



ITALY

**High-level Meeting on the
CERF - Central Emergency Response Fund**

Statement by

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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Italian Government, I wish to thank the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, for providing us with such a useful update on the recent activities carried out through the Central Emergency Response Fund.

Mr. Chairman, CERF has a proven record of success as a versatile collective emergency response tool that adds value to the humanitarian system by helping to improve leadership, predictability and coverage of humanitarian emergencies.

In 2011 the Fund has once again provided a timely and critical response to some of today's most difficult challenges and devastating events, such as the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, conflict-related instability in the North of Africa, and Central America floods. In these contexts, CERF has established itself as a significant source of funding, promoting early action and response to reduce loss of life.

Italy therefore welcomes the finalization and publication of the five-year assessment of the CERF, commissioned by OCHA to provide policy and operational recommendations to improve effectiveness. Italy applauds the success of CERF in reinforcing the humanitarian reform process and increasing the coverage of humanitarian response. We also welcome the development of a Management Response Plan (MRP) to the 5-Year Assessment and encourage the CERF Secretariat to act on the recommendations endorsed, especially in reducing CERF's dependence on agencies' internal assessment and monitoring systems.

We also appreciate the extensive work conducted through independent country-level reviews of the CERF, to assess the indicators of CERF's Performance and Accountability Framework (PAF) in different contexts.

On the whole CERF has increased the level of pledges and contributions in the current year, despite the global downturn and economic uncertainty among Member States. The Fund has also broadened its support base, attracting contributions from several first-time donors and the private sector. We encourage such efforts and hope they will garner growing support in the future.

Despite current budget shortfalls, Italy, which has donated over 9.7 million US dollars to CERF since its inception, will honour its financial commitments and continue to provide support to the Fund in 2012. I am therefore pleased to announce that the Italian Government has decided to contribute 500 thousand euros for 2012 – the equivalent of roughly 670 thousand US dollars – to the Central Emergency Response Fund.

Thank you, Mr Chairman,