

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS - CERF ADVISORY GROUP MEETING – 18 MAY 2022



1. The first Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) Advisory Group meeting of 2022 took place on 18 May 2022, under the chairmanship of Ms. Mariët Schuurman (Netherlands), and with participation of the USG/ERC, Mr. Martin Griffiths.

2. In the first session, the Chief of OCHA's Pooled Fund Management Branch (PFMB) provided an update on the results of the Fund in 2021 during which CERF enabled assistance for 51.5 million people through grants totalling \$548 million. This is the second highest allocation level in the Fund's history. Contributions to the Fund also reached the second highest level ever with \$638.5 million received. The Chief of PFMB noted that CERF had continued to use funding strategically to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, highlighting that a record 84 per cent of all CERF-funded projects included Gender-Based Violence (GBV) components and that the Fund enabled provision of humanitarian assistance to over three million people living with disabilities. In an update on 2022 allocations, the Chief noted that as of early May, a total of \$298 million had been allocated highlighting recent grants towards responses in Ukraine and in Africa and the Middle East to combat food insecurity. The Chief also updated the Group on the recent \$150 million Underfunded Emergencies (UFE) allocation, the largest in the history of the Fund, to underfunded and forgotten crises in 13 countries. The Chief informed of the endorsement of two additional Anticipatory Action frameworks for droughts in Burkina Faso and Niger. Finally, the Group was briefed on forward-looking CERF priorities, including on efforts to better capture and articulate CERF's impact and ensuring systematic learning as well as on reinforcing efforts to ensure collaboration with other funding instruments across the Triple-Nexus.

3. The Advisory Group applauded CERF on its continued role as a vehicle for enabling fast and timely support around the world, as well as on its commitment to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are met. The Group expressed appreciation for CERF's response to the humanitarian crises in Ukraine and in Africa and the Middle East, and commended CERF for its speed, and increasing support for frontline responders. The Group reiterated its support for CERF's Anticipatory Action agenda and encouraged continued learning to capture and share best practices. The Group referred to the growing gap between global humanitarian needs and available resources and asked for insight into CERF's decision-making and prioritization processes requesting a more in-depth discussion on the topic. The Group also welcomed further discussion on the Fund's efforts to support localization and accountability to affected people.

4. In the second session, the USG/ERC provided an update on the broader humanitarian landscape and the humanitarian system's response capacity, including that of CERF. He noted that the humanitarian system was facing unprecedented challenges, emphasizing the concerning humanitarian developments in Ukraine including its secondary impacts, including in the Horn of Africa as he had witnessed first-hand during a recent mission. The USG/ERC highlighted three significant challenges for humanitarian financing, including the increase in humanitarian needs due to rising food and energy prices and disruptions in global food supply chains; increases in the cost and complexity of humanitarian operations; and the expected reduction of humanitarian funding. He stressed that with humanitarian needs outpacing available resources, the quality of humanitarian financing was pivotal. Secondly, the USG/ERC reiterated the importance of ensuring further efficiencies across the humanitarian system and noted that CERF was a key vehicle for promoting more inclusive and accountable humanitarian action and a cornerstone for the UN's and the wider humanitarian community's efforts to respond to new and escalating needs. The USG/ERC also highlighted the importance of responding to ongoing emergencies, while at the same time continuing to evolve and innovate to ensure future ability to effectively respond to the growing humanitarian needs. He highlighted CERF's Anticipatory Action frameworks that have promoted faster and more dignified humanitarian action for emergencies, while at the same time providing valuable learning for the broader humanitarian system. In this context, he referenced the G7's recent statement in support of additional resources for CERF's Anticipatory Action efforts and called upon the Advisory Group to support related advocacy.

5. The Advisory Group expressed support for the USG/ERC's priorities and applauded the management of the Fund and noted that CERF was becoming increasingly important for the humanitarian system's ability to respond rapidly to the growing needs. The Group commended CERF for its efforts to drive reform across the humanitarian system through innovative approaches and reiterated the importance of ensuring strategic and prioritized use of CERF capitalizing on its comparative advantages. The group also highlighted OCHA's

important role in guiding the prioritization of needs and subsequent funding decisions. The Group also noted the importance of ensuring coherence in funding across the Triple Nexus and highlighted the key role of CERF and other pooled funding instruments in this respect. The Group reiterated its appreciation for CERF's role in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and referred to CERF's important role in promoting accountability to affected people across the humanitarian system.

6. In the fourth session of the meeting, the Chief of OCHA's Donor Relations Section, briefed on CERF's funding status and outlook for 2022 as well as on developments in private sector engagement and progress in implementing CERF's Resource Mobilization Action Plan for 2021-2022. The Chief noted that the 2022 income projection remained similar to last year at the same time, however falling significantly short of CERF's annual funding target of \$1 billion. He noted that CERF's annual income was contingent on generous contributions from CERF's longstanding donors, as well as on multi-year funding agreements that were expected to provide 80 per cent of the projected income. He also referred to the collective resource mobilization efforts by OCHA and donors, as outlined in the CERF Resource Mobilization Action Plan, noting their success s in expanding the donor base. At the same time further efforts were needed to bring in and retain non-traditional donors. The Advisory Group welcomed the recent increased contributions from the private sector and agreed to further explore outreach to the private sector while bearing in mind the return of investment when considering such pursues. The Group also took note of the opportunities to continue peer-to-peer outreach with other Member States.

7. In the last session of the meeting, the Chair facilitated a discussion on the role of the Advisory Group focusing on identifying opportunities for further use of the skills and experience represented in the Group. The Group agreed on the importance of ensuring a minimum one in-person meeting per year. The Group also recommended that CERF should inform the group about concrete areas where the Group's advice is sought ahead of the Advisory Group meetings to allow the group to agree on recommendations ahead of its meetings. The members also agreed on the importance of inviting humanitarian practitioners to its meetings, including Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators, as well as humanitarian and developments partners, as relevant.

8. The USG/ERC and the Director of the Humanitarian Financing and Resource Mobilization Division (HFRMD) thanked the seven members leaving the Group in July after three years of membership, including the Chair of the Group, Ms. Marriet Schuurman (Netherlands), Mr. Abdul Hannan (Bangladesh), Dr. Thomas Zahneisen (Germany), Ms. Yngvild Berggrav (Norway), Ms. Noralyn Jubaira-Baja (Philippines), Ms. Amanda Magambo (Uganda), and Mr Saud Al Shamsi (United Arab Emirates).