

United Nations



Nations Unies

## Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

### **UN HUMANITARIAN FUND ALLOCATES \$7 MILLION FOR LIFE-SAVING OPERATIONS IN GAZA**

(New York, 14 January 2009): As part of United Nations efforts to meet the rapidly growing humanitarian needs of civilians caught in the fighting in Gaza, John Holmes, United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, today allocated some seven million dollars in funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund.

“Humanitarian needs in Gaza are massive, and this funding will help jump-start urgent programmes to provide food and clean water to those seeking to survive the fighting,” Mr. Holmes said. The funding will also be used to repair damaged shelters, provide fuel for powering water pumping stations and hospitals, provide clean drinking water to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in shelters and host communities, and finance ready-made meals.

Even before the commencement of military operations on 27 December, Gazans were suffering from shortages of all kinds, because of Israeli restrictions on the entry of humanitarian and other goods. But the vulnerability of the population has risen dramatically due to the latest violence, and they have not way of fleeing.

With CERF funding, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) will seek to provide safe drinking water to as many as 200,000 people including displaced civilians staying in shelters and with host families. Water resources in Gaza are fragile at the best of times, and the risk of epidemics resulting from water borne disease has increased. 500,000 people in Gaza currently have no access to running water.

CERF will support the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) with funding to provide fuel for the generators that power water pumping stations, hospitals and other municipal services in Gaza. Another UNRWA project will assist a minimum of 17,000 individuals directly through emergency shelter and cash assistance to help civilians to rent alternative shelters, defray the costs of necessary services (including burial costs) and purchase essentials such as food and basic household materials.

Finally, CERF funds will help the World Food Programme (WFP) to provide ready-made meals to 16,000 IDPs staying in UNRWA shelters. Pre-packed food is critical in the early stages as shelters lack cooking facilities and there is a general lack of cooking gas, needed for example to bake bread, throughout the Gaza Strip.

CERF was established in 2006 to help agencies respond rapidly to new or deteriorating humanitarian situations. Since its establishment, more than 100 Member States and private sector donors have contributed 1.5 billion dollars to CERF, which is administered by OCHA.

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