

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Lebanon: Ship Disaster

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18 December 2009

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Lebanese Red Cross (Lebanese RC) has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

On 17 December, a cargo ship carrying 83 passengers and crew from different nationalities sank off the northern coast of Lebanon. According to the latest reports, six people are killed and 39 are rescued. The search and rescue efforts are being continued by the Lebanese navy and the United Nations peacekeeping force in the country (UNIFIL) as dozens of people are still missing.

The emergency medical services (EMS) volunteers of the National Society are waiting at the port of Tripoli and Kleiat Airport to deliver medical and first aid support. At the time of writing this bulletin, the Lebanese RC has deployed 80 EMS volunteers and transferred 38 medical cases to the hospitals.



The EMS volunteers of the Lebanese RC are transferring survivors to hospitals. Photo: Lebanese RC.

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The Situation



On 17 December, a Panamanian flagged cargo ship sank off Tripoli, the northern coast of Lebanon.

On the afternoon of 17 December, a cargo ship – Panamanian flagged Danny F II – sank off the northern coast of Lebanon. It had left Montevideo, Uruguay, on 23 November and was transporting cattle to the Syrian port of Tartous when it overturned near the Lebanese port city of Tripoli.

The ship, carrying 83 passengers and crew from different nationalities, was capsized in stormy weather after sending a distress signal. According to the latest reports, six people are killed and 39 are rescued. The victims are mostly from Uruguay, Panama, Pakistan, Philippines and Russia. Dozens of people are still missing and the teams of the Lebanese navy and UNIFIL are continuing their search and rescue efforts. The high seas and strong winds are hampering the

rescue operation. According to the ship's operator, the ship was carrying 10,224 sheep and 17,932 cattle, and all the livestock are presumed to be lost.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



80 EMS volunteers were deployed to the port of Tripoli and Kleiat Airport to follow-up on the rescue operations. Photo: Lebanese RC.

The Lebanese RC EMS volunteers, in cooperation with the Lebanese authorities, are playing an important part in the rescue operations since the National Society's emergency line (140) received a call on 17 December at 18:00 local time reporting the disaster. Initially, 50 first aiders and nine ambulances were directly deployed from the different EMS stations in the North to the shore in Tripoli. The teams, operating on the spot since the accident, transferred 30 cases to the hospitals of Munla, Al Salam, Islamic Charity, Al Mazloum, Haikal and Alnini by 3 PM Friday afternoon. In addition, they have transported one dead body to the Islamic Charity Hospital in Tripoli.

In the meantime, emergency teams of 30 first aid volunteers and seven ambulances were dispatched to the President Renee Moawad Airport in Kleiat where the helicopters are evacuating the wounded and delivering them to the Red Cross team. The volunteers transferred eight more cases to the hospitals of Youssef and Rahal. The complaints of the evacuated cases varied between fatigue and extreme cold, fractures and bruises, and a rise in temperature.

The teams comprising EMS volunteers are on stand-by with their ambulances at the port of Tripoli and Kleiat Airport to follow-up on the rescue operations handled to them by helicopters and ships belonging to the Lebanese army and UNIFIL. They are supporting the medical and first aid services on the spot and are transferring the survivors to the hospitals. The National Society is receiving emergency calls on its free hotline (140) from any mobile or land line.

Due to the nationalities of the victims, the International Federation's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Zone Office has alerted the Zone Offices in Europe, Asia-Pacific and Americas in case National Society contacts need to be established to restore family links.

How we work

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

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[<click here to return to the title page >](#)