

United Nations Nations Unies

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

UNITED NATIONS CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND ALLOCATES \$10 MILLION TO BOLSTER AID PROGRAMMES IN SOMALIA

(Nairobi: 9 February) – The United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, John Holmes, has allocated some \$10 million to boost the humanitarian response in Somalia, where according to the latest UN assessments, the situation continues to deteriorate in the main areas of humanitarian crisis.

The \$10 million in CERF funds will be apportioned by the United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to priority life-saving programmes, including water and nutrition, livelihoods support and funding for the UN Humanitarian Air Service. UN agencies and their humanitarian partners have requested a total of \$919 million to support those in need in Somalia in 2009. But to date, only 18 percent of the appeal is funded.

The humanitarian situation in Somalia is dire, and getting worse. Four consecutive seasons of poor rainfall, continuing conflict, massive displacement and extreme hyperinflation have severely exacerbated humanitarian conditions, resulting in a significant increase in acute malnutrition rates in most southern/central parts and is now well above the emergency thresholds of 15 percent. Internal displacement continues to increase with some 1.1 million people internally displaced since 2007 alone, bringing the total number to 1.3 million.

In addition, approximately 476,000 Somalis have fled the country, which has had a significant impact on the region. There are some 230,000 refugees in Kenya alone. In Ethiopia, for example, where the caseload of Somali refugees totals 30,000, The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had to open a third refugee camp in mid-2008 to accommodate the influx, and a fourth camp is planned for 2009. In Djibouti, which hosts 10,000 refugees, UNHCR was only 15 percent funded in 2008. Meanwhile, there are 5,000 Somali refugees in Eritrea even though it does not share a border with Somalia. Finally, some 30,000 Somali refugees have entered Yemen since 2007, and in 2008 more than 50,000 people attempted to cross the gulf sea, many of whom died in the attempt.

The CERF funds allocated for Somalia are part of some \$75 million in allocations made by the UN's Emergency Relief Coordinator through a process to support underfunded programmes in emergency situations around the world. The biannual allocations are based on a combination of urgency of humanitarian needs, combined with an analysis of the funding levels for humanitarian programmes.

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.

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