

**Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs**

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND EXCEED  
\$1 BILLION**

(New York: 13 December 2007): At a high-level United Nations conference convened today in support of the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), generous contributions from donors took the total contributions since the Fund's inception to over \$1 billion. In the first two years of the Fund's existence, 2006 and 2007, donors contributed over \$650 million while the remaining amount came as pledges for 2008. A 2006 resolution of the General Assembly specifies that the CERF should ultimately reach \$500 million per year, of which \$50 million is a revolving loan fund.

"Today is an important milestone in the history of humanitarianism. I am delighted to see so many donors renew and strengthen their commitment to the humanitarian cause," said John Holmes, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. "The CERF is crucial for our ability to assist quickly millions of vulnerable people around the globe, as it enables us to carry out immediate life-saving activities wherever and whenever required. The Fund exists thanks to the generous support of the ninety-three donors who have supported it, and I hope that 2008 will see even more countries, organizations and individuals joining us in support of this vital Fund, as we continue caring for the world's poorest and least fortunate," he added.

Mr. Holmes hosted the high-level event that brought together those committed to ensuring that the Fund continues to operate successfully, including senior officials from the international donor community, representatives of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and officials from countries whose populations benefited from assistance made possible by the CERF.

Mr. Srgjan Kerim, President of the 62nd session of the General Assembly, and the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro, addressed the meeting, as did the Permanent Representative of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Juan Antonio Yanez-Barnuevo, and Mr. Paul Antoine Bien-Aimé, Interior Minister of Haiti.

The CERF helped to save millions of lives during its first two years by providing quick initial funding for life-saving assistance and rapid response in sudden onset, rapidly deteriorating, and underfunded humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters. In 2007, the CERF helped respond to needs arising from floods, hurricanes, drought, and disease outbreaks including cholera, meningitis, and Rift Valley Fever.

It also helped to redress the imbalances in global aid distribution that have too often left millions of people in so-called neglected or forgotten crises in need. Since its launch on 9 March 2006, the Central Emergency Response Fund has committed \$595.3 million to humanitarian projects in 59 countries affected by natural disasters and armed conflicts. Since January 2007, the CERF has committed \$212.9 million to rapid response grants in 48 countries and \$124 million to underfunded emergencies in 23 countries. The United Nations encourages Member States and the private sector to support the CERF through multi-year commitments to ensure the sustainability of the Fund.