

**NO. 5**

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**CHINA : EARTHQUAKE IN YUNNAN PROVINCE**

As temperatures plunged to below 0° C and frightened residents spent their eleventh night huddled around fires, aftershocks continued to rattle Yunnan Province. The casualty toll is still rising: it now stands at 304 deaths, 3,775 seriously injured, and 12,430 slightly injured.

More than 545,000 houses are reported to be damaged. Of these, 358,000 have been completely destroyed. Around 1,000,000 people were significantly affected. In addition to the human suffering, economic losses are now put at 4 billion Chinese Yuan - a figure that will certainly grow, since it will be some time before the total extent of the losses can be determined.

Mr. Liu Dewang, Director of the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC) Disaster Relief Department, flew to Kunming today, to co-ordinate the National Society's relief operation from Yunnan Province. The RCSC is reallocating staff from other provinces to assist in the relief effort.

Relief goods sent from Geneva on behalf of the Federation arrived in Kunming yesterday. A second shipment will arrive today.

Besides the humanitarian aid it donated shortly after the earthquake, the Hong Kong Red Cross Society, under a relief plan developed with the RCSC, will provide clothing, quilts, rice, foodstuffs, tents, cooking utensils, and medicine for 4,495 families in the northern Lijiang region. Two senior headquarters staff members will arrive in Kunming today to monitor procurement and distribution of aid.

Today, the Japanese Red Cross shipped 10 air tents (with generators, lighting, and air compressors) that can be used as field hospitals. Two senior headquarters staff and a tent technician are accompanying the flight. Kidney dialysis machines are being held in readiness in Tokyo in case they are required in Kunming.

The RCSC points out that, as in many disasters, access to the earthquake area is being limited, in order not to impede the operation. It is continuing with its on the spot assessment of the situation and will keep the Federation informed through the Secretariat.

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