High-Level Conference on CERF set for 4 December 2008

The annual High-Level Conference on CERF will be held on Thursday, 4 December 2008. The event will take place in the Economic and Social Council Chamber at United Nations headquarters in New York from 10:00 to 17:00.

The Conference is a key instrument to review progress and mobilize resources for the Fund. The goals of this year’s event are to serve as a forum for an open and concrete dialogue on the Fund with Member States, and encourage as many Member States as possible to become contributors to CERF, so that the Fund can reach the annual funding goal of $450 million as set by the General Assembly in 2006.

The Conference will be attended by the Secretary-General and senior representatives of Member States at ministerial and ambassadorial level. The full day event includes a substantive briefing in the morning, a reception over lunch time, and a pledging session in the afternoon. Full interpretation will be provided.

Joining the Secretary-General at the podium will be ministers from Australia and Kenya, the Vice President of the General Assembly, and Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary-General for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator.

CERF’s Two-Year Evaluation: Briefing for all Member States

One of the most important developments for CERF in 2008 was the General Assembly-mandated evaluation of the Fund’s performance in its first two years.

Mr. Stephen O’Malley, Chief of the CERF Secretariat, will brief all Member States on the follow-up to evaluation’s recommendations. The briefings, for which Member States should be receiving invitations soon, will take place in Geneva on Wednesday, 19 November from 11:00 to 12:00 on the Secretary-General’s report on CERF and in New York on 24 November at 09:00 in Conference Room D.

CERF funding update

In October, CERF received four contributions from Mexico ($100,000), Poland ($300,000), private donation through the United Nations Foundation ($10,523) and PriceWaterhouseCoopers ($500,000).

With some exchange rate fluctuations, total pledges and paid contributions in 2008 come to $432,281,803. CERF is about $18 million short of the $450 million target set by General Assembly resolution A/RES/61/134 for the grant element.

CERF allocations since 1 January 2008*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Countries</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Response $ 272.8 million 51</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Underfunded Emergencies $ 125.7 million 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL        $ 398.5 million</td>
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* As at 7 November 2008

Training workshop in Bangkok

A regional training workshop is being held in Bangkok on 24 and 25 November 2008 for representatives of humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations. Some 60 participants are expected.

1 As at 1 November 2008

email: cerf@un.org  •  website: http://cerf.un.org
New Members to take part in the CERF Advisory Group meeting in Geneva

The nine newly-appointed members of the CERF Advisory Group will meet for the first time in their new capacities on 19 and 20 November 2008.

The new members were appointed in October by Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, replacing members whose terms had expired. Seven members were re-nominated to ensure the continuation of the institutional memory of the Advisory Group, one-third of which rotates every year. Members of the Advisory Group serve in their individual capacity, and not as representatives of their countries or governments. They include government officials from Member States, including contributing and recipient countries, representatives of humanitarian non-governmental organizations, and academic experts.

The ERC will brief the members on the use and impact of the Fund since the last Advisory Group meeting in June of this year. The Chief of the CERF Secretariat, Mr. Stephen O’Malley, will then discuss with the Group the follow-up to the recommendations of the General Assembly-mandated two-year evaluation of the Fund.

The members of the Advisory Group will also meet with humanitarian agencies, and the three NGO consortia. The meeting will include a reception hosted by the Mission of Spain.

The members are:

Ms. Diane Jacovella (Canada)*
Ms. Ursula Muller (Germany)*
Mr. George Amoo (Ghana)*
Mr. Koji Tsuruoka (Japan)*
Dr. (Ms.) Jemilah Mahmood (Malaysia)
Mr. Ruben Hofliger (Mexico)*
Ms. Yoka Brandt (the Netherlands)*
Ambassador Park Soo-Gil (Republic of Korea)
Ambassador Sipho George Nene (South Africa)
Ambassador Juan Pablo De Laiglesia (Spain)*
Ambassador Marika Fahlen (Sweden)
Mr. Moazzam Malik (United Kingdom)
Mr. Mati Raidma (Estonia) (Alternate)
Mr. Tom Arnold (Ireland) (Alternate)
Mr. Ali Duad Mohammed (Kenya) (Alternate)*
Ms. Elizabeth Rasmusson (Norway) (Alternate)*
*A new member

Country allocations and highlights for October 2008

In October, the CERF allocated over $21 million to relief activities in 17 crisis-affected countries.

Burundi

Returning refugees from Tanzania are putting a strain on limited resources in Burundi. Years of conflict have left infrastructure ruined and basic social services such as healthcare and education in dire condition. With the repatriation of thousands of refugees in Burundi, finding durable solutions for their reintegration has become a priority. CERF has responded by providing four relief agencies in the country $1.6 million. World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will support the provision of maternal and neonatal care for returnees. The World Food Programme (WFP) will use its CERF grant to feed returnees. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) will focus its efforts on the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene, education, HIV/AIDS testing and prevention, and nutrition programmes. Altogether, over 100,000 returning refugees will be assisted.

Chad

Huge refugee flows from Sudan into eastern Chad combined with conflict and internal displacement has left hundreds of thousands in desperate need of assistance in the country. With the media focus on Sudan and Darfur, the crisis in Chad threatened to become forgotten. In response, CERF has allocated over $4 million to five agencies (The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO) operating relief programmes in the country. The multi-sectoral support will address health, education, agriculture, nutrition, mine action, protection, water and sanitation. Tens of thousands of beneficiaries will receive assistance.

Côte d’Ivoire

High food prices have severely impacted food security and nutrition in Côte d’Ivoire, putting a strain on already vulnerable households. With an emergency allocation of $1 million, CERF will support the on-going efforts of UNICEF and WFP in extending access to essential therapeutic and nutritional care for 30,000 children suffering from acute malnutrition within communities and health facilities.

Haiti

Haiti is one of the world’s poorest countries, with 53 percent of the population living on less than one dollar per day.
Soaring food and energy costs, which have risen over 40 percent since the beginning of the year, have added to the hardship. Furthermore, several hurricanes have swept through Haiti since August, causing widespread destruction. Some 800,000 people are in dire need of humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance. Following $4.3 million in post-hurricane relief provided by CERF in September, an additional allocation of $780,000 will be provided to UNICEF to support nutrition, health, education and shelter programmes for affected women and children.

Honduras

A tropical storm swept through Honduras in October causing severe flooding. Homes and farms have been damaged, infrastructure destroyed, leaving 200,000 in need of assistance. In response, CERF has provided grants totaling $1.5 million to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), FAO, UNICEF and WFP. IOM, UNICEF and WFP will provide food, shelter, water and sanitation assistance to affected communities, benefiting over 55,000 people. FAO will provide 7,000 farming households with crop and livestock support to restore livelihoods and food security in affected communities.

Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

Despite recent improvements, malnutrition remains a threat in parts of DPRK. Several provinces in the northeast remain particularly vulnerable. CERF has provided a grant of $850,000 to WHO as part of its overall program to assist some 200,000 pregnant mothers and newborns. WHO is supporting health and nutrition interventions in three provinces to address malnutrition.

Lebanon

Some 27,000 Palestinian refugees have remained displaced for more than a year following the destruction of the Nahr el-Bared refugee camp in northern Lebanon in the summer of 2007. Most live in basic temporary accommodations erected by United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). With a $1 million grant from CERF, UNRWA will provide food rations to 4,800 displaced families for three months.

Nepal

Flooding in Nepal in August caused the displacement of tens of thousands of people. Following an appeal by the Government in coordination with the international humanitarian community, CERF allocated $2.3 million in emergency funding to five UN agencies in September to support a multi-sector relief effort. In October, CERF has approved an additional $1.2 million. With the additional funding, WFP will provide urgently needed food to over 200,000 flood-affected people. UNFPA will use the funds to support reproductive health care for 50,000 women in the flood zone.

Somalia

Somalia remains one of the largest and most challenging relief operations in the world. Increased troop and militia activity, coupled with the killings and abductions of aid workers and threats to the humanitarian community, are making response extremely difficult and have impacted UN programmes and operations, leading to the reduction and even suspension of some operations and programmes in south and central parts of the country.

In response, CERF has provided a grant of almost $3 million to WFP to enable humanitarian relief operations in Somalia by improving security support capabilities. The project will significantly and immediately increase the UN’s security capabilities in Somalia. This will be accomplished by increasing the capacity to conduct timely relocations, medical evacuations, and security risk assessments in areas of concern, establishing medical stabilization centres, creating capabilities for night landing, and acquiring personal security-related equipment for all UN staff. Creating more enabling security support capabilities will allow programmes and operations to continue, allowing humanitarian relief to reach those in desperate need, while decreasing the threats posed to relief workers.

Sri Lanka

Relief and rehabilitation operations in Sri Lanka are threatened by a deteriorating security situation in conflict areas. CERF has provided over $107,000 to UNDP to support security services (communications, information, training) so that humanitarians can safely and effectively provide relief to those in need.

Sudan

An estimated 600,000 Sudanese fled to seek safety in neighbouring countries as a result of the civil war in Southern Sudan. Peace and stability is now being slowly realized in most parts of Southern Sudan, creating the humanitarian conditions in which many refugees can return home.

With a grant of $1 million, UNHCR is transporting refugees in Egypt, Kenya, Ethiopia and Uganda back to Southern Sudan. Some 20,000 refugees will benefit directly from CERF funding as part of a larger UNHCR repatriation programme.
Syria

A CERF grant of $500,000 will help WHO in Syria meet the health needs of displaced Iraqis by providing health facilities in areas where the displaced Iraqis are concentrated with drugs, equipment and supplies. The project will be implemented by WHO and the Syrian Ministry of Health.

Tajikistan

In 2008, Tajikistan experienced its worst winter in 25 years, causing damage to infrastructure and agriculture. Many health centres were forced to close because of below-freezing temperatures or lack of access to water. The situation has been compounded by soaring food prices, which is impacting the food security of tens of thousands.

To reduce infant and child mortality, UNICEF is using a $200,000 CERF grant to provide urgently-needed micronutrient supplements and therapeutic foods for 2,000 malnourished children. WHO is training local health officials in emergency management of malnutrition thanks to $186,000 in CERF funding.

Yemen

Yemen remains one of the least developed countries in the world, ranking 153rd out of 177 countries according to the Human Development Report 2007. Rising food prices threaten the food security of already vulnerable groups. In response, CERF has provided $2 million to WFP, WHO and UNICEF for targeted food and health support to vulnerable people affected by the food price crisis. The CERF funding is part of a larger relief programme operated by these and other agencies assisting hundreds of thousands of needy people in the country.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe continues to face major economic and humanitarian challenges. Another year of poor crops, deteriorating health, water and sanitation services, and politically motivated violence leading to displacements, destruction of property and loss of lives has made matters worse. The effects of soaring global food prices combined with hyperinflation have added to the misery. As part of a large humanitarian relief programme in the country, CERF has allocated nearly $1.6 million. WFP will use CERF funding to support its nutrition interventions in the country, currently assisting some 300,000 chronically ill people. Funding will enable IOM to support thousands of migrant and displaced people with access to land through the distribution of farming inputs so that these vulnerable groups can grow their own food thus ensuring their food security.

CERF provides a life-line to Kenya

Violence erupted in Kenya in December 2007 following a contested presidential election. Following claims from election observers that the vote had been seriously flawed, rioting and looting broke out in cities and towns, particularly in the west of the country and in and around Nairobi. An estimated 500,000 people were displaced and forced to find shelter in camps and other sites.

A government and UN-led appeal was issued on 16 January requesting an initial $46 million to help fund the humanitarian response in Kenya. The CERF responded immediately, issuing $7 million in urgent funding.

The money allowed relief agencies such as IOM, UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP to provide life-saving relief covering food, health, shelter, sanitation and protection requirements. Countless lives were saved, and tens of thousands of victims received urgent assistance.

By responding rapidly, equitably and efficiently in response to the post-election violence in Kenya, the CERF proved its worth by providing a critical life-line while funding from donor governments awaited approval from their capitals.

In 2008, Kenya has received over $21 million in funding from the CERF in response to emergencies related to post-election violence, drought, rising food prices and refugees from Sudan and Somalia.

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YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS
on the newsletter and the CERF website (http://cerf.un.org) are most welcome.
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