

# INFORMATION BULLETIN



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

## CARIBBEAN:TROPICAL STORM ERNESTO

*Information Bulletin*  
no. 1/2006  
26 August 2006

*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 183 countries.*

### In Brief

This Bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the situation and the information available at this time. The Federation is not seeking funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time.

The International Federation undertakes activities that are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to achieve the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

#### Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

*For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:*

• In Jamaica: Yvonne Clarke, Director General, Jamaica Red Cross, [yvonneclarke@jamaicaredcross.org](mailto:yvonneclarke@jamaicaredcross.org) Tel: (1-876) 984 7860/2; Daisy Lilly, PADRU Logistics Officer, [daisy.lilly@ifrc.org](mailto:daisy.lilly@ifrc.org), Tel: (1-876) 997-2614

• In Panama: Stephen McAndrew, Coordinator, Federation Pan American Disaster Response Unit, Panama; email [stephen.mcandrew@ifrc.org](mailto:stephen.mcandrew@ifrc.org), phone (507) 316-1001, fax (507) 316-1082

• In Geneva: Olaug Bergseth, Federation Regional Officer, Americas Department, Geneva; email [olaug.bergseth@ifrc.org](mailto:olaug.bergseth@ifrc.org), phone (41 22) 730-4535, fax (41 22) 730-0395

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) 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>

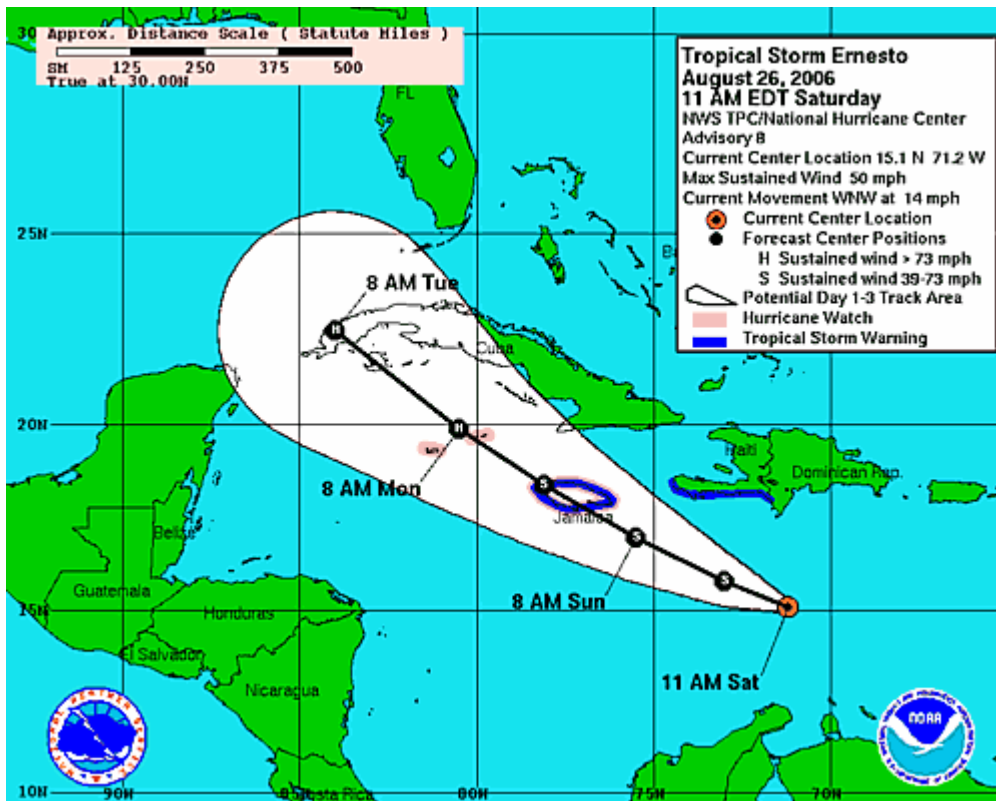
## The Situation

On 25 August, a tropical wave which had brought rain and storms to Barbados and the Lesser Antilles over the previous days, was up-graded to tropical storm status – the fifth named storm of the 2006 hurricane season – with predictions from the National Hurricane Centre that it could achieve hurricane status by 27 August, given the recent slowing of movement and increase in wind velocity over the past hours.

As of 11AM AST, tropical storm Ernesto was located at 15.1N and 71.2W, or some 680 kilometres ESE of Kingston, Jamaica. The storm has slowed down over the past hours and is currently moving WNW at 22 km / hour, on a projected track which would take it over Jamaica sometime on 27 August, and onwards over the Cayman Islands. The storm is expected to continue along its current track over the next 24 hours. At present, maximum sustained winds have increased to 85km / hour, with further strengthening forecast, as the storm passes over the Central Caribbean.

A tropical storm warning and a hurricane watch have been issued by the Government of Jamaica, and a hurricane watch has been issued for the Cayman Islands. A tropical storm warning remains in effect for the south coast of Hispaniola, from the Haiti-Dominican Republic border westward. Authorities in Cuba, the north-eastern Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico and the south-eastern Gulf of Mexico are also closely monitoring the situation. Tropical storm winds currently extend out over 185 km.

Heavy rainfall is anticipated in Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, parts of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, as well as Jamaica – reaching 10-14 cm, and up to 30 cm in places. Tides of up to 90cm above normal tide levels are expected in Jamaica, as the centre of Ernesto approaches. There is therefore a strong risk of flooding, particularly in coastal areas along the south east of Jamaica and ESE of the capital city, Kingston. Flooding may also occur in parts of Haiti – where the population is particularly vulnerable.



## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Federation's Pan-American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) is in close contact with the National Society in Jamaica and the Overseas Branch of British Red Cross in the Cayman Islands, to coordinate actions and exchange information, in anticipation of the possible need for emergency relief. A Federation Logistics Officer is positioned in Jamaica, as part of PADRU's regular operations and is providing support and acting in a liaison capacity with the National Society and PADRU. The Federation is also in contact with the National Society and the Federation Delegation in Haiti, as well as the National Societies in Cuba and the Dominican Republic.

The Jamaican Red Cross Executive Committee has been holding emergency meetings and has activated all of its branches, island-wide, with first-responder Red Cross volunteers on stand-by. On-going emergency response plans and the number of volunteers on stand-by are being re-evaluated on a regular basis, as the storm progresses. Planning and actions are being closely coordinated with the Jamaican National Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM).

The Cayman Islands Overseas Branch of British Red Cross is also on alert, with volunteers on stand-by, and is coordinating closely with the national emergency authorities.

### *Coordination and Information*

PADRU and the French Red Cross's 'Intervention Platform for the Caribbean' (PIRAC), based in Guadeloupe are also coordinating closely, for possible deployment of PIRAC's emergency intervention team to support operations in Haiti, as required.

The Federation has an Information Delegate, pre-positioned at PADRU, with specific responsibility to lead international media relations during the hurricane season and support National Societies in their media relations.

The Federation's Disaster Management Information System (DMIS) is being up-dated on a regular basis.

A special page on both of the Regional Federation websites at [www.cruzroja.org](http://www.cruzroja.org) and [www.caribbeanredcross.org](http://www.caribbeanredcross.org) have been created and will be up-dated on a regular basis, as the situation requires.

**[Click here to return to the title page or contact information.](#)**