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Qatar and UN urge countries to increase support for victims of humanitarian disaster



Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Valerie Amos. UN Photo/Mark Garten

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Qatar and the United Nations today jointly urged the international community to sustain and increase its help for the millions of people around the world affected by humanitarian disasters and emergencies, through funding of the Organizations' global humanitarian appeal.

“Millions of people are affected by emergencies caused or worsened by the impact of climate change, insecurity over food and water, economic and political crisis, migration and urbanization,” [said](#) the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, at a meeting in Qatar. “Our appeals provide a good basis for a co-ordinated response so that humanitarian needs are met in an effective and timely way.”

Late last year, for its Humanitarian Appeal 2012, the United Nations appealed for \$7.7 billion for aid agencies to help 51 million people cope with humanitarian emergencies around the world, such as that in the Horn of Africa, currently considered to be the world's largest humanitarian emergency.

The meeting in Qatar, which was chaired by Ms. Amos and that country's Assistant Minister for International Cooperation, Sheikh Ahmed Bin Mohammed Bin Jabr Al Thani, sought to spotlight the plight of the millions who need urgent assistance.

Ms. Amos drew particular attention to Sudan and Somalia which have the two largest appeals this year. The Humanitarian Appeal 2012 seeks \$1.1 billion for humanitarian activities in Sudan, supporting up to 4.2 million people. A total of \$1.5 billion is sought for Somalia, with the latest data showing that more than 2.3 million Somalis still need life-saving assistance and the situation is expected to deteriorate there again in May.

At the Qatar meeting, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Mark Bowden, stressed that although famine conditions are no longer present in the east African country, the situation is still fragile and will be reversed without continued assistance. So-called non-traditional donors, such as Gulf Member States, have emerged as important actors, accounting for close to a third of the funding received for humanitarian activities there.

For his part, Mr. Al Thani reaffirmed his country's commitment to support humanitarian disaster response efforts around the world.

"This briefing clearly reflects the State of Qatar's continued interest in mobilizing international efforts to discuss humanitarian challenges, particularly in Somalia and Sudan, and to encourage all countries to fulfil their commitment and coordinate with one another to mitigate the effects of disasters and conflicts," he said.

The Humanitarian Appeal 2012 comprises the coordinated plans of 466 aid organizations –UN agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other international organizations – that have united to meet major humanitarian challenges in a strategic and coordinated way.

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