

# ***TURKEY: EARTHQUAKES***

*18 November 1999*

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## ***The context***

North-western Turkey, the country's most densely populated region and industrial heartland, has been struck by two massive earthquakes in less than three months. The first, on 17 August 1999 at 03h02 local, measured between 7.4 and 7.8 on the Richter scale and lasted 45 seconds. Izmit, an industrial city of one million in western Turkey, was nearest the epicentre. The official death toll stands at over 17,100, with some 44,000 people injured, nearly 300,000 homes either damaged or collapsed and more than 40,000 business premises similarly affected. On the day of the catastrophe, 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, which remains active.

The disaster was followed by more than 1,300 aftershocks, culminating in the second quake - which shook Düzce and Kaynasli counties in the north-western province of Bolu, some 100 kms to the east of Izmit for 30 seconds - at 18h57 on 12 November 1999 and rated 7.2 on the Richter scale. The jolt was felt both in Istanbul (some 260 km to the west) and Ankara, the nation's capital, 300 km to the east. This situation report concentrates primarily on Red Cross Red Crescent activities in response to this further tragedy in Turkey.

## ***Update***

Casualty figures from last Friday's earthquake now stand at 550 confirmed dead and over 3,300 injured, with these numbers still expected to rise. The destruction in Bolu and Düzce is widespread, with the total affected population currently put at between 150,000 and 180,000; early assessments indicate that some 800 buildings have been heavily damaged and the Government has estimated the financial cost of

the quake at US\$ 10 billion. Industrial facilities in the area have stopped their production due to power shortages and some have suffered major material damage.

During the morning of 17 November (Wednesday) two major aftershocks (4.9 at 02h00 and 5.0 at 10h10) were felt in the provincial capital of Bolu bringing more fear and despair to the population as damaged buildings collapsed. It is estimated that 24,000 families (80% of the town's population) are homeless. The local crisis centre in Bolu called upon rescue and humanitarian workers in Düzce for help in the middle of the night. The Prime Minister's Crisis Centre (PMCC) is urgently seeking 10,000 tents for the affected area.

Besides Bolu and Düzce, the neighbouring districts of Kaynasli (70% of the town is considered to be destroyed), Akcakoca, Cumayeri, Gümüşova, Yigilca and Gökaya have been affected. With night-time temperatures dropping as low as minus two degrees Celsius, the majority of the region's population remains outdoors either because their homes are damaged or for fear of entering buildings even though many appear structurally sound. Population movements away from the region are also increasing on a daily basis. According to the PMCC, 1,000 prefabricated houses constructed in Düzce for victims of the August earthquake have been immediately reassigned to the locality.

Meanwhile, many hospital facilities in the affected area have been damaged and are no longer functioning. Field facilities surrounding the hospital buildings were set up immediately after the quake, with volunteer doctors and nurses coming from nearby towns to treat the injured. Severe cases are still being referred to hospitals both in Ankara and Istanbul. Medical personnel and medicines continue to be sufficient. All schools in Düzce and Kaynasli are closed due to damage.

Government crisis centres established in Düzce and Bolu are fully operational, coordinating search and rescue teams from all over the world. To date, some 12,000 rescue workers are in the area and the total number of people pulled from collapsed buildings is estimated at 300. It is expected that rescue activities will cease in the coming days, giving way to the process of debris removal.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent action***

### **Turkish Red Crescent Society •**

With a coordination centre established in Düzce, the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) is focusing its activities on the distribution of relief items and hot meals three times per day to 20,000 persons. With more mobile kitchens becoming available, the Society's aim is to provide meals for up to 30,000 persons during the coming days. More than 90 TRCS staff are working in the area.

According to the latest information, 18,756 tents have been distributed in the affected area - 10,657 by TRCS - providing shelter for 93,780 people, the majority of whom (53,285) are being assisted by the Society. In addition, the TRCS has also dispatched the following items: blankets (83,520), sleeping bags (4,995), beds (11,500), 100,000 meters of plastic sheeting, a mobile hospital with 100 beds, a mobile clinic, portable kitchens (33), ambulances (5), generators (103), stoves (2,250), blood units (855), medicines, serum and 78.5 tonnes of food.

Currently, the TRCS is managing five tent cities - comprising 2,300 tents sufficient for 11,500 persons - in Düzce (Azimilli, Aziziye and Egitimciler) and Kaynasli. A TRCS hospital has been set up in the Düzce State hospital grounds and a mobile clinic is treating some 350 persons daily in Kaynasli.

The Society has publicly announced plans to create a disaster base in Izmit, with the support of the International Federation.

### **International Federation •**

*Shelter:* A massive effort is underway through the Red Cross Red Crescent network to airlift thousands of winterised tents to Turkey in the coming days. Earlier this week, it became clear that attempts to expedite a consignment of 10,000 winterised tents, ordered by the International Federation from a

regular and long-established supplier in mid September, would not be successful, due to problems with the overall specification and water resistance properties. However, there has been a resounding response to the crisis by a number of National Societies, which have sourced supplies from local manufacturers and civil and military authorities. As a result, some 5,000 winterised tents - from Finland, Germany Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom - are due to reach Turkey by early next week. Efforts are also continuing in the United States, Denmark and the Netherlands where the first deliveries of a Red Cross order for 2,000 winterised tents are due to start before the end of the month.

*Relief:* Field liaison delegates assigned to the International Federation in Turkey continue supporting the TRCS in its response to the emergency, reinforced by colleagues from the water sanitation, procurement and telecommunications functions. A total of 28 trucks containing relief items (including tents, blankets and field beds), medicaments, sanitary equipment, three rubbish halls and plastic sheeting have been dispatched to the area. All distribution of these items are being handled in conjunction with the TRCS.

A warehouse in Düzce is fully operational and the local procurement of much needed items, including beds, bed-linen, office containers (to be located in field hospitals and tent cities), latrine, and shower containers, and lamps has already begun. A radio and satellite phone network in the affected area will be operational in two days.

*Water and Sanitation:* The International Federation has effected deliveries of 200 kgs of chlorine, 10 water tanks and 10 pumps to the fire brigade which is in charge of setting up water distribution points in Düzce. In the August earthquake area, an Austrian Red Cross water and sanitation expert has arrived and will support the International Federation delegate building up water tanks in Adapazari. A consignment of washing machines will soon arrive in Golchuk and Adapazari.

*Health:* An International Federation health team continues assessing the situation in order to define further needs and longer-term programmes. Meanwhile, members are coordinating the allocation of tents and other materials to support the established field hospitals in the affected towns.

#### **Participating National Societies •**

All PNS representatives based in Turkey joined the TRCS/International Federation teams within hours of Friday's earthquake, supporting the transportation and distribution of relief goods. This cooperation continues.

*American Red Cross:* The Society's representative is coordinating closely with the TRCS and the acting vice president of the international services department in Washington DC is currently in Turkey, leading a team of 10 persons in order to provide support to the Red Cross Red Crescent operation.

*Austrian Red Cross:* The Society immediately provided a search and rescue dog team, which arrived in the disaster zone on the morning after the earthquake.

*Bulgarian Red Cross:* A search and rescue team of 10 persons and 5 dogs arrived a day after the disaster and is working in the area.

*French Red Cross:* A team of five persons has been distributing clothes, blankets, bed linen and medicines received from the Egyptian hospital in Adapazari. In coordination with TRCS, the Society is supporting a UNICEF tent city in Kaynasli with warehouse management, sanitation and a dispensary. An in-depth assessment of needs in the 28 villages in the affected area may also be conducted.

*German Red Cross:* Two specialised search and rescue teams comprising 22 persons and 11 dogs arrived in the affected area on the morning after the quake. A German Red Cross field hospital in Golchuk was made available to authorities but, to date, has not been utilised.

*Hellenic Red Cross:* A search and rescue team of 10 persons arrived early on Saturday, 13 November, exiting the country three days later, having rescued one survivor and recovered four bodies.

*Italian Red Cross:* The Society dispatched a search and rescue specialist with a dog to the stricken area.

*Japanese Red Cross:* The director of the Society's Relief Department is in Turkey and much needed telecommunications equipment is expected shortly from Japan to support the establishment of telecom network.

*Netherlands Red Cross:* A team of nine persons and five dogs arrived over last weekend and is still in the area. A representative from the Society's headquarters is in Turkey to provide further assistance.

*Spanish Red Cross:* With funding from ECHO, the Society is setting up a tent city in Bolu centre with 1,000 tents and all the necessary support facilities. Two 50 sq m tents with electricity and heating systems have been dispatched to the Social Security hospital in Düzce, together with 95 family tents to support facilities in Adapazari and Bolu hospitals.

*Swiss Red Cross:* The Society is airlifting 9,500 blankets to Turkey, expected to arrive shortly.

## ***Outstanding needs***

Winterised tents remain the priority item required in response to the present emergency. In addition, sleeping bags, plastic sheeting and jerry cans would be welcome, but only if available for immediate delivery to Turkey. Pending a clearer picture of the full extent of this latest disaster, at present the International Federation is not seeking further funds for its appeal of 8 September 1999 - which is being extended to cover the new situation - though unearmarked cash contributions will continue to be accepted.

## ***External relations / Government/UN/ NGOs/ Media***

Media activity has been intense in the days following the quake of 12 November, with the International Federation's delegation management team and members of the information/reporting function responding to dozens of requests for on-the-spot interviews. International media attention is however is now slowly decreasing. A TRCS information officer has also been in the affected area, providing continuous information on the Society's response and activities to local media. Both local and international coverage has so far been very positive.

## ***Contributions***

See Annex 1 for details.

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