

USG/ERC John Holmes

Closing Remarks at Donor Briefing on Timor-Leste Humanitarian Situation

22 January 2008

I would like to thank our panel for their informative statements and all participants for an interesting discussion. I hope we now have a better understanding of the humanitarian situation in Timor-Leste and its related inter-linked challenges, which are to continue to provide humanitarian life-saving assistance to the people in the IDP camps but also to find ways of getting them home or to other areas as soon as possible, while also working as rapidly as we can to addressing the longer-term and chronic vulnerabilities that have a direct impact on people's lives.

It is clearly vital that the Government demonstrates leadership and commitment to solve these issues. The National Recovery Strategy is an important step towards the return and resettlement of IDPs. However, it clearly still requires support from the international community.

The international support to the Government's response to life-saving and recovery needs is two-fold: direct financial support, combined with enhanced human and institutional capacity for planning and delivering assistance. In this respect, international NGOs and organizations, and UN agencies are critical partners of the government and require continued support to implement programmes as well as continued efforts in strengthening the government's institutional capacities.

In the coming months an appeal will be prepared by the international humanitarian partners to address gaps in provision of humanitarian assistance targeted for the IDPs, and to prepare the way for full recovery and development activities.

And on OCHA itself the year 2008 will also be a decisive period for OCHA's engagement in Timor-Leste. As always, we want to work ourselves out of a job as quickly as possible, through the kind of parallel working noted by Ms. Kathleen Cravero. As the stabilization of the country continues, the UN system will want to reflect this transition and move

from the relief phase to the recovery phase in order to address in a sustainable way the underlying political and socio-economic factors of displacement and conflict in Timor-Leste.

Thank you to you all for attending in such numbers and at such a high level, testimony to continuing interest of the international community and we look forward to your continuing generous support.