

UN CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND GIVES \$6 MILLION TO ETHIOPIA

(New York/Addis Ababa: 23 July) – Ethiopia is to receive US\$ 6 million from the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), announced UN Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes at a press conference in Geneva, Switzerland on Tuesday.

Welcoming the announcement, United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Ethiopia Fidele Sarassoro said, “This funding comes at a time when Ethiopia is confronting critical humanitarian challenges on multiple fronts, including in food, health, nutrition, water and sanitation, emergency shelter, agriculture and livelihoods.”

“I have directed the humanitarian community jointly to agree on priority areas in which this new money can immediately be put to use,” he added, noting that initial feedback had identified the five sectors between which the funding should be shared in order to support government-led responses to growing malnutrition and food insecurity, outbreaks of acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) and refugee needs.

Rising malnutrition and food insecurity are a growing concern in Ethiopia, where up to 6.2 million people may require relief food aid in the wake of a second consecutive year of poor secondary rains, according to the federal Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector (DRMFSS). The so-called *belg* rains, which normally fall between mid-February and mid-May, performed poorly, leaving many vulnerable families in an even more difficult position. Increasing admissions to therapeutic feeding programmes have also been recorded in several regions, including in SNNPR, Oromiya, Somali and Amhara regions, since May 2009.

The funding will also be used to bolster the response to AWD outbreaks that have affected five of the country’s nine regions, including Afar, Harari, Oromiya, SNNP and Somali, and to support the Government in hosting over 100,000 refugees from neighbouring countries, including Sudan, Eritrea and Somalia.

The CERF funds earmarked for Ethiopia are part of some \$55 million in allocations made by the UN’s Emergency Relief Coordinator to support underfunded programmes in emergency situations around the world. Other recipient countries include the Democratic Republic of the Congo (\$10 million), Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (\$9 million), Zimbabwe (\$9 million), Kenya (\$8 million), Chad (\$6 million), Central African Republic (\$2.8 million), Algeria (\$1.5 million), Eritrea (\$1.5 million), Guinea (\$1.2 million) and Djibouti (\$1 million).

The 21 July 2009 announcement represents the second allocation from CERF to humanitarian organizations in Ethiopia in 2009. An earlier decision in February 2009 awarded some \$10 million to Ethiopia, out of a total \$75 million allocated to fourteen countries. The biannual allocations from the CERF’s underfunded window are based on a combination of urgency of humanitarian needs, combined with an analysis of the funding levels for humanitarian programmes. Worldwide, humanitarian organizations in Ethiopia have been the fourth-largest recipient of CERF funding since the Fund was established in 2006.

Since its establishment, more than 100 Member States and private sector donors have contributed \$1.5 billion to CERF.