

Information bulletin



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Ecuador: Civil Unrest

Information bulletin n° 2
1 October 2010

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Ecuadorian Red Cross (ERC), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has determined that external assistance is not required, and is therefore not seeking funding or other assistance from donors at this time.

[<click here for detailed contact information>](#)

The Situation

On Thursday 30 September 2010, civil unrest broke out in the capital city of Quito, Ecuador due to demonstrations over a new law regarding rights and benefits for the state police forces. Hundreds of police took over police stations, regional police departments, the Customs Office and the Mariscal Sucre International Airport in Quito. Disturbances and looting were reported in the streets and markets in Quito and Guayaquil. The demonstrations also disrupted public transportation in some cities. Roadblocks were erected on several major thoroughfares in Guayaquil, including Avenida de las Américas and Avenida Portete, and on all access routes to Quito, causing severe traffic congestion. The Rafael Mendoza Avilés Bridge in Guayaquil was also closed to traffic. Classes were suspended in several provinces of the country and the electricity service was interrupted in some areas.

The Ecuadorian President, Rafael Correa, was injured during the demonstrations due to tear gas inhalation and was being held in a police hospital outside which demonstrators were protesting. On Thursday evening, 30 September, Ecuadorian military forces entered the police hospital and released the President after an encounter with the police protesters outside the facility. The President was transported to the Presidential Palace of Carandolet and made a speech to the Ecuadorian population. The government is maintaining the national State of Emergency declared on Thursday, with the military in charge of internal security.

Government authorities have closed banks in Guayaquil and Quito in response to incidents of looting in these cities; disruption to the telephone network was also reported, mainly attributed to an increase in call volume. The Mariscal Sucre International Airport has now been reopened.

The situation is likely to remain tense for at least the next 48 hours, as both sides—the government and police protesters—attempt to secure a negotiated settlement and win decisive public backing for their stand.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

On the afternoon of Thursday 30 September, the Ecuadorian Congress requested the Ecuadorian Red Cross to act as a mediator to seek the release of the President of the Republic who had been kidnapped and held at the police hospital. Unfortunately, negotiations to secure the President's release were unsuccessful. Later in the afternoon a doctor from the Ecuadorian Red Cross was requested to guarantee the health of the President and two medical staff were provided. In the evening of 30 September, heavy cross fire occurred between the Police and the military in the area of the hospital as the military attacked, and military forces succeeded in releasing the President.

Since fire fighters also joined the protests along with the police, the Ecuadorian Red Cross in the capital city was the only organization able to provide emergency services, although numbers of ambulances are limited.

All National Society branches have received key messages on the position of the Ecuadorian Red Cross in this situation, together with information on safety procedures and are reporting in every two hours. Twenty four Provincial branches, 139 volunteers, 100 humanitarian workers, vehicles and ambulances have been activated. The Ecuadorian Red Cross has provided pre-hospital care to 88 people in 5 provinces presenting asphyxia, multiple traumas and injuries due to falls, as below:

Province	N° of people treated	Deaths
Tungurahua	3	
Pichincha	82	2 (Police Hospital)
Santo Domingo	1	
El Oro	1	
Loja	1	
Total	88	2

The Regional Representative for the Andean Region is currently in Ecuador and coordination is taking place between the Federation's Zone Office and the ICRC headquarters in Geneva and with ICRC personnel in Ecuador, together with the Ecuadorian Red Cross.

Furthermore, the IFRC, through its Regional Representation in the Andean Region and the Pan American Disaster Response Unit (PADRU) have been monitoring the situation through communications with the Relief Director of the Ecuadorian Red Cross, the ICRC, international organizations and media reports.

Dialogue with OCHA and IFRC have also take place today as well communication with the Government Secretary for Risk Reduction.

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 the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The International Federation's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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