

**HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE ON
THE CENTRAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND**

STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last few years the number and scale of humanitarian emergencies has increased at an unprecedented rate. CERF was created to address these emergencies. Its objective was to act and respond swiftly in order to reduce loss of life, to enhance response to time-critical requirements and to strengthen the core elements of humanitarian response in under-funded crises. This was, without any doubt, a very promising step. By committing in 2007 more than 210.6 million dollars to rapid response grants in 47 countries and 124 million dollars to under-funded emergencies in 23 countries, CERF has, in our view, found a good balance between rapid response to humanitarian crisis on the one hand, and response to under-funded emergencies on the other. It is against this background that we are looking forward to the independent review of the CERF in 2008.

Because in absolute terms our financial contribution will never be able to match those of larger countries, Liechtenstein's humanitarian assistance policy is based on a "niche approach", aimed at using our contributions for under-funded appeals. The Central Emergency Response Fund gives us the opportunity to continue this approach together with other donors, thereby increasing its live-saving impact.

We welcome the fact that the donor base of the Fund has further enlarged and also includes donors from the private sector and civil society. For the CERF to further evolve as an effective emergency tool, it is crucial that the funding target of 500 million dollars is achieved in 2008 and that contributions make additional funds available to existing resources for international emergency assistance and development cooperation. Liechtenstein was part of the founding group of the CERF, and I am very pleased to announce that we will again increase our contribution to the CERF this time, pledging 200'000 Swiss francs for 2008. This constitutes an increase by more than 30 percent.