

TURKEY: EARTHQUAKE

3 September 1999

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situation report no. 11

period covered: 1 - 3 September 1999

Senior Federation officials meeting with the Turkish Red Crescent in Ankara yesterday (Thursday) have made good progress toward the launch of a full appeal scheduled for the first half of next week. Meanwhile, support for Red Cross Red Crescent activities in the wake of the earthquake continues to grow. A leading global advertising agency is seeking to persuade media outlets in up to 25 countries around the world to offer free column space and air time for materials promoting the Red Cross Red Crescent operation in Turkey.

The context

On 17 August at 03h02 local time a massive earthquake measuring between 7.4 and 7.8 on the Richter scale and lasting 45 seconds hit northwestern Turkey. Hundreds of aftershocks have since been reported, some exceeding five on the Richter scale. Izmit, an industrial city of one million in western Turkey, was nearest the epicentre. But the force of the tremor was felt as far away as Ankara, the capital, some 500 km to the east, and across parts of the Balkans. Geophysicists described the quake as one of the most powerful this century, nearly rivalling the 7.9 magnitude earthquake that devastated San Francisco in 1906.

The Turkish government declared a state of emergency and requested international assistance. The International Federation first issued an Alert on 17 August, and at the request of the Turkish Red Crescent Society (TRCS) followed up by launching a Preliminary Appeal to support the Society's emergency relief operation. Following discussions this week with the TRCS leadership, though subject to confirmation with the Turkish government, a full appeal will be launched in the first half of next week.

Update

Latest official reports put the confirmed death toll at 14,559 and more than 24,000 injured. Statistics from the ongoing damage assessment include: 21,992 homes destroyed, 36,308 damaged/not habitable and 38,113 damaged but habitable; 1,132 businesses are collapsed, 400 businesses damaged/not usable and 415 businesses damaged but usable. Business assessments have just begun in Istanbul and Yalova,

but not in other areas. Of the total Education Ministry affiliated schools in the affected area, four are collapsed and 506 damaged (61 heavily, 91 moderately and 350 lightly). The Education minister has reiterated that primary and secondary education in the area will start on 13 September in line with the rest of the country, adding that prefabricated structures would be built if necessary. Summary statistics for the effects of the quake are as follows:

Province	Dead	Injured	Houses Destroyed	Houses Damaged/ Not habitable	Houses Damaged/ Can be lived in
Bolu	264	1,163	2,214	1,426	1,527
Bursa	253	451	3	127	476
Eskisehir	33	98	61	44	255
Istanbul	973	3,538	628	11076	14,934
Kocaeli/Izmit*	4,083	4,149	4,701	19259	20,894
Golcuk	3,833	5,064	--*	--*	--*
Sakarya/Adapazari	2,626	5,084	4,337	433	TBD
Tekirdag	--	35	--	2	TBD
Yalova	2,491	4,472	10,041	TBD	23
Zonguldak	3	26	7	45	4
TOTALS	14,559	24,093	21,992	36,308	38,113

* *Kocaeli/Izmit includes Golcuk counts for homes damaged*

According to local media reports, there are now 62 tent cities, comprising 78,300 tents which are home for 65,000 families living in the earthquake affected area. However, thousands have migrated back to other areas of Turkey, especially the southeast and Black Sea regions. The reverse migration includes those who had come to the newly industrialised region within the past few years for job opportunities. Women and children have been the first to leave, with men remaining to salvage personal items from the rubble of their homes. In Adapazari, the governor's office reports that 1,750 families (some 9,275 people) have left. The Yalova local authority reports that 8,100 people have moved away, while 14,250 people have left the Izmit area. There are increasing numbers of children from the epicentre of earthquake zone registering in Istanbul schools.

The Health Ministry is deploying teams of experts to tent cities and health centres in an effort to provide psycho-social support services to the earthquake victims. A 100-person team is being sent into the earthquake affected areas to administer a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) screening survey. Respondents who report high levels of PTSD symptoms will be advised of counselling facilities. The information from the survey will be discussed at a symposium planned by the province of Istanbul Health Directorate and Bakirday hospital. The PTSD screening questionnaire appeared in Hurriyet newspaper, with contact information for hospitals and clinics offering psychiatric counselling.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Turkish Red Crescent •

In tent cities being managed by the TRCS, field kitchens, latrines and large containers of water for bathing have been installed. Spontaneous donations of relief goods by the Turkish public have helped tremendously in the aid effort. At the Turkish Red Crescent camp for 6,000 displaced persons in Yalova, distribution efforts by private companies and individuals helped cover food needs until a proper kitchen could be set up. Meanwhile, the Society's branch network has pulled together in strong solidarity. Volunteers travel each day from their homes outside the disaster zone, often bringing food and other materials in their own transport.

Since the emergency began the TRCS has performed rapid co-ordination of customs clearance, transport and some delivery of Red Cross Red Crescent relief aid. The Society has distributed some 35,000 tents and about 70,000 blankets, set up several camps for thousands of homeless and provided hot meals and drinking water in the camps and throughout the quake area.

Health •

Needs assessment: The key points of a health needs assessment report - presented by a specialist team from the American Red Cross and the health studies branch of the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention, working under the umbrella of the International Federation - were made available earlier this week. In preparing the report, interviews were carried out on 23-24 August involving 230 household representatives of families living in informal accommodation outside the established tent cities being managed by the Turkish Red Crescent. The findings match those of an earlier Federation assessment which concentrated on the TRCS camps.

Approximately 40% of homes of people included in this later survey had been destroyed and were uninhabitable, 49% were damaged but were felt by respondents to be 'habitable', and 12% had not been damaged at all. At the time of the interviews, 84% were living in makeshift shelters, 13% were living in shelters provided by government or relief organisations, and 3% had other forms of shelter.

In response to the question regarding 'greatest immediate need', shelter was the most frequent answer (37%), including short-term requirements (tents) as well as medium and long-term solutions (prefabricated housing); food (23%) and hygiene needs (19%) were also regularly mentioned.

The team found that many people are living outdoors out of fear of returning to apartments that they consider still unsafe. People living outdoors often return to their damaged homes to meet basic needs, such as using the bathroom. These can be a potentially dangerous situations, especially if the home has not been inspected and deemed safe. More than two weeks after the earthquake, shelter, food, hygiene, sanitation, and supply of medications for chronic disease remain important public health needs in this population.

Japanese Red Cross: The Society's medical team at the Uzunciftlik field hospital near Izmit has treated over 305 patients from 23-28 August. The hospital itself was set up by and is managed by the Turkish Red Crescent Society and treated about 2,000 patients in total during the same period. Half of the patients were seeking treatment for injuries caused by the earthquake, another 17% received follow-up from first aid given in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, and 33% comprised other cases. The hospital has four field tents with areas for surgery, internal medicine, paediatrics, a mobile x-ray unit and two TRCS ambulances. The hospital started operation on 18 August and is open 24-hours. The Japanese team of two doctors, three nurses and one co-ordinator will continue at the hospital until 6 September.

Federation •

Senior Federation representatives met with the leadership of the Turkish Red Crescent in Ankara yesterday to finalise the framework for Red Cross Red Crescent operations in Turkey in preparation for the launch of a full appeal, scheduled for the first half of next week. Among the components for which funds will be sought are: shelter, health activities, water and sanitation, food and clothing (local purchase), social welfare and replenishment of TRCS disaster preparedness stocks.

The Federation has set up offices in the sixth floor of the Istanbul directorate building of the Turkish Red Crescent Society at: Nuzhetiye Caddesi Derya Dil Sokak, No. 1, Besiktas, Istanbul. Telephone: (90) 212 236-7902; Fax: (90) 212 236-7711.

PNS Coordination •

A delegate from the Irish Red Cross with lengthy experience in crisis situations began his mission at the weekend, working as the International Federation's PNS coordinator in Turkey.

Global fundraising •

As noted in previous situation reports, the Federation has received and accepted approaches from global media wishing to support its Turkey earthquake operation through various complimentary publicity initiatives. A leading international advertising agency, Saatchi & Saatchi, has now approached the Federation offering to prepare a print and broadcast promotional campaign for Red Cross Red Crescent activities in the wake of the disaster and encouraging its affiliates in 25 countries to seek free placement of these materials in their respective media. This initiative will be run at no cost to the Red Cross Red Crescent.

Funds collected will be channelled only through the relevant National Society, unless it prefers otherwise - and all funds must be utilised for Red Cross Red Crescent Turkey earthquake programmes. Obviously there is no obligation whatsoever for any National Society approached by the agency to participate in the campaign; conversely it is possible that individual Saatchi and Saatchi affiliates themselves may not wish to pursue the opportunity. The International Federation has written to National Societies in those countries potentially to be targeted by Saatchi and Saatchi explaining the position.

Meanwhile, a total of IR£270,000 has already been donated to the Federation appeal by the Irish Red Cross which continues to receive donations from the Irish public. On Thursday 2 September an additional pledge of IR£300,000 was forwarded to the Federation. Today (Friday), the Irish Red Cross confirmed that total donations from the public to the Turkish Earthquake Appeal Fund now stands at approximately IR£700,000.

Further fundraising campaigns are also being organised by the Liechtenstein Red Cross and the Hong Kong branch of the Red Cross Society of China.

Outstanding needs

A list of needs will be reflected in the full appeal, whose content and direction will be finalised in the coming days. In the meantime, please refer to previous situation reports, though chemical toilets are no longer required.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details

For further information please contact the following:

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