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## ***RED CROSS & RED CRESCENT INFORMATION***

*Report No. 8*

*This report is published daily as a general update on Red Cross Red Crescent activities during the Balkans crisis, targeting primarily the Movement's components and supporters. Today's text can also be found on the internet: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org) and [www.icrc.org](http://www.icrc.org).*

### ***LATEST EVENTS***

This update covers the two-day period from 9-11 April, a phase of the humanitarian operation during which the border crossings into Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were periodically closed (causing concern over the situation of persons unable to cross), and sporadic flows of refugees and new arrivals when the borders opened. In a sign of the regional nature of the crisis, reports indicate that Kosovo refugees are being provided with assistance and asylum in Hungary (457), Romania (136), and Bulgaria (2,500). Another 5,000 persons have reportedly crossed through Bulgaria on their way to Turkey.

#### ***Federal Republic of Yugoslavia***

To assess the needs of the civilian population affected by the air strikes a Red Cross team visited Novi Sad on the weekend. The focus of the assessment was on the availability of water in the area.

#### ***Montenegro***

Red Cross teams have undertaken assessments in northern and southern Montenegro. In Rozaje (northern Montenegro) the collective centres housing displaced persons are in need of improved water facilities (Red Cross teams are currently working on a solution). In Ulcinj (southern Montenegro) with IDPs arriving from northern Montenegro, the transit centres are overcrowded and the Red Cross will provide tents, kitchen sets and improved water facilities to alleviate the situation. A convoy of six trucks with emergency supplies (20,000 individual parcels and 2,000 hygiene parcels) departed today (Monday) for Montenegro from Belgrade.

Since 23 March, the Red Cross have distributed the following assistance to the displaced in Montenegro:

- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| - 32,000 individual parcels | - 2,000 hygiene parcels        |
| - 10 MT of sugar            | - 830 mattresses               |
| - 5 MT of oil               | - 3,000 sets of clothes        |
| - 6,000 blankets            | - 3,000 pairs of shoes         |
| - 3,000 jerry cans          | - 26 boxes of medical supplies |

### ***Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia***

Red Cross teams are actively providing relief to some 46,000 refugees located in the camps of Stenkovic, Bojane, Radusa, and Neprosteni. The Red Cross and other humanitarian organisations have now registered over 150 unaccompanied children in the transit camps and received over 300 applications from parents who have lost contact with their children. The Macedonian Red Cross and the ICRC are currently undertaking the necessary steps with the authorities so that family reunions can start. Family details are also being collected for broadcast on radio networks (same system as for Albania). Three tracing delegates will arrive today to strengthen the operation.

### ***Albania***

The refugees in Albania now total some 300,000 (223,000 estimated in camps with a further 60-80,000 estimated to be hosted with families). An average of 35 to 40 relief flights are arriving in Tirana each day, but clearance of the consignments and poor weather continue to cause delays. Despite the constraints, a full ration of food assistance is being provided to the six collective centres covered by the Red Cross.

Shelter assistance remains insufficient, and Danish and Dutch/Belgian Red Cross assessment teams are continuing site assessment work while the Italian Red Cross (IRC) has made a strong commitment to providing relief delegates and assistance in Albania, in coordination with the Federation. The IRC assistance consists of first aid, food, hot meals from a field kitchen, and clothing in three camps located in Kukes, Durres, and Kavajek.

Following the Federation Health Delegate's assessments, 5 Emergency Response Units (ERU's) consisting of groups of sector specialists and Red Cross volunteers from various National Societies together with their equipment have been deployed to Macedonia and Albania. A Telecommunications ERU will assist in the establishment of communication links between Tirana and Kukes and update the communication possibilities between the field and Geneva. Two Basic Health Care ERU's will provide basic, essential curative, preventive and community health care each for a population of 20,000 - 30,000. One clinic will be established in Kukes while the site for the other clinic will be decided after further assessments.

An estimated 11,000 persons have now arrived in Korce and Pogradec and surrounding villages from Macedonia. The new arrivals have been absorbed either by local host families or in organised shelters in sport centres and public buildings. The refugees in Pogradec currently number some 1,700, of whom 400 are being sheltered with host families and 1,300 in shelters. An estimated 9,000 refugees are located in the Korce district, of whom approximately 4,000 are in some 17 surrounding villages accommodated with host families, 1,500 are in the Korce Sport Centre, 230 are with host families in Korce and the balance (3,270) are in 5 other camps in the town. Their food, water, hygiene, shelter and medical needs are being met by the prefecture authorities and the local branch of the Albanian Red Cross, as well as other NGO's.

A team from the ARC headquarters in Tirana has provided support to the Korce branch in the provision of relief items. Relief assistance for some 1,700 persons consisting of blankets, biscuits and milk for children, tinned vegetables and meat, toilet soap and water persons has been distributed. While the refugees have been registered by the local authorities, reliable figures (particularly those refugees in the outlying areas and located with host families) are not available.

With many families having lost contact with their relatives, the tracing programme is being strengthened. Today, 40 mobile and satellite telephones will arrive in Tirana with 25 for immediate dispatch to the Kukes area. This will enable the ICRC to expand the telephone link for refugees where people make a short telephone call to relatives. Several hundred people are already using this service every day. Refugees are also being offered the opportunity to send a Red Cross Message to family members. The broadcast of family details on radio networks is continuing with a BBC service (sponsored by the British Red Cross) to commence shortly. In addition, the family details are also being published in two Albanian language newspapers. Three tracing delegates will arrive in Tirana today to strengthen the programme which is undertaken in cooperation with the Albanian Red Cross.

Given the difficulties of transporting relief supplies by road from Tirana to Kukes and area, a Red Cross chartered helicopter has arrived in Tirana and undertook its first flight to Kruma carrying 3 MT of BP-5 (high energy biscuits).

The following relief supplies arrived in Tirana between 9-11 April:

- three Federation/ICRC planes with 31,500 blankets and 19 MT BP5;
- 8 Norwegian Red Cross ambulances and 6 landcruisers;
- German Red Cross planeloads of sleeping bags;
- field hospital of the Finnish Red Cross (ERU's);
- field hospital of the Austrian Red Cross (ERU's).

In addition, supplies from the Swiss Red Cross and British Red Cross have arrived in Ancona, Italy for transfer to Skopje or Tirana.

## ***OUTSTANDING NEEDS***

Significant logistics problems are still being encountered. The International Federation and the ICRC advise National Societies that no further unsolicited donations can be accepted by the operation. All donations must be co-ordinated with the Geneva logistics unit.

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