

# 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

## HAITI: UNREST

17 February 2004

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**Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 60,000**

*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 180 countries.*

For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

### In Brief

**This document is being issued based on the needs described below reflecting the information available at this time. As information from further updates and details from assessment reports becomes available, or should the situation deteriorate, the Federation will consider international support through an Appeal. A DREF allocation of CHF 60,000 has been released and unearmarked funds to repay DREF are needed.**

### The Situation

Since the take-over of Gonaïves on 5 February by rebel groups, the situation in Haiti has been constantly deteriorating. Uprisings and clashes between the opposition, armed groups and government supporters and police continue. Several significant towns are now controlled by rebel factions including both Gonaïves and Saint Marc. As a result, access to the north of the country, particularly the three main cities of Cap-Haïtien, Port-de-Paix and Fort Liberté is blocked. There are major concerns about vulnerable populations affected by escalating insecurity, lack of hospital services and food shortages. In some cities, there are reports of sharp increases in the price of basic food staples, given distribution problems. Uprisings are spreading in the north and south of the country and there are unofficial reports of homes being burnt down and internal movements of people; the border with the Dominican Republic has been closed. At present, there are no accurate figures relating to people affected by the crisis.

### Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Haitian National Red Cross Society (HNRCS), through its several hundreds of volunteers, is active in Port-au-Prince and affected cities, providing first aid and an ambulance service in the capital. Relief goods funded by the Japanese Red Cross Society stored in containers in Cap-Haïtien and Anse-à-Veaux are being utilized and distributed by volunteers, particularly first aid kits, blankets, kitchen sets and hygiene kits. The Haitian National Red Cross Society and the ICRC undertook two assessment missions to Cap-Haïtien and Saint Marc on 11 and 13 February respectively in order to take stock of the situation in hospitals, given that several have been targeted by armed groups. In addition, on 16 February, the ICRC led a convoy to Gonaïves in order to provide surgical material to hospitals.

With ECHO funding, the Federation, through its Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) based in Panama, procured and shipped to Port-au-Prince relief items. These goods have reached Port-au-Prince and are stocked in warehouses at the port until the security conditions improve sufficiently in order to distribute the goods.

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The Federation delegation is providing institutional and programme support to strengthen the National Society. The delegation, based in the premises of the Haitian National Red Cross Society, is monitoring the situation of social unrest closely and is ensuring coordination with PNS, NGOs and international organizations in Haiti. Moreover, the Federation is undertaking an assessment mission to take place in coordination with the Haitian National Red Cross Society, the ICRC delegation and PNS present in the country. A water and sanitation/relief delegate and a telecommunications delegate from PADRU are scheduled to arrive in Haiti, tomorrow, 18 February. A senior representative of the Federation will join the PADRU delegates and a plan of action will be drawn up to define support to the HNRCS in assisting the most vulnerable affected by the current crisis.

As the situation evolves, further information will be provided on a regular basis.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)

*For further details please contact:*

- *The Haitian National Red Cross Society in Port-au-Prince; Phone (509) 510 9813; Fax number (509) 223 1054; email [croroha@haitiworld.com](mailto:croroha@haitiworld.com)*
- *Luis Luna, Regional Officer, Phone 41 22 730 4274; Fax 41 22 733 0395; email: [luis.luna@ifrc.org](mailto:luis.luna@ifrc.org)*

*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>*

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.