

MINOR EMERGENCY



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

CENTRAL AMERICA: TROPICAL STORM ADRIAN

Minor Emergency
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The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

CHF 150,000 (USD 122,539 OR EUR 97,112) HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO THIS OPERATION.

UN earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged. Based on further updates and details from assessment reports, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an emergency appeal.

For information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- In El Salvador: Salvadorean Red Cross Society; email secretaria.ejecutiva@cruzrojasal.sv, phone (503) 219-2200, fax (503) 222-7758
- In Guatemala: Guatemalan Red Cross; email crg@guate.net, phone (502) 2253-2027, fax (502) 2232-4649
- In Honduras: Honduran Red Cross; honducruz@datum.hm, phone (504) 237-8876, fax (504) 238-0185
- In Panama, Nelson Castaño, Head of Pan American Disaster Response Unit; email ifrcpa07@ifrc.org, phone (507) 316-1001, fax (507) 316-1082
- In Geneva: Jan Gelfand, Federation Regional Officer, Americas Department, Geneva; email jan.gelfand@ifrc.org, phone (41 22) 730-, fax (41 22) 733-0392

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

The situation

On Wednesday, 18 May 2005, the first tropical storm of the 2005 East Pacific Hurricane Season, Tropical Storm Adrian, intensified off the western coast of El Salvador and Guatemala. The latest information from the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) indicates that within the next 24 hours, the system may develop into the season's first hurricane.

Central America: Tropical Storm Adrian; Minor Emergency no 31.

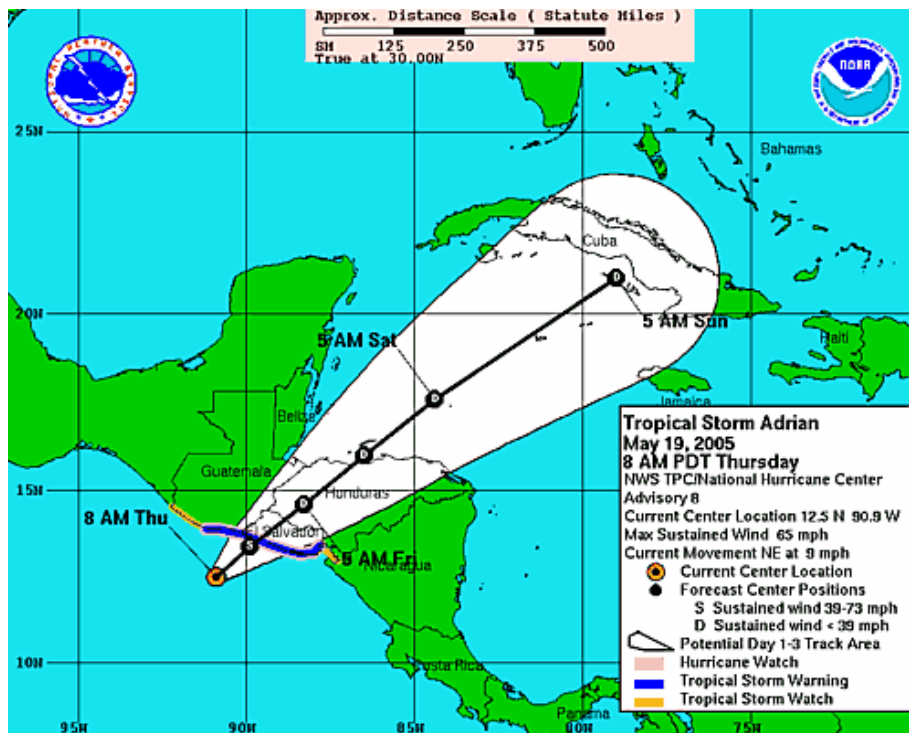
At 8AM Thursday 19 May, Adrian was located about 140 miles (225 kilometres) southwest of San Salvador, El Salvador and moving northeast at almost 9 mph (15 kilometres/hour) with winds approaching 65 mph (100 km/hr). It is anticipated that the system will continue to strengthen, becoming more organized as it intensifies and accelerates towards Central America's Pacific coast. Tropical storm force winds are expected to increase along El Salvador's coast as the system nears, and Tropical Storm Adrian could become a hurricane before making landfall late on Thursday, 19 May. The outer rain bands of the storm, which extend some 70 miles (110 kilometres) from the centre, have already begun reaching the coasts of El Salvador and Guatemala.

According to the National Hurricane Centre, on 19 May the government of Guatemala issued a tropical storm warning and a hurricane watch for the Pacific coast of the country from Sipcate eastward to the Guatemala-El Salvador Border. A tropical storm watch is also in effect from Sipcate westward to the Guatemala-Mexico border. A tropical storm watch remains in effect for the Pacific coast of Honduras, including the Golfo de Fonseca, and a tropical storm warning and hurricane watch are now in effect from Guatemala to the El Salvador-Honduras border. In addition, heavy rains are expected throughout southern Mexico and Central America, as far north as the Mexican state of Oaxaca and as far south as Panama. The Salvadoran and Guatemalan governments have closed schools and are evaluating the closure of airports and ports.

While current forecasts anticipate that Adrian will slow after it makes landfall along the El Salvador-Guatemala border and that it may continue to de-intensify as it travels over Honduras and into the Caribbean, rainfall accumulations of six to ten inches, with rainfall reaching 20 inches in mountainous regions, are expected. Tropical Storm Adrian has the potential to cause flooding and mudslides across parts of Central America over the next few days. In addition, storm surge flooding of two to four feet above normal tide levels is possible in the area where the storm's centre makes landfall.

It is expected that, on its current track, the system will become extra-tropical before it approaches Cuba and surrounding Caribbean islands over the 21-22 May weekend.

In addition to this tropical storm, Guatemala was affected by three earthquakes on 18 May. The earthquakes, whose epicentre was in the eastern department of Zacapa, registered 5.3, 5.1 and 3 on the Richter scale. There have been reports of damages to highways in the eastern region of the country.



Projected path of Tropical Storm Adrian according to the National Hurricane Center, showing coastal areas under a hurricane watch (pink), tropical storm warning (blue) and tropical storm watch (yellow)

Red Cross and Red Crescent action taken so far

The Guatemalan Red Cross (GRC) Disaster Preparedness Coordinator is monitoring the situation with the support of staff from the Federation and is sharing information with the Federation's regional delegation.

The Honduran Red Cross (HRC) is monitoring the situation and, through the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergencies (OPADE), has sent a first alert to members of its National Intervention Teams (NITs).

The Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) is monitoring the situation, has initiated procedures to prepare for the storm, and is maintaining contact with all SRC branches. The National Society is coordinating information and activities with the National Emergency Operations Centre. The SRC preparedness and response system is part of the government's national emergency committee.

The International Federation is continuing to monitor the situation and is providing the latest information regarding the disaster and the National Society's response activities through the Disaster Management Information System (DMIS). The Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) and the Federation's Panama Regional Delegation met late Wednesday afternoon to plan for a possible response in El Salvador and Guatemala. One disaster management delegate from PADRU was deployed to El Salvador on 19 May to support the National Society in the coordination and response activities. Additional disaster management delegates are standing by for further deployment should the need arise. In addition, a Regional Intervention Team (RIT) alert has been launched.

The needs

The full extent of the needs in the affected areas will not be known until storm has passed over. However, as the storm is likely to affect highly populated, deforested areas in the region, the following needs are anticipated:

Volunteers: Additional volunteers may be needed to support the National Societies' relief efforts.

Shelter: Should homes be damaged or destroyed by flood waters, mudslides or high winds, there may be a need for tents, plastic sheeting and tarpaulins to ensure temporary shelter, and for zinc sheeting, nails and construction tools to repair damaged roofs.

Water and sanitation: Should the water supply be disrupted, it may be necessary to implement measures in order to prevent the outbreak of diseases. Therefore, water purification tablets and jerry cans to ensure that clean water is stored safely, together with hygiene kits, may be necessary.

Food supplies: Depending upon the extent of the damage, there may be a need to supply food to the affected population.

Non-food items: Heavy rains, high winds and flooding often damage or carry away many basic household items. Therefore, kitchen kits, including basic cooking utensils, blankets, clothing and torch batteries may be needed.

Longer-term needs: Depending upon the scale of devastation in the affected areas, there may also be a need for rehabilitation and repair of housing, especially in low-lying areas which are vulnerable to storm surges and flooding.

Coordination

The Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU), the Panama Regional Delegation and the Guatemalan, Honduran and Salvadorean Red Cross Societies are maintaining constant contact to monitor the progress of the storm and address the needs of the local populations as they arise. In Guatemala, the Guatemalan Red Cross is working closely with the National Coordination Committee for the Reduction of Disasters (CONRED) through the National Information System, which includes the GRC. CONRED declared an orange alert throughout the country and held a press conference in order to coordinate the response in the affected regions. In El Salvador, the Salvadorean Red Cross preparedness and response system is part of the government's national emergency committee.

[*click here to return to the title page and contact information.*](#)