



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 November 2009

Excellencies,

I have the honour to request your participation at the High-Level Conference on the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The event will take place on 8 and 9 December in the ECOSOC Chamber and will be convened by the Secretary-General. I will attend in my capacity as President of the General Assembly.

The close of this year marks an important symbolic milestone in the context of our efforts to improve the international humanitarian response system. Five years ago this December, we all witnessed a devastating, lightning-fast and multi-state natural disaster: the Indian Ocean Tsunami. The massive material damage, suffering and loss of life caused by this catastrophe was one of the catalysts for humanitarian reform and resulted in the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 60/124 on 15 December 2005, which created the new CERF.

At that time, aware of the contrast between the overwhelming international response to the Indian Ocean Tsunami and the underwhelming response to the needs of people in places like the Democratic Republic of the Congo, CERF was upgraded from a US\$50 million revolving fund to an annually-replenished fund with a US\$450 million grant facility.

CERF is a humanitarian tool created by all nations, for all nations. It serves both as a symbol and active instrument of international humanitarian solidarity toward emergency relief. As you may know, the disaster trends of the past year portend an increase in global humanitarian needs in 2010 and beyond. We are collectively facing the ramifications of climate change and accompanying natural disasters, a global recession, growing food and water insecurity, and the continued deterioration of complex emergencies in many areas of the world.

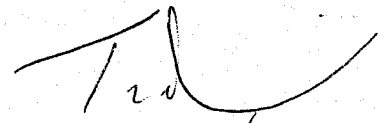
All Permanent Representatives and  
Permanent Observers  
to the United Nations  
New York

The Fund's role in addressing such crises also impacts our efforts in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We must be especially cognizant of this link as we prepare for the 2010 MDG High-Level Progress Review. As the consequences of increasing natural disasters affect the progress toward meeting the MDGs, a timely and sufficient humanitarian response is critical in minimizing the negative ramifications toward longer-term early recovery and development activities. We are all too aware that years of development work can be wiped out within mere hours of a large-scale disaster.

It is absolutely critical therefore, that CERF reaches its annual funding goal of \$450 million set by you, as a Member of the General Assembly, in 2006. Back then, the Fund had the financial support of 53 Member States. By 2009, the community of Member and Observer State supporters has more than double in size. This year's High-Level Conference is an opportune moment for us to reaffirm our commitment to the Fund and to live up to the expectations we have set for it.

Your participation and generous pledge at the Conference next month will tap into the post-Tsunami spirit of solidarity, support our collective efforts to assist humanitarian victims around the world, and help demonstrate that the CERF is truly a fund for all and by all.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Treki', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Ali Abdussalam Treki