

EL SALVADOR: EARTHQUAKE

*18 February
2001*

appeal no. 02/2001

situation report no. 8

period covered: 16 - 17 February 2001

A third earthquake since mid January has struck El Salvador, giving rise to scenes of panic in San Salvador since the epicentre of the quake was in the southern districts of the capital. Salvadorean Red Cross Society (SRC) search and rescue teams were deployed to the affected areas immediately and reports are now awaited as to the extent of further damage incurred and increased needs amongst the population. At present, it is not expected that the SRC / Federation / PNS operation will be greatly expanded; however, the continued occurrence of after-shocks complicates the implementation of relief activities to support the earthquake victims.

The context

A major earthquake measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale occurred off the coast of El Salvador on Saturday, 13 January 2001 at 11:33 am local time (17:33UTC). The epicentre of the earthquake was located at latitude 12.8 degrees north, longitude 88.8 degrees west, or about 105 km south-south east of the capital, San Salvador. The earthquake caused major damage in the departments of San Miguel, Santa Ana, La Libertad, La Paz and San Salvador. The most heavily affected area was the neighbourhood of "Las Colinas" in the suburbs of Santa Tecla/Nueva San Salvador, where the earthquake triggered a landslide covering an estimated 400 houses entirely in mud. However, later assessments subsequently revealed a far broader impact as rural areas across the country were severely damaged, resulting in the displacement of whole communities.

One month to the day after this earthquake, another after shock registering 6.6 on the Richter scale, struck some 30 km east of San Salvador on the morning of Tuesday, 13 February at 8:22 a.m The departments which incurred most damage are San Vicente, La Paz, Cuscatlán and Cabañas. The tremor caused considerable panic in San Salvador as thousands rushed to return home or to check on children in schools.

Latest events

On Saturday, 17 February, at approximately 14.24 hours local time, El Salvador was shaken by a further earthquake measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale. The national emergency committee (COEN) states that the epicentre of the quake was in the south of the city of San Salvador. It appears from initial reports that in the district of Apopa, two people have lost the lives, further damage has been incurred and a number of people are buried under debris. Furthermore, the tremor has caused landslides and has damaged more homes in the neighbourhoods of Las Mercedes, San Jacinto, close to the San Salvador volcano, and in the vicinity of Los Chorros. In particular, the third earthquake to hit El Salvador since mid January has caused further panic and distress. People are frightened to return home to buildings they fear may not be safe in the event of after-shocks and prefer to sleep in the open.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Teams from the Salvadorean Red Cross Society were mobilised immediately in the affected areas including Apopa, in order to assess further damage and needs; reports are awaited from search and rescue units. In the meantime, the SRC is planning distributions of tarpaulins in the city of El Salvador, particularly since many people, in a state of panic, are coming to the Red Cross to request tarpaulins as they no longer wish to stay in their homes for fear of further tremors. The National Society headquarters has also been damaged by the quake, with some walls having collapsed.

Outstanding needs

Needs are currently being assessed in the wake of yesterday's earthquake, particularly with regard to shelter. However, it appears at present that the earthquake has not resulted in major damage and it is not expected that the SRC / Federation /PNS operation to support the earthquake victims will be significantly expanded. Further details will be provided shortly in forthcoming situation reports.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

There has been much media focus on the latest earthquake; the Federation regional delegation in Guatemala and the country delegation in El Salvador have provided information to the BBC, CNN and radio stations in Guatemala. The Salvadorean Red Cross Society's information department has also received numerous enquiries from the national media.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details. The appeal coverage currently stands at 48.7 per cent.

Santiago Gil

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Central America / El Salvador, earthquake						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 02/2001		PLEDGES RECEIVED			02/18/01	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				7,645,698		48.7%
CASH CARRIED FORWARD						
AMERICAN - PRIVATES				8,626	24.01.01	
AUSTRIAN - RC		1,000,000	ATS	111,799	15.01.01	
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		100,000	AUD	91,330	23.01.01	FOOD, MEDICINES, SHELTER MATERIALS AND BLANKETS
AUSTRALIAN - RC		65,000	AUD	58,429	14.02.01	
BRITISH - GOVT (DFID)		98,039	GBP	242,156	16.01.01	EARMARKING TO BE SPECIFIED
BRITISH - RC				170,000	12.02.01	REIMBURSEMENT DREF
BRITISH - PRIVATE				126	29.01.01	
CANADIAN - RC		70,000	CAD	77,112	16.01.01	
CANADIAN - RC		150,000	CAD	165,240	17.01.01	CANNOT BE USED FOR PURCHASE OF FOOD ITEMS
CANADIAN - RC		150,000	CAD	162,375	02.02.01	WATER & SANITATION TRAINING & DP
DANISH - RC		92,500	DKK	18,657	19.01.01	
DANISH - RC		185,000	DKK	38,110	15.02.01	
FINNISH - RC		43,729	EUR	65,773	15.01.01	
ICELANDIC - RC		1,000,000	ISK	19,411	15.01.01	
IRISH - RC		20,000	IEP	38,190	16.01.01	
IRISH - GOVT		200,000	IEP	381,900	15.01.01	
ITALIAN - RC		100,000,000	ITL	77,700	18.01.01	EMERGENCY SHELTER MATERIALS & FOOD
JAPANESE - RC				37,000	16.01.01	
KOREA, REPUBLIC - RC				30,000	17.01.01	
LIECHTENSTEIN - RC				53,150	13.02.01	
MONACO - RC		200,000	FRF	46,900	14.01.01	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		504,490	NLG	352,176	01.02.01	FOR PURCHASE OF HYGINE KITS, INDUSTRIAL KITCHENS, BED KITS, MANAGEMENT / OPERATION SUPPORT
NEW ZEALAND - RC		100,000	NZD	71,770	16.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - RC		250,000	NOK	46,350	18.01.01	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT		2,060,000	NOK	385,410	24.01.01	
OPEC		200,000	USD	335,000	18.01.01	EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES
PHARMACIA & UPJOHN FOUNDATION		25,000	USD	40,700	29.01.01	RELIEF ITEMS
SHELL INTERNATIONAL		25,000	USD	40,700	24.01.01	
SINGAPORE - RC				23,000	22.01.01	
SINGAPORE - RC				2,918	14.02.01	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		600,000	SEK	104,580	15.01.01	
SWISS - PRIVATES				200	16.01.01	
TURKISH - RC				50,000	17.01.01	
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES		10,000	AED	4,433	05.02.01	
VENEZUELA - PRIVATE		10,000	USD	16,750	22.01.01	
WHO STAFF				2,000	22.01.01	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				3,369,971	CHF	44.1%

This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
ERICSSON		36,506	USD	59,432	15.01.01	SEE PMN FOR DETAILS
FINNISH - RC		6,500	EUR	10,000	15.01.01	FACT TEAM MEMBER COSTS
NETHERLANDS - RC		411,122	NLG	286,997	16.01.01	EMERGENCY HEALTH KITS, GENERATORS, DISPENSARY TENTS, FAMILY TENTS, REINF. PLASTIC SHEETING, JERRY CANS, KITCHEN SETS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				356,429	CHF	4.7%
ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						
PSV507						