

## **UNITED NATIONS HUMANITARIAN CHIEF VISITS CHAD**

(Ndjaména: November 24, 2008): United Nations Under-Secretary-General (USG) for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) John Holmes visited Chad from 21 to 24 November. Mr. Holmes met with the Prime Minister, Youssouf Saleh Abbas, other senior Chadian officials, and members of the diplomatic corps and humanitarian community. In the east of Chad, he visited a refugee camp in Farchana, a site of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Gassire and a village of returned IDPs in Louboutigue.

During these meetings, Mr. Holmes discussed the very volatile security situation, including insecurity caused by criminality, which restricts humanitarian space and thus affects humanitarian operations in certain localities. Mr. Holmes emphasised the urgent need for closer co-operation between the government and international institutions to counter this.

The ERC also appealed for action on ensuring both protection and socio-economic stability for IDP families who have returned voluntarily to their villages of origin.

Mr. Holmes also noted the deployment of the Détachement intégré de Sécurité (DIS--Integrated Detachment for Safety), which is mandated to ensure the protection of the refugees in and around the camps. "I hope that this deployment of the DIS and the current consultations for the replacement of European Union Force (EUFOR) in March 2009 by a United Nations force will help improve the security situation in the east of Chad, even if many challenges remain to be addressed," he said.

To donor representatives in the country, the ERC expressed his gratitude for their support to humanitarian programmes benefiting more than 300,000 refugees from Sudan and the Central African Republic and about 180,000 IDPs.

To date, donors have provided \$242 million for the humanitarian appeal for Chad, which is 77% of the funding required. However, mine action, water and sanitation, education and early recovery remain somewhat underfunded.

Mr. Holmes welcomed the recent progress in relations between Chad and Sudan, including the exchange of ambassadors in early November 2008. Mr. Holmes noted that Sudanese refugees will return to their country only once the crisis that affects that country is solved. It is thus extremely important that political efforts continue

**The ERC** left Chad for an official visit to Sudan on 24 November.

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