MERCY CORPS STATEMENT ON THE POLITICIZATION OF U.S. AID TO VENEZUELA

Statement by Provash Budden, Americas Regional Director, Mercy Corps

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It is regrettable that aid has become a pawn in the political chess match between the governments of the United States and Venezuela. Aid should never be used as political bait – both the people who need it and those who risk their lives to deliver it deserve better.

We support any increase in humanitarian access and resources to help turn the tide against massive human suffering in Venezuela. Should aid make it into Venezuela, it is critical that local, impartial humanitarian groups distribute it to the people who need it most – including children, the sick, the elderly and the most impoverished. Decisions around who receives aid, and in which locations, must not be influenced or controlled by security forces or political actors. Those decisions instead should be guided by the level of need and must not put the people receiving it or distributing it in danger. No government should put humanitarian organizations in a position where they have to consider compromising fundamental humanitarian principles or safety to help people who desperately need it.