

## **DONORS PLEDGE OVER US\$370 MILLION TO THE UN CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND**

*(New York, 8 December 2020)* - At today's high-level pledging event for the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), over 50 donors announced pledges totalling more than US\$370 million for 2021 – higher than those made at the pledging event a year ago for 2020. With top-ups for 2020 also announced today, overall funding for this year has reached \$620 million.

“This year was like no other, with the COVID-19 pandemic adding a layer of suffering on top of existing crises, brought on by conflict and the intensifying impacts of climate change,” said United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres at the event's opening. “This fund is one of the fastest ways to help people trapped both in sudden-onset and deteriorating crises, as well as underfunded ones that are not at the top of the world's radar.”

Following the Secretary-General's remarks, a high-level panel discussed CERF's results in the last 12 months. Panellists included Sudan's Minister for Social Development and Labour; DRC's Minister of Humanitarian Affairs and National Solidarity; Germany's Director-General for Crisis Prevention, Stabilization, Post-Conflict Peacebuilding, and Humanitarian Assistance; The Netherlands Deputy Director-General for International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and the Executive Director of BRAC, Bangladesh.

In 2020 CERF provided time-critical, innovative and life-saving assistance that benefited some 65 million people across 52 countries and territories at a total value of more than \$900 million – the highest ever amount allocated by CERF in a single year. Against the backdrop of the pandemic, CERF funding helped people affected by COVID-19 and other disease outbreaks, conflict, and natural disasters such as droughts, earthquakes and hurricanes.

CERF funding released in 2020 included more than \$65 million to combat gender-based violence, \$80 million to fund cash programming in response to rising food insecurity in six countries, and more than \$40 million for anticipatory action, which enabled the UN and its partners to help people before disaster hit.

The CERF high-level event came just days after the UN launched its Global Humanitarian Overview (GHO), the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of humanitarian needs in 2021. This called for \$35 billion to meet the needs of 160 million people worldwide.

CERF's achievements are the collective success of the global humanitarian community, whose members donate to the fund. When the General Assembly endorsed the increase of CERF's annual fundraising target to \$1 billion in 2016, it represented a shared commitment by all Member States to increase their voluntary contributions to the fund. At today's event, Emergency Relief Coordinator Mark Lowcock thanked donors for their support. The \$1 billion

funding target is less than 3 per cent of the GHO 2021 requirements—a small percentage to ensure partners can act with speed and agility to unforeseen or rapidly deteriorating needs and severely underfunded crises.

Mark Lowcock, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, said: “The CERF is first and fastest, and it looks after the forgotten. As the world faces the greatest humanitarian challenges in over a generation, we have never needed it more. With the pandemic came uncertainty, so the CERF prioritized flexibility. When travel shut down, CERF supported the transportation of humanitarian goods and workers to crisis zones. And when the threat of gender-based violence increased in lockdown, CERF prioritized help for women and girls in its allocations.

“CERF has helped millions of people get food, health care, shelter and protection this year. Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, and to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow, we need to reach the goal we set in 2016, for a billion-dollar CERF.”

Since it was established in 2005, CERF has provided close to \$7 billion for life-saving humanitarian action that has helped hundreds of millions of people across more than 100 countries and territories. This would have not been possible without generous and consistent donor support.

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