

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

**UN PROVIDES AID TO DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF
KOREA**

(New York, 23 October 2007): In response to flooding in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in August and September, UN agencies are undertaking various assistance activities in cooperation with the Government of the DPRK. Heavy rains in August caused severe floods in nine provinces of the country, including the capital city, Pyongyang. The floods affected almost one million people and displaced nearly 170,000, while at least 454 people died and 156 people remain missing. Government sources reported that over 40,000 houses were completely destroyed, with a further 200,000 submerged or badly damaged in the floods. Thousands of schools, hospitals and other public buildings were destroyed or badly damaged. At least 10 per cent of the agricultural land was also inundated. Rainstorms and strong winds caused by Typhoon Wipha in September led to further severe damage in four provinces.

Rapid nutritional screening of children less than five years of age took place in 19 of the worst-affected counties from 15 – 18 October. The Ministry of Public Health and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will analyze the results of the assessment and develop a response plan before the end of October. Procurement of therapeutic food continues, and adequate stocks for the initial response phase are now in place.

Using funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the World Health Organisation is providing emergency health kits, as are IFRC and the Governments of Norway, Poland and Switzerland. CERF funding is also making it possible for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to provide reproductive health kits to 240 health clinics. UNFPA is also working with the Ministry of Public Health develop a surveillance system for monitoring maternal deaths in clinics, with funding from Norway.

The World Food Programme (WFP) completed the first cycle of food distributions to 215,000 people in 37 flood-affected counties in the second week of September. More than 5,500 tonnes of food were dispatched by rail and road. The second cycle of food distributions consisting of some 4,800 tonnes of cereals began in mid-October. The first round of monitoring visits to 18 flood-affected counties on the east coast took place between 5-14 September. Monitoring of the remaining 19 counties on the west coast is currently underway and will be completed by early November. CERF funding is also being used by FAO to procure seeds, fertiliser and plastic sheeting.

The DPRK Flash Appeal for USD 14.1 million is now 80 per cent funded, with a further USD 1.1 million in unconfirmed pledges.