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*Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
for Recovery and Governance, Resident Coordinator
and Humanitarian Coordinator in Liberia*

9 June 2008

Dear Mr. Holmes,

I refer to the May announcement that CERF has set aside a funding reserve to help mitigate the effects of the current food crisis. This announcement is timely in light of the adverse effects the food and fuel crisis in Liberia.

Liberia faces a real threat of having some of the gains made in peace consolidation and strengthening of national authority dissipate, or be eroded if immediate remedial measures are not taken. You will recall that the fourteen-year civil war was instigated by rice price increases.

In Liberia, the general Consumer Price Index increased by 14 percent in between January 2007 and 2008, and the costs for the food basket increased by 22 percent within the same period. Furthermore, the price of rice, the main staple food, has increased by 45 percent since January 2007. The World Bank has recently estimated that the poverty rate could exceed 68 percent due to these increases. Increasing rice prices are closely related to poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity in the context of Liberia as the poorest of the population rely heavily on food imports to meet rice consumption needs (56 percent).

The Government and its partners have agreed that a combination of short-term and long-term measures is required to address the food crisis in Liberia. Short-term measures include increasing short-term crop yields, providing nutritional support for vulnerable groups, and enhancing opportunities for wage increases.

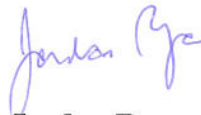
The IASC Country Team has endorsed the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)'s proposal *Emergency Support to Increase Local Food Production During the 2008 Planting Season*. The project will implement critical actions to improve the productivity of low income, food insecure farmers by providing them key agricultural inputs and supporting cultivation practices to reduce post harvest losses. This will have an immediate impact on the next harvest, and mitigate some of the effects of the price increase in rice. Boosting crop production will help prevent the rapid deterioration of the already precarious nutrition status of the population.

Mr. John Holmes
Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs
and Emergency Relief Coordinator
United Nations, New York

These interventions are fully in-line with the Government of Liberia's Food Security policies and have their endorsement.

I am hopeful that this proposal can be viewed favorably given the successful experience with CERF funding in Liberia since 2006.

Sincerely yours,



**Jordan Ryan
Humanitarian Coordinator, Liberia**