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Information bulletin Albania: Bus accident

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time.

The Albanian Red Cross, 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.



A bus plunges 80 meters (260 ft) off a cliff. Most of the victims were university students of Aleksandër Xhuvani University of Elbasan

Summary:

A bus carrying Albanian university students plunged hundreds of feet into a ravine Monday, killing at least 13 people according to police. Rescuers were working Monday to free students who may be trapped inside the bus, located at the bottom of a deep ravine near the city of Himara, 220 kilometers south of the capital of Tirana.

Albanian Red Cross immediately mobilized its trained volunteers to provide first aid and psychosocial support. The National Society launched public and media campaign for blood donations to ensure that sufficient blood units are available.

[<click here for detailed contact information, or here for the map of the affected area>](#)

The situation

A tragic accident happened in the afternoon at 16:15 o'clock on 21st May 2012, at the Qafa e Vishës, near the town of Himare, 220 kilometres south of the capital of Tirana.

One bus carrying 33 people has fallen 80 meters off the road in the mountain slope, killing 11 people and seriously injuring another 22. Based on official information, two persons died on the way to hospital, raising the total death toll to 13 people. The bus driver was among the dead.



Rescue teams and ambulance are taking one of the injured students to the hospital.

Officials from Aleksander Xhuvani University in the city of Elbasan said that there were two buses taking 75 students on a trip to the southern city of Saranda.

In total ten ambulances, two rescue helicopters and six army helicopters were sent to the crash site to help the injured. The police forces and medical teams were sent to area as well.

Fifteen of the injured students were in serious condition and were flown by helicopter to Tirana's military hospital. The Military Hospital doctors say that nine of the injured girls are under intensive care, but four of them are in very severe conditions and are living on artificial breathing machines.

The cause of the accident is unclear and an investigation has been launched. Albanian media quoted one of the passengers and a resident near the crash site that say the bus had been going very fast.

The government declared Tuesday a day of national mourning.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The President of Albanian Red Cross and staff gathered in the headquarters in Tirana immediately after the accident happened and started the coordination of their response activities.

Several Red Cross Branches like Tirana, Vlora, Saranda, Elbasan and Pogradec did mobilize their volunteers who are trained to provide first aid during disasters. Total of 90 trained volunteers were engaged to respond immediately to the situation.

Albanian Red Cross launched public and media campaign for blood donations. Already within 4-5 hours after the accident happened, 400 blood units had been donated and hundreds were registered for donation.

25 First aid volunteers are sent to Tirana military hospital to provide psychological support to the family members of victims and injured people.

In the same time the National Society provided a small contingent of bandages, gloves and other sterilized materials to the hospital. Albanian Red Cross is focusing on addressing the needs of the injured people and their families and acquaintances.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

- **Red Cross of Albania:** Zamir Muça, Secretary General, Phone: 0355 42227508; email: zmuca@kksh.org.al
- **IFRC Zone:** Alberto Monguzzi, Acting Disaster Management Coordinator; office phone: +36 1 8884 500; email: alberto.monguzzi@ifrc.org



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How we work

All IFRC 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 IFRC'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.

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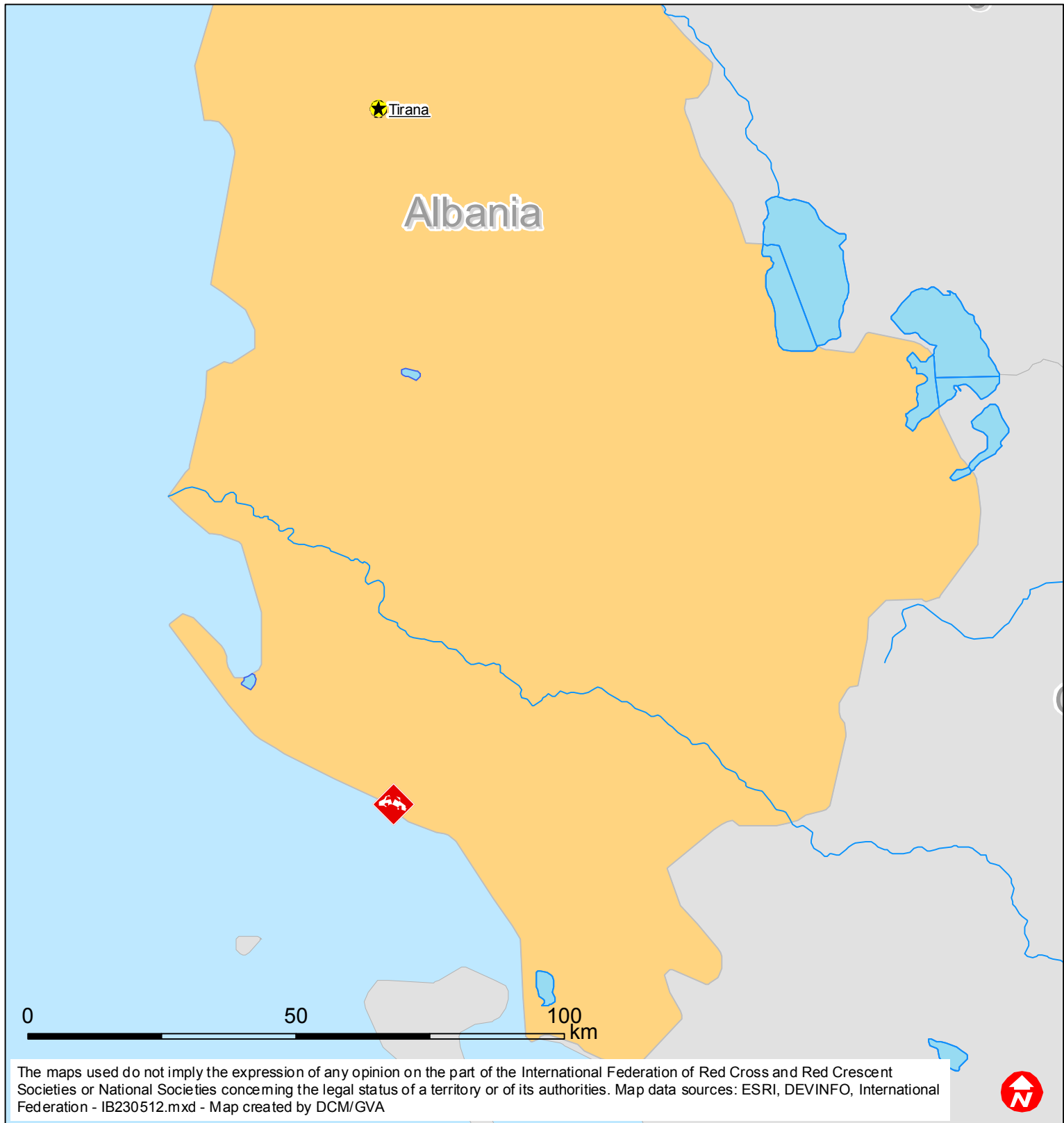


The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.



Albania: Bus accident



Bus accident near Himare