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NEW UN EMERGENCY RELIEF COORDINATOR MAKES FIRST VISIT TO ASIA

(New York: 11 June 2007): United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes will visit Seoul, Republic of Korea, and Tokyo, Japan, in the coming days as part of his first mission to Asia.

In Seoul on 12 June 2007, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will attend the regional meeting of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Donor Support Group (ODSG). He is expected to open the meeting hosted by the Republic of Korea, which joined the OCHA Donor Support Group in 2006.

While in Seoul, Mr. Holmes is also expected to meet with senior officials from a number of Government ministries, as well as with representatives of Korean non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in emergency relief operations. On 13 June 2007, he will give a lecture at Kyung Hee University.

From 14 to 15 June, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will be in Tokyo, Japan, where he is expected to meet with a number of Japanese ministers and other senior Government officials, including Ms. Sadako Ogata, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and current President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Mr. Holmes also plans to meet with a group of Japanese parliamentarians to discuss diplomatic affairs and human security, as well as with representatives of the United Nations system based in Japan. Finally, he will present an address at the Japan Foundation to a wide-ranging audience including academics and students, government officials, NGOs, and representatives of the private sector.

Throughout his mission, the Emergency Relief Coordinator will focus on strengthening humanitarian partnerships, both at the governmental and non-governmental level. He will also engage in strategic and policy discussions in both countries on natural disaster management, climate change and its implication for humanitarian assistance, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and disaster risk reduction. Both Japan and the Republic of Korea are important donors to humanitarian operations; both are members of the ODSG; and both contributed to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) in 2006.

There will be several opportunities for press to meet with the Emergency Relief Coordinator during his mission. For more information, or to request an interview, please contact:

<u>Contact</u>	<u>Telephone Number</u>
Amanda Pitt, OCHA-Bangkok (Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific)	+ 66 2288 1195 +66 81 374 1035 (mobile) pitta@un.org
Stephanie Bunker, OCHA-New York	+1 917 367 5126, +1 917 892 1679 (mobile) bunker@un.org
Kristen Knutson, OCHA-New York	+1 917 367 9262 knutson@un.org