

CARIBBEAN: Hurricane Debby

23 August 2000

Information Bulletin N° 02

The Disaster

At 2 a.m. today, the centre of the category one hurricane Debby was located near latitude 19.5 north, longitude 68.1 west or about 385 km south-east of Grand Turk island. Debby has been moving in the west-north-west direction during the past few hours. The maximum sustained winds remain around 120 km/hr, with stronger gusts. No significant change in strength is expected while Debby remains north of Hispaniola.

A hurricane warning is in effect for the south-east and central Bahamas, the Turks and Caico Islands and for the north coast of the Dominican Republic. A hurricane watch is in effect for the north coast of Cuba for the provinces of Guantanamo, Holguin and Las Tunas and will probably be extended westward later today. A hurricane watch is also in effect for the north-western Bahamas. A tropical storm warning and a hurricane watch are in effect for Haiti, north of Port au Prince.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

National Societies •

The St. Kitts & Nevis Red Cross Society and the Antigua Red Cross branch have reported no damage. Governments in both countries have discontinued the hurricane warning and these National Societies are no longer on alert. No report has been received so far on the situation in Barbuda from the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross Headquarters.

The Dominican Red Cross is still on alert in north and north-east branches and the Emergency Operation Centre is meeting on a regular basis.

The Montserrat Red Cross was also put on alert. The Red Cross First Aiders were asked to report to the hurricane shelters but not many people took shelter there. On Monday night there were occasional showers backed by the usual winds. By Tuesday morning, however, heavy rains developed.

International Federation •

The Caribbean Regional Delegation is still closely monitoring the progress of the Hurricane Debby. The National Societies in the region are in regular contact with the Delegation. The Disaster Preparedness Delegates are supporting NS hurricane preparedness. Four Federation Delegates and eight regional Red Cross Societies are on standby for immediate action.

The Weather Channel and BBC Caribbean Services are in permanent contact with the Regional Delegation in order to release safety hurricane preparedness tips to the community.

Needs

Major damage can be caused by flash flooding, landslides and high tides. The nature and the course of the hurricane Debby will be better determined within the next 48 hours. If it continues on its current track, it would pose a threat to Turks and Caicos islands and the Bahamas archipelago. In addition, the Dominican Republic and Haiti are anticipating flooding, landslides and coastal damage. In case of Haiti, this rain can alleviate the drought that the country has been experiencing lately. At the moment, no international assistance is requested.

Peter Rees-Gildea
Director
Operations Funding and Reporting Department

Santiago Gil
Director
Americas Department

This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>