

### **UN's Global Emergency Response Fund enables humanitarian aid for people affected by Hurricane Irma**

(New York 17 September 2017): The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, today allocated US\$10 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to enable humanitarian aid to help tens of thousands of people in need of assistance following the devastating category five storm, Hurricane Irma.

The funds will enable the United Nations and other organisations to support the national and regional response immediately to provide food, critical health care, clean water and other urgently needed aid to the people most affected by Irma, in particular women and girls.

“People are still cut off from basic services and infrastructure. This allocation will allow us to kick-start operations for families and communities in desperate need,” Mr. Lowcock said.

Hurricane Irma left a wake of destruction on several islands in the Caribbean. In Cuba hurricane-force winds and rain ravaged 13 of the country's 15 provinces. More than 2 million people were forced to evacuate their homes ahead of the storm. Many homes have been destroyed or are barely habitable. Health facilities are severely damaged, hampering the rapid delivery of emergency care.

The UN and partners deployed experts and supplies to the Caribbean ahead of the storm, and continue to support regional organizations, national governments and local authorities to coordinate the response throughout the affected islands. “We will continue to stand in solidarity with the people of the Caribbean to ensure maximum support is available to the commendable national and regional efforts,” Mr. Lowcock said.

“This immediate funding would not be possible without the generous support of CERF's donors, which enable it to be the fastest way to get urgent aid to people whenever and wherever they need it the most.”

For more than a decade, donor contributions to CERF have enabled the UN agencies, funds and programmes, and their implementing partners to provide over \$4.9 billion in life-saving assistance across the globe.

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