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# ***HUNGARY, ROMANIA AND THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA: FLOODS***

## ***Information Bulletin N° 2***

### ***The Disaster***

Melting snows and heavy rains have led to serious flooding in Romania, Hungary and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FR Yugoslavia) in recent days.

Due to a rapid snow melt in Romania and Ukraine and heavy rainfalls in northern Hungary and western Romania, the Tamis River in FR Yugoslavia, the Tisza and Bodrog Rivers and their tributaries in Hungary, and the Kris, Mures, Somes and Timis Rivers in Romania, have risen significantly above normal levels.

#### **Hungary**

The water level of both the Tisza and Bodrog Rivers is slowly decreasing. In the area of Szolnok, with the city lying about 1.0-1.5 m below the present water level, it is estimated that it will take another week until the Tisza reaches its normal level. During that period the present emergency phase will be maintained due to the fact that the dams are under enormous pressure. The local emergency committee has developed detailed plans for the evacuation of Szolnok if needed. Fortunately, the location is such that the whole city cannot be flooded at once. It is therefore expected that Szolnok will be used to accommodate evacuees. In many villages in the area people have been advised to leave their homes, but very few (mainly children and the elderly) have actually left. People are concerned about the security of their homes on the one hand, and wish to continue working on the dams on the other hand. So far, some 2,000 people have been evacuated from 11 settlements in the area of Szolnok. Given the present circumstances it is expected that they will be able to return to their homes in two-three weeks. There are transportation facilities on standby in all the threatened settlements in case any part of the dams breaks.

#### **Romania**

The flood situation remains a cause of considerable concern and fear for the population in the 15 districts hit by the disaster. Alba, Arad, Bihor, Caras-Severin, Hunadoara, Mures, Satu-Mare and Timis districts in western Romania are among the most severely affected, with damage to houses, bridges, roads and cultivated land.

#### **FR Yugoslavia**

The floods continue to cause destruction to the land, with the crisis period not being over yet. However, while around 4,000 people have been affected, none have been evacuated from their homes.

## ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

### **International Federation**

Representatives of the International Federation have visited the affected areas in the past few days to assess the situation.

### **Hungarian Red Cross**

The Hungarian Red Cross has provided rubber boots and food supplies to those working on the dams and assistance to people forced to leave their homes. Local Red Cross Branches have been distributing food parcels to the evacuees and to those working along the river banks. In Vezensy, with 800 inhabitants almost entirely surrounded by Tisza, the local Red Cross representative has organised provision of first aid and shelter in one of the community buildings for those workers who have arrived from other settlements.

### **Romanian Red Cross**

The Romanian Red Cross has sent bed linen, clothes, rubber boots, basic food items and mineral water to the affected areas. The Society has appealed to the public for cash donations.

## ***Needs***

In the Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén district of Hungary, Federation assistance was requested by the local Red Cross. The Hungarian Red Cross has requested CHF 10,000 from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to provide food parcels to 300 people. In the area of Szolnok, some eight million sandbags have been used. Through the Austrian and the Hungarian Red Cross Societies, the Austrian government donated 400,000 sandbags to support the flood operations in the country. Further needs for sandbags can now be met locally. It is expected that there will be further needs for assistance in the area of Szolnok once the assessments of the damage and loss are complete.

The Romanian Red Cross has requested CHF 360,500 to assist 10,000 beneficiaries in the 9 most affected districts with food parcels for a period of four to five months. The Netherlands Red Cross is already considering the possibility of providing a contribution.

In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia there is no need for further assistance for the time being.

The Federation's Regional Delegation in Budapest continues to monitor the situation closely.

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