Dear Colleagues,

The Governments of Denmark and Germany, the European Union and the United Nations have decided to arrange a Ministerial Roundtable on the Central Sahel (Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger) on Tuesday, 20 October 2020 with a view to identify solutions, new approaches, gather political momentum and mobilize support from donors in response to current humanitarian challenges in the region. Ahead of the Ministerial Roundtable, the co-hosts are convening a Senior Official’s Meeting (SOM) on Tuesday, 8 September 2020, to which you are hereby cordially invited.

The SOM and the subsequent Ministerial Roundtable are motivated by the fact that in the Central Sahel, several complex and fast-growing crises are developing with unprecedented levels of armed violence, insecurity and resulting humanitarian needs. More than 1.4 million people have been forced to flee their homes, and there is a significant risk that this number will continue to increase. Insecurity and forced displacement are destroying the social fabric of communities, and climate change is exacerbating conflict dynamics. In addition, food insecurity and human rights violations are on a sharp rise. COVID-19 poses an additional emerging threat to the region that may exacerbate these ongoing crises even further.

The situation has led to substantial humanitarian needs that continue to grow. Currently, 13 million people across the three countries are in need of humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian and development partners are scaling up and adapting their operations in response to COVID-19 to support the efforts of local and national authorities. Without appropriate response as well as timely and sufficient resources, the humanitarian crises will continue to escalate, further eroding the resilience of communities and putting growing numbers of vulnerable children, women and men at risk.

As of August 2020, the United Nations and its partners are appealing for US $1.4 billion to provide 9.8 million people with immediate, critical, lifesaving and protection assistance. The humanitarian response is severely underfunded, being only at a current 34 percent of requirements.

Additional funding contributions in response to the humanitarian challenges, increased political support as well as scaled up responses adapted to the needs are therefore all urgently needed; and your participation to the Senior Official’s Meeting would be highly appreciated.

Irine Rask Thygesen
State Secretary for Development Policy, Denmark

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The SOM aims to focus on operational lessons learned and forward-looking plans for select thematic tracks that cut across humanitarian action, development cooperation and peace efforts, and frame the provision of humanitarian assistance in a nexus perspective.

The SOM will serve as a technical discussion forum, which will inform the Ministerial Roundtable in October 2020.

We look forward to receiving confirmation of your participation (Director + 3) by Monday, 31 August 2020.

Please use this link to register for the event.