foreseeable risk or injury. In light of the ongoing Cyclone Freddy, it is advisable that employers take precautionary measures to ensure the safety of employees on the days the extreme weather is expected to strike, namely, 13th and 14th March 2023. **On these two days (13th and 14th March 2023), employees should be allowed to report to work only when there is a guarantee that the safety of the employees on these two days would not be compromised and, where appropriate, allow employees to work from home.**

Employees who are employed in essential services such as medical personnel, ambulance drivers, and disaster and emergency management shall be required to report for work. However, the said employees must be provided with adequate protective gear and a work environment that ensures their safety, health and welfare.

The Ministry would like to appeal to the Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM) and the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions (MCTU) to join hands with the Ministry by sensitizing their Members to take precautionary measures and to take proactive action to avoid cyclone-related injuries or deaths at work or during commuting.

Wezi Kayira

SECRETARY FOR LABOUR

12th March, 2023