

**Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)****NEW DEPUTY HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR DEPLOYED TO EASTERN CHAD**

(New York / N'Djamena: 08 November 2007): The United Nations has appointed Ms. Fatma Samoura to fill the newly created position of Deputy Humanitarian Coordinator (DHC) in eastern Chad. She will be based in the city of Abéché, located approximately 80 kilometres west of the border with Sudan's conflict-torn Darfur region.

“Given the significant and lasting humanitarian needs in the area, it is essential to have a senior official reinforce coordination on the ground. I trust that this will enable humanitarian actors to respond better to the needs of the most vulnerable,” said John Holmes, Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) and United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. Mr. Holmes visited Abéché and Chad's capital N'Djamena last March, as part of his first field mission after assuming his current functions. The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has also been reinforcing its presence on the ground.

Ms. Samoura has been seconded by the World Food Programme (WFP). Since 1995, she has covered positions with WFP at its headquarters in Rome and as Country Director in Djibouti and Cameroon. She has worked on complex emergencies including Kosovo, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sierra Leone, and Timor-Leste.

“Despite sustained insecurity, we estimate that humanitarian aid has already reached over 450,000 people in Chad during 2007,” said Ms. Samoura, “But a lot of work lies ahead. We must continue to provide life-saving assistance to all those in need, and we must be ready to respond to new potential population movements.” The DHC will provide support and guidance to a team comprised of seven United Nations agencies and over 40 international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in eastern Chad.

Ms. Samoura, who arrived in Abéché today, is a national of Senegal, and is married with three children.

Chad is a landlocked country in a region of Africa affected by recurrent humanitarian emergencies. Bordering the Central African Republic to the south-east, Niger to the north-west, and Sudan to the east, it currently hosts 280,000 refugees and over 170,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs). With an infant mortality rate of 124 per 1,000 live births and an average life expectancy of 44 years, in 2006 it ranked 171st out of 177 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index.

The United Nations and its partners in Chad are planning to present a Humanitarian Appeal for 2008, within the scope of the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) coordinated by the United Nations. The 2007 appeal requested a total of \$264 million on behalf of 11 United Nations agencies and 29 NGOs, and received funding of \$241 million from 22 donors. Funded at 91%, it is today the best funded of all consolidated and flash appeals in 2007.

For further information, please contact:

Maurizio Giuliano, Public Information Officer, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), N'Djamena
Email: giuliano@un.org Tel: +235-6053892

Stephanie Bunker, Spokesperson, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), New York
Email: bunker@un.org Tel: +1-917-3675126

Elizabeth Byrs, Spokesperson, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Geneva
Email: byrs@un.org Tel: +41-22-9172653