

# MINOR EMERGENCY



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

## COLOMBIA: VOLCANIC ACTIVITY

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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 181 countries.

### In Brief

**CHF 50,000 (USD 38,025 OR EUR 32,318) HAS BEEN ALLOCATED FROM THE FEDERATION'S DISASTER RELIEF EMERGENCY FUND (DREF) TO RESPOND TO EMERGENCY OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA.**

**UN earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For longer-term programmes in this or other countries or regions, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for national society profiles, please also access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

### The situation

The Colombian Institute of Geology and Mining (Ingeominas) has announced that the Galeras volcano erupted today, 24 November 2005, at 2:46 AM local time, spewing large amounts of ash and affecting the areas Fontibon, San Cayetano, Postobon and Norte de Pasto. To date, there are no reports of deaths, injuries or serious material damages. Ingeominas had previously issued a "level two" or "maximum alert" on 16 November due to increased activity in the volcano (please refer to [https://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf\\_appeals.pl?rpts05/MEcovol1.pdf](https://www.ifrc.org/cgi/pdf_appeals.pl?rpts05/MEcovol1.pdf) for more details).

The Galeras volcano stands 4,270-m high and is located in the department of Nariño in south western Colombia near the border with Ecuador. The area around the volcano is mostly populated by farmers, many of whom have

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refused to abandon their homes. The National Disaster Preparedness and Response System (SNPAD) has ordered the immediate evacuation of about 9,000 people living on the slopes of the Galeras volcano who could be seriously affected; some have already started this process.

Volcanic activity in Galeras has been frequent in recent years; the volcano first began showing signs of activity in 1988 after lying dormant more than 40 years, then erupted in January 1993, killing nine people on a scientific expedition to its summit. The present active crater lies 6 km west of Pasto, a city with approximately 300,000 inhabitants. There are also three smaller craters in the caldera. Galeras is one of 15 volcanoes worldwide that are being monitored by the scientific community as an "International Decade Volcano" because of the hazard that it represents to the local population<sup>1</sup>.

### Red Cross action taken so far

The Colombian Red Cross Society's (CRCS) Galeras volcano contingency plan, which is in line with the SNPAD contingency plan, has been activated and response units have been deployed to Cauca, Valle, Quindio and Risaralda. A total of 55 people were mobilized today, 24 November, to support the team of 51 people already in the field, including 11 mobilized yesterday from the Cauca branch and one relief coordinator from the Valle branch of the CRCS. The national relief director and the national telecommunications coordinator are also present in the field. A national intervention team (NIT) member and an information coordinator will be deployed later today.

The emergency operational committees (COEs) of both the municipality and the department of Nariño were activated today at 4 in the morning as part of the contingency plan. Ambulances, trucks, telecommunications equipment and 29 tents donated by the Federation are being sent to the area today together with food and non food relief to support the relief activities.

The American Red Cross and French Red Cross have made available vehicles and personnel from their projects in Nariño and the region in order to support the activities. As part of the operations established in the CRCS contingency plan, the branches of Boyaca, Caldas and Cundinamarca have also activated their contingency plans.

The CRCS is inviting the Colombian public, entrepreneurs, and humanitarian organizations to express their solidarity with the most vulnerable through food and non-food donations, and voluntary blood donation in the CRCS blood banks in Armenia, Bogota, Cali, Medellin and Villavicencio. Monetary donations can be also made through a bank account in the Banco de Botogá (account no. 078-116522 in the name of the Cruz Roja Colombiana).

### Coordination

The CRCS is working in close coordination with the Institute of Health in the department of Nariño and the Pan American Health Association (PAHO) in order to provide 300 temporary shelters in the city of Pasto. In addition, a total of 29 tents have been mobilized thus far from the Federation's Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU). An agreement has also been signed with the municipality in order to organize the distribution of relief goods to be provided to families in case they are evacuated.

### Budget outline

CHF 50,000 has been allocated to Colombia in response to recent emergencies. Of this total, CHF 25,000 has been allocated for disaster preparedness activities in anticipation of increased volcanic activity in the area around the Galeras volcano. Another CHF 25,000 has been allocated in response to floods which are currently affecting 26 departments in the country (please see floods Minor Emergency Bulletin)

[\*Click here to return to the title page and contact information.\*](#)

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<sup>1</sup> According to [SIR-C/X-SAR Space radar images of Earth at JPL](#)