

TURKEY: EARTHQUAKE

07 October 1999

appeal no. 19/99

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period covered: 02 - 07 October 1999

The first shipment of winterised tents has arrived on schedule, a donation of the German Red Cross. The Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) has been providing hot food every day for 65,000 homeless in the earthquake affected areas. To meet future outstanding needs of those living in the tent cities, the TRCS has put forward a request for food commodities for the current earthquake relief operation. The German Red Cross has signed an agreement with the governor's office in Izmit to secure a site for prefabricated hospital facilities, to replace the tent facilities of the emergency response unit (ERU) field hospital. The International Federation's Secretary General has concluded a successful three-day visit to Turkey, which included meetings with the country's Deputy Prime Minister and the TRCS leadership.

The context

On 17 August at 03h02 local time a massive earthquake measuring between 7.4 and 7.8 on the Richter scale and lasting 45 seconds hit north-western Turkey. Hundreds of aftershocks have since been reported, some exceeding five on the Richter scale. Izmit, an industrial city of one million in western Turkey, was nearest the epicentre. But the force of the tremor was felt as far away as Ankara, the capital, some 500 km to the east, and across parts of the Balkans. Geophysicists described the quake as one of the most powerful this century, nearly rivalling the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that devastated San Francisco in 1906. On the day of the disaster, the Turkish government declared a state of emergency and requested international assistance. The International Federation immediately launched a preliminary Appeal, followed by a full Appeal for CHF 65 million on 8 September 1999.

Update

As reported by the Prime Minister's Crisis Co-ordination Centre (PMCCC), the latest death toll from the August quake is now 15,820, and the number of injured stands at 43,953. According to local media reports, schools in Yalova opened on 4 October after a month's delay. Officials said structural surveys of the school buildings showed 23 of a total of 67 schools in the province had been damaged by the earthquake on 17 August. Where the school facilities are damaged, classes are being held in tents.

Findings from a series of psychological assessments carried out by the Turkish Ministry of Health indicate that 25 million people living in the disaster region have showed signs of trauma, which can lead to various psychiatric symptoms and diseases. The Ministry has organised a seminar focusing on post-traumatic therapies and programmes for specialists/professionals in this field.

The Minister of the Interior has announced an allocation of USD 1.2 million to repair/replace water and sewage systems in Sakarya province; the work is expected to take over one year to complete.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Food w

The TRCS has been providing hot food daily for 65,000 homeless in the earthquake affected areas. To meet future outstanding needs of those living in the tent cities, the TRCS has put forward a request for a bulk food programme for the current earthquake relief operation. All food will be purchased locally and distributed by the TRCS. International Federation logistics officers are in the process of researching local vendors. A table of the commodities requested is shown here:

Commodity	Quantity (metric tonnes)
Flour	1,260
Rice	120
Lentils	120
Beans	60
Chickpeas	60
Pasta	90
Vegetable oil	60
Sugar	40
Tea	3
Tomato paste	6

Shelter w

The first shipment of 225 winterised tents has arrived on schedule, a donation of the German Red Cross. Further consignments through the coming weeks will deliver 14,000 winterised tents to Turkey - 4,000 more than the planning figure in the Emergency Appeal, launched on 8 September. The tents are being funded/donated by Red Cross Societies in Germany, Japan and the Netherlands.

Health w

Together with the TRCS, the German Red Cross (GRC), which has been managing an ERU field hospital since 21 August, has signed an agreement with the governor's office in Izmit to secure the use of 14,000 square metres of land for prefabricated hospital facilities, located about one kilometre from the field hospital in Yenikoy, near the Ford Otosan tent city. The first units are scheduled to arrive in early November and the transfer of the ERU field hospital will be completed by 16 December.

Meanwhile, working with the TRCS, the GRC has initiated an assessment concentrating on the rural communities in outlying villages around Golchuk. The survey includes questions about health, shelter, food and sanitation needs; an analysis and report will be completed in about three weeks. The GRC has also undertaken assessments of the orphanage at Karamursel, located about 18 kilometres from Golchuk and the nearby school for the Hearing and Speech Impaired. Both institutions suffered major damage in the quake. The orphanage, with some 100 children under six years of age, has been relocated temporarily to Bursa.

Logistics w

New telephone numbers for the International Federation's warehousing facility at Besiktas, near Istanbul are as follows: *Phone:* +902 16 311 9640/41/42/43/44. *Fax:* +902 16 311 9639.

The Participating National Societies (PNS) are asked to advise transport companies that once their trucks are at the border, the truck company or drivers should call the International Federation's logistics co-ordinator in Turkey (+41 79 217 33 58) or his assistant (+90 532 795 0299) for advice on how to reach the new warehouse.

Water/Sanitation w

The International Federation's senior water-sanitation officer has been in Turkey this week to work with the delegation in moving ahead with a detailed plan of action for the water/sanitation component. Red Cross/Red Crescent activities will be directed primarily towards establishing sound water/sanitation facilities in the tent cities being managed by the TRCS, linking with systems installed by the local authorities from the boundaries of the camps. In-country suppliers of shower and toilet units are being identified for an initial order for 100 of these items.

Outstanding needs

See the relief table in annex 2.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Federation's Secretary General, the Director of the Europe Department and the Federation's Head of Delegation, accompanied by the leadership of the Turkish Red Crescent, met with the Turkish government's deputy prime minister in charge of crisis co-ordination in Ankara on Tuesday. The discussions were positive and productive. The following day, a meeting took place with the newly appointed Governor of the earthquake crisis area in Izmit; the Secretary General also spent time with beneficiaries, TRCS volunteers and staff, and visited Red Cross/Red Crescent activities in the earthquake zone.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

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