

# United Nations Nations Unies

## Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

### **MORE THAN HALF OF UN MEMBER STATES CONTRIBUTE TO UN HUMANITARIAN FUND**

(New York, 5 December 2008): United Nations Member States and two private sector donors pledged nearly \$380 million to the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) at the High Level Event held on 4 December, during which the number of contributors to the fund surpassed 100, more than half the number of all UN General Assembly members.

“Given the volatility in economies around the world, it would have been natural to expect that pledges made for the coming year would decrease. But the pledges we heard are a ray of hope in an otherwise gloomy global economic climate,” said John Holmes, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. “The pledges are an important signal to the millions of people caught in humanitarian crises around the world that they will not be abandoned, that international support for humanitarian efforts is as strong as ever,” Mr. Holmes said.

CERF was created by the General Assembly in 2006 to help people affected by sudden-onset disasters and neglected emergencies in a fast, reliable and impartial manner. The Fund, which was envisaged at its inception as being “by all for all” has disbursed over \$1 billion to help millions of victims of natural disaster and conflict in 65 countries.

Seven new countries - Afghanistan, Kenya, Myanmar, Oman, Samoa, Saint Lucia and , Timor-Leste – became donors to CERF. Four of the new donors to the fund - Afghanistan, Kenya, Myanmar, and Timor-Leste - have also been recipients of CERF funding. The two private sector donors are PricewaterhouseCoopers and Western Union, who had both contributed in 2008.

A number of Member States increased significantly their contributions in their respective local currencies in 2009, including Australia, Finland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Spain and Sweden.

Speaking at the opening of the conference, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said demand for resources to meet humanitarian needs continued to rise.

“Already, nearly 20 percent of CERF funds are being used to help people suffering from extreme weather and other disasters caused by climate change. When food prices spiked earlier this year, I set aside \$100 million from CERF to help more than 16 million people who could not afford enough to eat. Those funds have been used; in fact, we could have used three times that amount,” said the Secretary-General “The needs are tremendous, but I believe that your generosity can match them,” he told Member States.

UN General Assembly Member States, as well as a number of private businesses, non-governmental organizations, foundations, individuals and one local government have pledged or contributed over \$1.1 billion to the humanitarian stand-by fund since its inception in March 2006.

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