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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

MEDIA ADVISORY

WASHINGTON, DC 20523
<http://www.info.usaid.gov>

PRESS OFFICE
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99-52

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Laura Gross or Rekha Chalasani
Wednesday, April 21, 1999

USAID ANNOUNCES PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGN TO HELP VICTIMS OF KOSOVO

Washington, DC – The U.S. Agency for International (USAID) has produced a 30-second television and radio Public Service Announcement featuring First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton to encourage those who want to help the refugees of Kosovo to call 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. President Clinton announced the special toll-free phone number on April 6. The PSA highlights the tragic humanitarian situation in the Balkans and underscores the need for financial contributions to non-governmental organizations working in the region.

In the PSA Mrs. Clinton says, "Thousands of Americans are reaching out to help the refugees of Kosovo. Relief workers, members of our armed forces, and concerned citizens everywhere are helping innocent people who have been driven from their homes and are in desperate need of food, shelter and care. The best way to help is through financial contributions. Help give life and hope to the Kosovo refugees. Please call 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. Thank you very much."

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The PSA has been endorsed by Ruth Wooden, President of the Ad Council, who is encouraging stations to run it.

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For hard copy, please contact Mary Felder at 202-712-4330. All other questions, please call the USAID press office at 202-712-4320.

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**USAID KOSOVO RELIEF PSA
WITH FIRST LADY HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
APRIL 1999**

TV SPOT

**THOUSANDS OF AMERICANS ARE REACHING OUT TO
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**RELIEF WORKERS, MEMBERS OF OUR ARMED FORCES,
AND CONCERNED CITIZENS EVERYWHERE ARE
HELPING INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN
DRIVEN FROM THEIR HOMES AND ARE IN DESPERATE
NEED OF FOOD, SHELTER AND CARE.**

**THE BEST WAY TO HELP IS THROUGH FINANCIAL
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**HELP GIVE LIFE AND HOPE TO THE KOSOVO
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PLEASE CALL 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

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**FIRST LADY TO BRIEF BUSINESS COMMUNITY ON
KOSOVO HUMANITARIAN RELIEF EFFORT
AND APPEAL FOR SUPPORT**

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1999

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On April 5th, President Clinton announced J. Brian Atwood, Administrator for USAID as the Chairman of the Coordinating Council for Humanitarian Relief in Kosovo. The Council includes: Julia Taft, Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration, General James McDuffie of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and James Lee Witt, Director of FEMA.

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Harriet C. Babbitt, Deputy Administrator for USAID
James Lee Witt, Director of FEMA
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- WHAT:** Corporate Community Briefing on Humanitarian Relief in Kosovo
- WHEN:** Wednesday, April 21, 1999 at 2:00 PM
Pre-Set - 1:00 PM
Final Access - 1:45 PM
- WHERE:** Presidential Hall (OEOP Room 450)
- NOTE:** Media who wish to cover this event should contact the First Lady's Press Office at 202-456-2960 for clearance.

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What's New?

Kosovo: Humanitarian Crisis

1-800-USAID-RELIEF

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 21, 1999

Contact: Rekha Chalasani or
Tyler Beardsley

**U.S. AIRLIFTS FOOD AID FOR KOSOVAR CHILDREN AND
ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES**

Washington, DC – First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, at a White House briefing today for corporate community leaders on the Kosovo humanitarian relief effort, announced the provision of \$5.4 million in additional food assistance and supplies to meet the needs of the Kosovar refugees in Macedonia and Albania.

The food assistance and supplies were provided through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and have already begun to arrive in the region. The food assistance for children includes 1,000 metric tons (MTs) of corn soya-blend to feed 489,777 children under the age of six for one month. Due to emergency need in Tirana, Albania 76 MTs of corn soya blend were airlifted aboard two U.S. DC-8 airplanes, arriving on Wednesday and Thursday, April 21st and 22nd. The remaining 924 MTs are due to arrive by ocean transport for delivery over the next 60 days.

Additionally, USAID food assistance includes 3,000 MTs of rice, 420 MTs of vegetable oil, and 100 MTs (4,520 bars) of high protein biscuits, 51 MTs of which arrived by airlift in April 7, in Albania and Macedonia for those deportees arriving at border stations. The rice will meet the needs of 250,000 people for one month and the vegetable oil will meet the needs of 420,000 people over one month. The total value of the above food assistance is \$4 million and will be provided the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP). The vulnerable groups targeted to receive this latest U.S. food aid include refugees in camps or sheltered by host families.

USAID commodity assistance includes 40,000 blankets and 1,260 tents from USAID's stockpile in New Windsor, MD. These supplies, valued at \$940,220 (including transport), were airlifted to Skopje, Macedonia and arrived on April 20, 1999. Supplies from USAID's Pisa, Italy stockpile, will be trucked into Skopje and Tirana this week, include 15,200 water jugs, 30,000 hygiene kits, 800 rolls of plastic sheeting and fifteen 3,000 gallon collapsible water tanks valued at \$483,474. The total values these supplies is equal to \$1.4 million.

-MORE-

Page 2 of 2, USAID RELEASE: First Lady Announces Food aid for Kosovar Children

USAID is currently providing humanitarian food aid support through WFP, Catholic Relief Services, Mercy Corps International and the American Red Cross in Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Montenegro. Prior to the onset of NATO airstrikes, and the Serbian deportation of Kosovars, USAID had pre-positioned 38,000 metric tons of food assistance in the region to feed 500,000 people over a period of three months. Previously provided food assistance through USAID totals \$28.5 million for the region as part of the \$156 million humanitarian assistance package for 1999.

USAID is currently positioning additional food assistance at U.S. ports for shipment to the Balkans and humanitarian agencies caring for the Kosovar refugees. J. Brian Atwood, Administrator for USAID, was appointed by President Clinton as the Chairman for the President's Coordinating Council for Humanitarian Relief for Kosovo. USAID is the lead U.S. government coordinating agency for foreign disasters and humanitarian response worldwide.

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Wednesday, April 21, 1999

U.S. GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN KOSOVO SINCE MARCH 1998

Financial Support

U.S. Agency for International Development/Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) \$53,046,551

Includes: *USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)* \$29,720,937
 USAID/Food For Peace (FFP) \$22,100,000
 USAID/Office of Transition Initiative (OTI) \$1,100,000

Department of State/Population Refugee and Migration (PRM) \$55,348,671

Department of Defense/Peace Keeping and Humanitarian Assistance(PK/HA) \$47,949,000

Total U.S.G. Assistance committed to the Kosovo crisis from 3/98 to date: \$156,344,222

Background

- Since the beginning of the conflict in Kosovo in March 1998, the USG has provided over \$178 million to respond to the humanitarian needs relating to the crisis in Kosovo.
- On March 31, President Clinton announced a package of \$50 million in aid to address the urgent humanitarian needs of those affected by the conflict in Kosovo. Of this amount \$25 million went to the Emergency Refugee and Migration Account (ERMA) administered by the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) and is to be disbursed to UNHCR and other international entities involved in the relief effort. The other \$25 million is comprised of supplies and services from the Department of Defense, including relief materials, shelter, and food. To date, \$29,438,052 of the \$50 million has been spent. The remaining \$20.56 million will be spent by State/PRM on the relief effort.
- The USG has also requested a supplemental allowance from Congress for humanitarian assistance in response to the Kosovo crisis. This request amounts to \$291 million.

NOTE: Please refer to current fact sheet for additional details.

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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

KOSOVO CRISIS

Factsheet # 32

April 21, 1999

Past Factsheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at: http://www.info.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html

Highlights:

Regional

- UNHCR has asked all European countries who have agreed to take in refugees to prepare to receive them.
- UNHCR and the World Food Program (WFP) in Bosnia are coordinating closely and making contingency plans for a possible influx of 100,000 new refugees from Kosovo, Sandzak (in southwest Serbia) and other parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

Refugees/Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Kosovo

Country	Total Refugees	Entries in last 24 hrs	Departures
Albania	357,000	2,000	None
Macedonia	130,000	3,000	600
Montenegro	70,000	None	2000 to Albania (4/20)

**All numbers are estimates from UNHCR Headquarters. These numbers are constantly changing and being verified.*

UNHCR Humanitarian Evacuations (beginning April 6 to date)

Receiving Country	Number of Refugees
Austria	324
Belgium	517
France	348
Germany	9,974
Israel	106
Norway	1,104
Poland	545
Turkey	1,869
Others (Iceland, Switzerland)	56
TOTAL	14,843**

****** Some refugees were moved to third countries prior to April 6 by the Government of Macedonia: 10,000 were moved to Albania, 5,500 to Greece, and 1,980 to Turkey. Another 88 were sent to Croatia under a bilateral agreement between the Government of Macedonia and the Government of Croatia.

Montenegro

- UNHCR reports that an estimated 70,000 displaced people from Kosovo are now in Montenegro. According to UNHCR, security for IDPs from Kosovo just inside the Montenegrin border has worsened.
- WFP has begun delivering flour to bakeries in Podgorica and Plav so that bread is available for newly arrived IDPs. WFP is planning to begin bread production in Rozaje as well. Mercy Corps International is currently providing flour to bakeries in Ulcinj for the production of 14,500 loaves a day for newly arrived refugees and children in collective centers.

Albania

- UNHCR headquarters estimates a total of 357,000 refugees in Albania, 2000 of whom have entered from Montenegro in the last 24 hours at the Hani I Hotit crossing. 15 refugees have entered Albania from Kosovo on April 20. According to the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) the FRY border with Albania at Morina remains open.

- Approximately 126,600 refugees remain in Albania's northern districts. The Government of Albania (GOA) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that 6,900 refugees were transferred from the north on April 20. NATO is leading efforts to transfer refugees to locations farther south.
- The DART reports that a dual plan to continue the transfer of refugees from the north to the south, and to increase the shelter capacity in northern Albania, is underway. Poor weather conditions have hampered the ability to move refugees inside the country. Moving fewer refugees than anticipated has resulted in the increased need for shelter construction in the northern region.
- UNHCR headquarters reports that there are a total of 48 refugee campsites throughout Albania.
- The GOA has identified nine new sites for NATO-led refugee transfer efforts. These sites have a planned capacity of 22,000 refugees. Proposed sites and capacities are listed below:
 - Diber -- 4,000
 - Lezha -- 2,000
 - Elbasan -- 2,000
 - Korce -- 3,000
 - Berati -- 3,000
 - Fier -- 2,000
 - Vlora I -- 2,000
 - Vlora II -- 2,000
 - Gjirokastra -- 2,000
- U.S. Government (USG) personnel from the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Embassy, and the DART are coordinating with the GOA and the GOA-led Emergency Management Group (EMG) to find a location for potential U.S. campsites.
- Security in northern Albania is still a concern. Shelling by FRY forces continues in the Has District, heavy fighting was reported near Kruma, and activity from local criminal groups was reported in Kukës.
- Customs delays have hindered the offloading of humanitarian cargo at Durrës port. The GOA has reportedly agreed to help to expedite the process.
- WFP in Albania reports that trucking facilities are in place, and the commodity pipeline is beginning to take shape, its focus is on "organizing" its implementing partners. A food coordination meeting was held yesterday to discuss the need for reliable refugee and host family registration, standardized registration cards, and standard host family rations.

Macedonia

- UNHCR headquarters estimates that there are 130,000 refugees currently in Macedonia.
- 3,000 refugees were allowed into the country at the Lojane border crossing, where they had been waiting in no man's land for two days. 800 of these refugees were taken to the new transit camp at Blace, and the remaining 2,200 were taken to Stankovac I and II.
- According to UNHCR, a train from Uroševac arrived at the Blace border crossing, reportedly with 350 - 450 people aboard. Only those with valid travel documents, approximately 150, were allowed into Macedonia. The others reportedly returned to Uroševac.
- UNHCR has not been able to deliver supplies to the mountain village of Male Malina, just inside the Macedonian border with Kosovo, where some 6,000 refugees arrived over the weekend and on Monday. These refugees have not been formally admitted into Macedonia.
- **Camp details:** According to NATO all camps are filled to capacity. Numbers below are becoming more refined as UNHCR registration continues.
 - Stankovac I (Brazda): 25,100 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Stankovac II: 12,300 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Radusa: an estimated 1,500 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Bojane: an estimated 3,200 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Neprosteno: an estimated 4,200 refugees (4/19). Lack of sanitation facilities is a serious problem.
 - Senokos (15 km east of Tetovo): OSCE and MCI report 833 refugees in the camp (4/19).

Background:

- *In late February 1998, following an unprecedented series of clashes in Kosovo between Serbian police forces and members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), Serbian police raided villages in Kosovo's Drenica region,*

a KLA stronghold. The police reportedly burned homes and killed dozens of ethnic Albanians in these raids. Thousands of ethnic Albanians in Pristina protested Serb police actions, and were subsequently attacked by the police with tear gas, water cannons, and clubs.

- As a result of the fighting, thousands of Kosovar Albanians were displaced from their homes, many taking refuge with host families, while a smaller proportion (several thousand) took to the hills and forests.

USG Humanitarian Assistance:

Commodities

- USAID/OFDA has provided over \$3.5 million in commodities in response to humanitarian needs in Macedonia and Albania since March 24.

Financial Support

- To date the USG has provided over \$178 million in response to the Kosovo crisis, beginning in March 1998.

USAID/BHR.....	\$53,046,551
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Public Donation Information

- In the interest of effective coordination of such public response, we encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary donations to appropriate organizations. USAID does not recommend in-kind donations of clothing, food, medicines, or other goods as the handling, storage, and transport of these materials from the U.S. to the Balkans would be extremely complicated, time-consuming, and expensive.
- USAID encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) which are currently working in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina to provide monetary donations. Financial contributions to PVOs will allow these professional aid organizations to purchase exactly what is most needed by the victims of the conflict in Kosovo and to pay for transport and other costs associated with the distribution of relief supplies. Cash contributions allow humanitarian agencies based in the Balkans to procure food, medicine, clothing, shelter materials, and other relief goods locally and regionally, thereby greatly speeding the delivery of this assistance to those most in need.
- A list of PVOs that are currently working in, or have affiliates in, the Balkan countries may be obtained from the USAID website at www.info.usaid.gov. The list is composed of non-profit organizations that are registered with USAID and/or listed by InterAction, a coalition of voluntary humanitarian and development organizations that work overseas; InterAction can be contacted at 1-818-502-4288, or via the Internet at www.interaction.org. Those interested in providing specific technical relief services or commodities should contact Volunteers in Technical Assistance's (VITA) Disaster Information Center for information and guidelines (703) 276-1914.
- For more information, please contact the public donations hotline at 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. This hotline, which is staffed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 851 calls were received by the public donation hotline on April 20, through 12:00 a.m. EDT. A total of 38,926 calls have been received since April 6.
- Past USAID/OFDA Factsheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at the following URL: http://www.info.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html

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ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES**

Washington, DC – First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, at a White House briefing today for corporate community leaders on the Kosovo humanitarian relief effort, announced the provision of \$5.4 million in additional food assistance and supplies to meet the needs of the Kosovar refugees in Macedonia and Albania.

The food assistance and supplies were provided through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and have already begun to arrive in the region. The food assistance for children includes 1,000 metric tons (MTs) of corn soya-blend to feed 489,777 children under the age of six for one month. Due to emergency need in Tirana, Albania 76 MTs of corn soya blend were airlifted aboard two U.S. DC-8 airplanes, arriving on Wednesday and Thursday, April 21st and 22nd. The remaining 924 MTs are due to arrive by ocean transport for delivery over the next 60 days.

Additionally, USAID food assistance includes 3,000 MTs of rice, 420 MTs of vegetable oil, and 100 MTs (4,520 bars) of high protein biscuits, 51 MTs of which arrived by airlift in April 7, in Albania and Macedonia for those deportees arriving at border stations. The rice will meet the needs of 250,000 people for one month and the vegetable oil will meet the needs of 420,000 people over one month. The total value of the above food assistance is \$4 million and will be provided the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP). The vulnerable groups targeted to receive this latest U.S. food aid include refugees in camps or sheltered by host families.

USAID commodity assistance includes 40,000 blankets and 1,260 tents from USAID's stockpile in New Windsor, MD. These supplies, valued at \$940,220 (including transport), were airlifted to Skopje, Macedonia and arrived on April 20, 1999. Supplies from USAID's Pisa, Italy stockpile, will be trucked into Skopje and Tirana this week, include 15,200 water jugs, 30,000 hygiene kits, 800 rolls of plastic sheeting and fifteen 3,000 gallon collapsible water tanks valued at \$483,474. The total values these supplies is equal to \$1.4 million.

-MORE-

Page 2 of 2, USAID RELEASE: First Lady Announces Food aid for Kosovar Children

USAID is currently providing humanitarian food aid support through WFP, Catholic Relief Services, Mercy Corps International and the American Red Cross in Albania, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Montenegro. Prior to the onset of NATO airstrikes, and the Serbian deportation of Kosovars, USAID had pre-positioned 38,000 metric tons of food assistance in the region to feed 500,000 people over a period of three months. Previously provided food assistance through USAID totals \$28.5 million for the region as part of the \$156 million humanitarian assistance package for 1999.

USAID is currently positioning additional food assistance at U.S. ports for shipment to the Balkans and humanitarian agencies caring for the Kosovar refugees. J. Brian Atwood, Administrator for USAID, was appointed by President Clinton as the Chairman for the President's Coordinating Council for Humanitarian Relief for Kosovo. USAID is the lead U.S. government coordinating agency for foreign disasters and humanitarian response worldwide.

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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FACT SHEET

WASHINGTON, DC 20523
<http://www.info.usaid.gov>

PRESS OFFICE
(202) 712-4320

99-53

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, April 21, 1999

U.S. GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN KOSOVO SINCE MARCH 1998

Financial Support

U.S. Agency for International Development/Bureau for Humanitarian Response (BHR) \$53,046,551

Includes: *USAID/Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)* \$29,720,937
 USAID/Food For Peace (FFP) \$22,100,000
 USAID/Office of Transition Initiative (OTI) \$1,100,000

Department of State/Population Refugee and Migration (PRM) \$55,348,671

Department of Defense/Peace Keeping and Humanitarian Assistance(PK/HA) \$47,949,000

Total U.S.G. Assistance committed to the Kosovo crisis from 3/98 to date: \$156,344,222

Background

- Since the beginning of the conflict in Kosovo in March 1998, the USG has provided over \$178 million to respond to the humanitarian needs relating to the crisis in Kosovo.
- On March 31, President Clinton announced a package of \$50 million in aid to address the urgent humanitarian needs of those affected by the conflict in Kosovo. Of this amount \$25 million went to the Emergency Refugee and Migration Account (ERMA) administered by the State Department's Bureau for Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) and is to be disbursed to UNHCR and other international entities involved in the relief effort. The other \$25 million is comprised of supplies and services from the Department of Defense, including relief materials, shelter, and food. To date, \$29,438,052 of the \$50 million has been spent. The remaining \$20.56 million will be spent by State/PRM on the relief effort.
- The USG has also requested a supplemental allowance from Congress for humanitarian assistance in response to the Kosovo crisis. This request amounts to \$291 million.

NOTE: Please refer to current fact sheet for additional details.

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U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

KOSOVO CRISIS

Factsheet # 32

April 21, 1999

Past Factsheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at: http://www.info.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html

Highlights:

Regional

- UNHCR has asked all European countries who have agreed to take in refugees to prepare to receive them.
- UNHCR and the World Food Program (WFP) in Bosnia are coordinating closely and making contingency plans for a possible influx of 100,000 new refugees from Kosovo, Sandzak (in southwest Serbia) and other parts of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY).

Refugees/Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Kosovo

Country	Total Refugees	Entries in last 24 hrs	Departures
Albania	357,000	2,000	None
Macedonia	130,000	3,000	600
Montenegro	70,000	None	2000 to Albania (4/20)

**All numbers are estimates from UNHCR Headquarters. These numbers are constantly changing and being verified.*

UNHCR Humanitarian Evacuations (beginning April 6 to date)

Receiving Country	Number of Refugees
Austria	324
Belgium	517
France	348
Germany	9,974
Israel	106
Norway	1,104
Poland	545
Turkey	1,869
Others (Iceland, Switzerland)	56
TOTAL	14,843**

****** Some refugees were moved to third countries prior to April 6 by the Government of Macedonia: 10,000 were moved to Albania, 5,500 to Greece, and 1,980 to Turkey. Another 88 were sent to Croatia under a bilateral agreement between the Government of Macedonia and the Government of Croatia.

Montenegro

- UNHCR reports that an estimated 70,000 displaced people from Kosovo are now in Montenegro. According to UNHCR, security for IDPs from Kosovo just inside the Montenegrin border has worsened.
- WFP has begun delivering flour to bakeries in Podgorica and Plav so that bread is available for newly arrived IDPs. WFP is planning to begin bread production in Rozaje as well. Mercy Corps International is currently providing flour to bakeries in Ulcinj for the production of 14,500 loaves a day for newly arrived refugees and children in collective centers.

Albania

- UNHCR headquarters estimates a total of 357,000 refugees in Albania, 2000 of whom have entered from Montenegro in the last 24 hours at the Hani I Hotit crossing. 15 refugees have entered Albania from Kosovo on April 20. According to the USAID Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) the FRY border with Albania at Morina remains open.

- Approximately 126,600 refugees remain in Albania's northern districts. The Government of Albania (GOA) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that 6,900 refugees were transferred from the north on April 20. NATO is leading efforts to transfer refugees to locations farther south.
- The DART reports that a dual plan to continue the transfer of refugees from the north to the south, and to increase the shelter capacity in northern Albania, is underway. Poor weather conditions have hampered the ability to move refugees inside the country. Moving fewer refugees than anticipated has resulted in the increased need for shelter construction in the northern region.
- UNHCR headquarters reports that there are a total of 48 refugee campsites throughout Albania.
- The GOA has identified nine new sites for NATO-led refugee transfer efforts. These sites have a planned capacity of 22,000 refugees. Proposed sites and capacities are listed below:
 - Diber -- 4,000
 - Lezha -- 2,000
 - Elbasan -- 2,000
 - Korce -- 3,000
 - Berati -- 3,000
 - Fier -- 2,000
 - Vlora I -- 2,000
 - Vlora II -- 2,000
 - Gjirokastra -- 2,000
- U.S. Government (USG) personnel from the Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Embassy, and the DART are coordinating with the GOA and the GOA-led Emergency Management Group (EMG) to find a location for potential U.S. campsites.
- Security in northern Albania is still a concern. Shelling by FRY forces continues in the Has District, heavy fighting was reported near Kruma, and activity from local criminal groups was reported in Kukës.
- Customs delays have hindered the offloading of humanitarian cargo at Durrës port. The GOA has reportedly agreed to help to expedite the process.
- WFP in Albania reports that trucking facilities are in place, and the commodity pipeline is beginning to take shape, its focus is on "organizing" its implementing partners. A food coordination meeting was held yesterday to discuss the need for reliable refugee and host family registration, standardized registration cards, and standard host family rations.

Macedonia

- UNHCR headquarters estimates that there are 130,000 refugees currently in Macedonia.
- 3,000 refugees were allowed into the country at the Lojane border crossing, where they had been waiting in no man's land for two days. 800 of these refugees were taken to the new transit camp at Blace, and the remaining 2,200 were taken to Stankovac I and II.
- According to UNHCR, a train from Uroševac arrived at the Blace border crossing, reportedly with 350 - 450 people aboard. Only those with valid travel documents, approximately 150, were allowed into Macedonia. The others reportedly returned to Uroševac.
- UNHCR has not been able to deliver supplies to the mountain village of Male Malina, just inside the Macedonian border with Kosovo, where some 6,000 refugees arrived over the weekend and on Monday. These refugees have not been formally admitted into Macedonia.
- **Camp details:** According to NATO all camps are filled to capacity. Numbers below are becoming more refined as UNHCR registration continues.
 - Stankovac I (Brazda): 25,100 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Stankovac II: 12,300 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Radusa: an estimated 1,500 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Bojane: an estimated 3,200 refugees (as of 4/19).
 - Neprosteno: an estimated 4,200 refugees (4/19). Lack of sanitation facilities is a serious problem.
 - Senokos (15 km east of Tetovo): OSCE and MCI report 833 refugees in the camp (4/19).

Background:

- *In late February 1998, following an unprecedented series of clashes in Kosovo between Serbian police forces and members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), Serbian police raided villages in Kosovo's Drenica region,*

a KLA stronghold. The police reportedly burned homes and killed dozens of ethnic Albanians in these raids. Thousands of ethnic Albanians in Pristina protested Serb police actions, and were subsequently attacked by the police with tear gas, water cannons, and clubs.

- As a result of the fighting, thousands of Kosovar Albanians were displaced from their homes, many taking refuge with host families, while a smaller proportion (several thousand) took to the hills and forests.

USG Humanitarian Assistance:

Commodities

- USAID/OFDA has provided over \$3.5 million in commodities in response to humanitarian needs in Macedonia and Albania since March 24.

Financial Support

- To date the USG has provided over \$178 million in response to the Kosovo crisis, beginning in March 1998.

USAID/BHR.....	\$53,046,551
State/PRM.....	\$55,348,671
DOD.....	\$47,949,000
TOTAL.....	\$156,344,222

Public Donation Information

- In the interest of effective coordination of such public response, we encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary donations to appropriate organizations. USAID does not recommend in-kind donations of clothing, food, medicines, or other goods as the handling, storage, and transport of these materials from the U.S. to the Balkans would be extremely complicated, time-consuming, and expensive.
- USAID encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) which are currently working in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Bosnia-Herzegovina to provide monetary donations. Financial contributions to PVOs will allow these professional aid organizations to purchase exactly what is most needed by the victims of the conflict in Kosovo and to pay for transport and other costs associated with the distribution of relief supplies. Cash contributions allow humanitarian agencies based in the Balkans to procure food, medicine, clothing, shelter materials, and other relief goods locally and regionally, thereby greatly speeding the delivery of this assistance to those most in need.
- A list of PVOs that are currently working in, or have affiliates in, the Balkan countries may be obtained from the USAID website at www.info.usaid.gov. The list is composed of non-profit organizations that are registered with USAID and/or listed by InterAction, a coalition of voluntary humanitarian and development organizations that work overseas; InterAction can be contacted at 1-818-502-4288, or via the Internet at www.interaction.org. Those interested in providing specific technical relief services or commodities should contact Volunteers in Technical Assistance's (VITA) Disaster Information Center for information and guidelines (703) 276-1914.
- For more information, please contact the public donations hotline at 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. This hotline, which is staffed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is operational 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 851 calls were received by the public donation hotline on April 20, through 12:00 a.m. EDT. A total of 38,926 calls have been received since April 6.
- Past USAID/OFDA Factsheets can be obtained from the USAID web site at the following URL: http://www.info.usaid.gov/hum_response/ofda/situation.html



The White House





U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON, DC 20523
<http://hurricane.info.usaid.gov>

PRESS OFFICE
(202) 712-4320

98-176
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, November 23, 1998

Contact: Rekha Chalasani
or Jess Sarmiento

**USAID TO COORDINATE PUBLIC DONATIONS FOR CENTRAL AMERICA;
LAUNCHES PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGN**

Washington, DC -- Today, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced the launch of a public service campaign and 800 number, 800-USAID-RELIEF, to coordinate donations made by the American public on behalf of victims of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges in Central America and the Caribbean.

Also, today, two Public Service Announcements, one in English featuring Mrs. Tipper Gore, and one in Spanish featuring Major League baseball player Dennis Martinez, will begin airing, via television and radio, across the United States and Latin America to encourage viewers to call a public information line, 800-USAID-RELIEF, to learn how to best help meet the immediate needs of hurricane disaster victims.

A new Website has been created to provide the public with detailed information on the U.S. government response and public giving. The Website is linked to USAID's public site, www.info.usaid.gov and can be accessed independently through, <http://hurricane.info.usaid.gov>.

The generosity of the American public to the victims of Hurricane Mitch has been unprecedented. Individuals, local civic organizations, churches and corporations have all provided record donations of food, clothing, medicine, and services. However, this generosity has overwhelmed the capacity of the relief infrastructure in the United States and in the recipient countries. Therefore, USAID will take the lead in coordinating, with the Department of Defense and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), a domestic infrastructure, here in the United States, to channel publicly donated food and medicines for use abroad.

Hurricane Mitch was the most devastating natural disaster to strike the Western Hemisphere since the 1972 Nicaraguan earthquake. The United States government, through USAID, the Department of Defense and the Department of Agriculture, has responded to crisis by providing over \$265 million in relief services and supplies and emergency food aid. The current airlift of emergency food aid has surpassed the first weeks of the Berlin Airlift as the largest in history.

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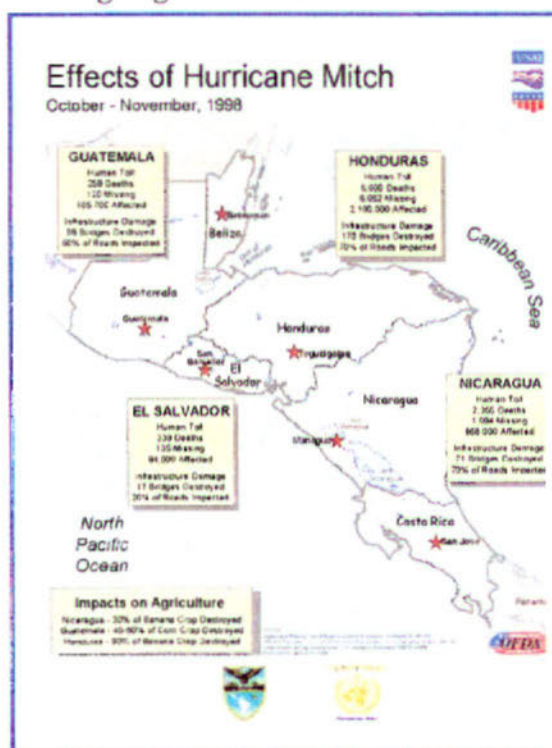


RONALD REAGAN BUILDING AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CENTER
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Public-Private Partnership for Central American Reconstruction: A Call to Action, will bring together key players from the for-profit and non-profit sectors, along with high-level U.S. Government officials, officials from the affected countries and multilateral donors to discuss plans for the reconstruction of Central America. Scheduled to immediately follow the Inter-American Development Bank's ministerial conference on Central American reconstruction, the conference is being planned to bring together key CEOs and COOs to join in partnership with the full range of U.S. executive branch departments and agencies.

- Housing
- Public Utilities
- Agriculture
- Health & Social services
- Transportation
- Public Finance

For further information, please call
USAID @ 202-712-4810.





U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

BUREAU FOR HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE (BHR)
OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE (OFDA)

Central America - Hurricane Mitch

Fact Sheet # 18a

November 23, 1998

Note: New material is underlined

Background: On October 24 Atlantic Tropical Storm Mitch was upgraded to a hurricane that developed into one of the strongest and most damaging storms to ever hit the Caribbean and Central America. At its height on October 26 and 27, the hurricane had sustained winds of 180 mph and dumped heavy rains over Central America. Although the winds diminished as Hurricane Mitch traveled inland over Honduras on October 30, the storm continued to produce torrential rains, reaching a rate of more than 4 inches per hour, which caused catastrophic floods and landslides throughout the region. After its slow, destructive march north and west across Honduras and Guatemala, Mitch dissipated over southeastern Mexico but briefly regained tropical storm strength as it moved northeasterly across Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, the Gulf of Mexico and southern Florida. By November 5 all tropical storm warnings were discontinued as Mitch's remnants tracked out into the Atlantic. Prior to Mitch making landfall, USAID/OFDA pre-positioned assets throughout the region along the storm's forecasted course, and quickly launched its emergency relief efforts as the hurricane passed overland. The USAID/OFDA Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) was established to coordinate the U.S. Government relief effort for Central America. Senior Regional Advisor and DART leader Paul Bell has managed the DART personnel and its operations in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua from the USAID/OFDA Regional Office at the U.S. Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica.

USG Assistance: On November 5, President Clinton announced a \$70 million assistance package for Central America in response to Hurricane Mitch. This package has been augmented and now totals \$263 million, to be channeled largely through USAID, the Department of Defense (DOD), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Of this package, \$30 million in assistance will be provided by USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), \$35 million by USAID/Food for Peace (USAID/FFP), \$130 million by DOD, \$63 million by USDA, and the remaining \$5 million will be for development assistance and micro-enterprise credits. The assistance by USAID will provide immediate disaster relief, including health and water/sanitation needs, food, shelter, and other emergency relief commodities as well as airlift support and logistics. USAID/OFDA assistance to date, described below, is part of this overall package, which is being closely coordinated with DOD.

Honduras: Honduras suffered the brunt of Hurricane Mitch. After being stalled for more than two days off the country's northern coast, the storm traveled inland during October 30 and 31. Extensive wind damage and devastating floods occurred nationwide, but particularly on the northern seaboard and in the Bay Islands. As of November 10, the National Emergency Committee of Honduras (CONEH) reported that 6,600 persons were killed, 8,052 were missing, 11,998 were injured while approximately 1.4 million were left homeless. The U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimated at least 70,000 houses had been damaged and the USAID/OFDA DART estimated that more than 92 bridges had been damaged or destroyed. Damage to the nation's infrastructure isolated entire communities which made access by emergency aid workers extremely difficult and it hampered efforts to supply the larger cities with food, water and other essentials. Additionally, press reports state that nearly 70 percent of crops were destroyed by Hurricane Mitch, with the U.S. Embassy reporting that much of the banana crop, grain fields and shrimp industry were devastated.

On October 27, the U.S. Ambassador to Honduras James F. Creagan declared a disaster due to the effects of Hurricane Mitch. USAID/OFDA responded immediately by providing a total of \$125,000 to the USAID Mission in Honduras for the local purchase and transport of critical relief supplies, including food, simple cooking stoves, blankets, and medical supplies. USAID/OFDA also provided a total of \$750,000 for the deployment of DOD aircraft to assist in overflight assessments, search and rescue operations, and delivery of relief supplies. Initially grounded by poor visibility, the USAID/OFDA-funded aircraft missions have been operating since November 1. As of November 18, 13 Black Hawk (UH-60 or MH-60) and 6 Chinook (CH-47) helicopters, and 2 C-27, 1 C-130 and 1 C-12 cargo planes are distributing relief supplies from Soto Cano airbase. USAID/OFDA has deployed a total of 1,038 rolls of plastic sheeting, thirty-two 10,000-liter water

bladders, 25,500 five-gallon water jugs, and 1,004 body bags to Honduras at a total estimated cost of \$423,999 including transport. The first airlift carrying USAID/OFDA relief supplies arrived at La Ceiba on October 31, the second arrived at Soto Cano airbase on November 1, the third airlift arrived at Soto Cano on November 2, the fourth arrived at Soto Cano on November 9, and the fifth arrived at Tegucigalpa on November 22. Supplemental relief commodities were transported by DOD on November 9 and 10. To date, USAID/OFDA has provided \$400,000 to the USAID Mission for the local purchase of food and emergency supplies, and for other response activities. Additionally, USAID/OFDA has provided \$800,000 to the USAID Mission, which will grant funding to resident PVOs in Honduras for the purchase and delivery of local relief supplies. USAID/OFDA has also purchased and airlifted plastic food storage bags from Costa Rica that will allow for the distribution of critical food stocks to 100,000 families in Honduras. USAID/OFDA has provided \$2 million to USAID in Tegucigalpa to fund projects to repair the nation's water supply system. On November 20, USAID/OFDA provided \$2,133,000 through USAID/Tegucigalpa to CARE to assist approximately 70,000 families for up to four months with basic livelihood needs such as: sanitation and health, agriculture, construction, food and shelter.

USAID/OFDA has had disaster specialists on the ground in Honduras since October 27. Disaster specialists from USAID, Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Department (Miami-Dade), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) have operated out of Tegucigalpa, San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba, Danli, Choluteca and Soto Cano airbase. USAID/OFDA personnel in Honduras have assisted CONEH's Emergency Operations Center, conducted field assessments, coordinated aircraft and transport logistics, and performed other disaster relief activities. As of November 20, there are four USAID/OFDA DART members operating in Honduras.

USAID/OFDA DART assessments indicate that the most heavily affected areas in Honduras include the Bay Islands of Guanaja, Roatan and Utila, and the cities of La Ceiba, Tocoa, Trujillo, San Pedro Sula, Tegucigalpa and Choluteca. In the Bay Islands initial relief efforts focused on providing shelter and water carrying capacity, then shifted to the delivery of emergency food supplies. As of November 8, no further emergency relief assistance is required in the Bay Islands. In the Valle del Aguan region, the road transportation network is largely open allowing sufficient food and water distribution. However, as of November 16 there were still large numbers of people residing in shelters, especially in Santa Rosa del Aguan.

As of November 12 the USAID/OFDA DART continues to provide food, plastic sheeting for shelter, and water carrying supplies to residents. Also, the DART is providing air transport for other agencies carrying critical relief supplies to this area. Overland access to San Pedro Sula has been restored and no further emergency response action is anticipated. Overland access between La Ceiba and San Pedro Sula has also been restored, and all forms of traffic are reaching Tegucigalpa. The DART reports that the towns of Danli and El Paraiso are still inaccessible by road, and there are over 12,000 displaced persons with no emergency shelter in the region. The DART conducted an assessment in Catacamas, and concluded there are still persons without shelter in the region, 50-70% of the crops had been lost, and health supplies are sufficient for at least the next 30 days. Overland transportation in the area is still severely limited so airlifts of supplies will continue. USAID/OFDA delivered shelter materials for up to 90 displaced families in Catacamas and over 12 tons of food were delivered on November 16. After multiple deliveries of food, fuel, water and medical supplies to La Mosquitia region, no further emergency assistance is anticipated. To address short-term food requirements USAID/Tegucigalpa has established two strategic food reserves located at CARE warehouses in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. A recent DART assessment in Nacaome reported four cases of hemorrhagic dengue and that 50% of the sampled population tested positive for Malaria. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) was alerted to the health situation and will send a team to the region. The DART has recommended potable water programs for Nacaome as water systems and electricity have not functioned since October 30.

All major airports in the country are operational, and most ports are open with the exception of Trujillo and Guanaja, while Puerto Castilla is partially functional. Further, as most of the major roads are functioning, the need for aircraft transport is diminishing. It has been noted, however, that while the reconstruction of major paved roads has been given priority, the repair of secondary roads has been neglected. The rehabilitation of unpaved roads has been identified as critical need to the country's economic revival. Further, a detailed food security assessment is being carried out jointly by several organizations operating in the country.

The DART priority continues to be the delivery of supplies, food, water, and shelter to targeted populations. The Government of Honduras indicates that their assistance priorities are for medications and immunizations, information dissemination, disease control, bridging, shelter, latrines and field sanitation, food, and heavy construction.

Nicaragua: Mitch inflicted its greatest damage in Nicaragua through severe rains that caused extensive flooding and landslides. As of November 12, the Nicaraguan National Defense System estimated that 2,362 people had died and 970 were missing, many as a result of a large mudslide that inundated ten communities situated at the base of the Casitas Volcano, and that 867,752 people were displaced nationwide. A Nicaraguan transportation official reported as of November 6 that 71 bridges are either destroyed or heavily damaged, and OCHA estimated that 70% of roads were impassable immediately after the storm. On November 12, the Government of Nicaragua estimated that more than 30,000 houses in Nicaragua were either totally or partially destroyed.

On October 29, U.S. Ambassador to Nicaragua Lino Gutierrez declared a disaster due to continued flooding. USAID/OFDA has provided \$175,000 for the local purchase and transport of critical relief supplies, including medicines, food and shelter material. On November 2, USAID/OFDA provided \$250,000 for the deployment of DOD UH-60 and CH-47 helicopters to assist with search and rescue efforts and the delivery of relief supplies. As of November 18, 5 UH-60 and 5 CH-47 helicopters are operating in Nicaragua. Airlifts of USAID/OFDA relief supplies to Nicaragua, consisted of 679 rolls of plastic sheeting, 10,000 polyester blankets, 4,000 wool blankets, three 10,000-gallon water bladders, and 15,500 five-gallon water jugs, at a total estimated cost of \$419,267 including transport. The first airlift arrived in Managua on November 4, a second on November 8, and a third on November 19. On November 19, USAID/OFDA provided \$4 million to USAID/Managua to fund relief grants to reduce hunger and the threat of disease for thousands of victims in rural areas.

USAID/OFDA has operated in Nicaragua since October 29. The DART personnel from USAID, Miami-Dade, and DOD have conducted assessments, assisted national search and rescue operations, and performed other response activities. As of November 18, five USAID/OFDA DART members are posted in Nicaragua.

The November 12 assessment report from the USAID/OFDA DART indicates that emergency relief efforts are expected to continue for the next one to two weeks. The areas most affected were the northwestern Pacific coast, the north-central region and the northeastern Atlantic coast. The northwest is largely accessible by road and relief supplies have been widely distributed. The north-central and northeastern areas are still accessible only by helicopter and airlifts to both regions continue. In-depth damage assessments of the northwest have been difficult due to the region's remote location and lack of previously existing infrastructure. The DART informs that the management of the relief effort has been well coordinated by the Government of Nicaragua, and the warehouse system in Managua is operating extremely well. Additionally, all of the country's ports are reported to be open. Continued support for air transport during the emergency relief phase, and continued assessments of isolated areas, remain priorities. Short-term food stocks are adequate, but the lack of air transport has limited its distribution. Secondary to disaster response, planning for rehabilitation and mitigation programs are beginning. On November 12 and 13 a new assessment of bridges and roads was conducted by the Nicaragua government, DOD and OFDA representatives. Recommendations for reconstruction assistance will be forthcoming. Further, USAID/OFDA is currently reviewing relief assistance proposals for Nicaragua that include primarily agricultural and health projects.

Guatemala: The storm moved northwestward across Guatemala on November 1, causing heavy rains and severe flooding. The national emergency office (CONRED) took steps to evacuate 5,969 people prior to the storm's arrival. The Red Cross estimated that 27,000 people were still housed in shelters as of November 4. As of November 9, officials reported a total of 258 deaths and 120 people missing in Guatemala, while 723,581 people were still at risk. The most recent reporting from OCHA indicated that 32 bridges, and 40 roads had been severely damaged or destroyed by flood waters. CONRED reports that about 19,000 homes were either destroyed or heavily damaged. On November 5 the U.S. Embassy estimated that 95% of the nation's banana crop was decimated, 25-60% of the corn, bean, coffee, and sugar crops were destroyed, and 30% of the cattle herd was lost.

On October 31, Ambassador Donald J. Planty declared a disaster for Guatemala. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$25,000 through the U.S. Embassy to Catholic Relief Services for the local purchase of food. USAID/OFDA has delivered 290 rolls of plastic sheeting, 3,000 polyester blankets, 7,350 five-gallon water jugs, and four 3,000-gallon water bladders to Guatemala, at a total estimated cost of \$182,013 including transport. The first airlift arrived in Guatemala City on November 4, and the second on November 9. USAID/OFDA has also provided \$ 50,000 for the rental of local helicopters for aerial assessments of disaster-affected areas. As of November 18, 6 DOD UH-60 and 4 CH-47 helicopters were operating in Guatemala to facilitate USAID/OFDA relief efforts. On November 18 USAID/OFDA provided \$1 million in grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for disaster response projects that will provide assistance in the following sectors: water/sanitation, emergency shelter, medicine, hygiene, and agriculture.

USAID/OFDA disaster relief personnel have operated in Guatemala since October 27. They have assisted CONRED in coordinating the national relief effort, and have conducted damage assessments and oversight of USAID/OFDA assistance. As of November 18, there are five USAID/OFDA DART members posted in Guatemala. The DART reports indicate that northeastern Guatemala was most severely affected, including Isabal, Zacapa and Alta Verapaz. USAID/OFDA will continue to distribute water jugs and plastic sheeting for shelters, as well as support the transport of relief supplies of other agencies. The DART also reports that all major roads are passable and the bridges damaged along the Atlantic Coast Highway are operable. In general, the USAID/OFDA DART has identified water treatment and addressing health issues, such as malaria, dengue and diarrhea as the highest priorities. However, due to the devastation suffered by the agricultural sector, the USAID/OFDA DART also recommends seeds and tools assistance programs during long-term recovery efforts. The DART is currently reviewing project proposals that have been submitted to USAID field missions that address water and sanitation and health projects, as well as agricultural programs.

El Salvador: As of November 9, the National Emergency Committee (NEC) of El Salvador reported that 239 deaths and 135 people missing as a result of flash floods, and the Red Cross estimated that 400 people had died and 600 were missing. As of November 6, the Government of El Salvador estimates that 55,864 people have been displaced and has established 107 emergency shelters. The government also estimates that 10,000 houses have been destroyed and thousands more were seriously damaged.

Ambassador Anne W. Patterson declared a disaster in El Salvador on November 1. In response, USAID/OFDA provided \$25,000 for the immediate needs of flood victims. In addition, on November 5 USAID/OFDA airlifted 117 rolls of plastic sheeting, 5,150 polyester blankets, 6,000 five-gallon water jugs, and four 3,000-gallon water bladders, at a total estimated cost of \$98,451 including transport. On November 18 USAID/OFDA provided \$1 million in grants to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for disaster response projects that will distribute recovery packages to the areas of greatest need.

A Miami-Dade disaster specialist was in El Salvador November 1-5 to assist USAID/OFDA/LAC in coordinating initial relief operations. As of November 18, two USAID/OFDA DART members are based in San Salvador to assist in the ongoing assessment of relief needs and priorities. Initial assessment reports indicate that all seaports, airports and major roads are now open and that health issues are likely the most critical problem in El Salvador. The USAID/OFDA DART is conducting an assessment in the southeastern portion of the country to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the relief effort and to make recommendations on additional relief projects.

Belize: The Government of Belize established an Emergency Operations Center in Belize City to prepare for the storm's arrival and evacuated over 75,000 people from Belize City and the coastal islands to temporary shelters in Belmopan. Contrary to initial forecasts, the hurricane did not directly strike Belize. Nonetheless, heavy rains caused flooding throughout the coastal areas, particularly in Belize City. The Government of Belize has since granted permission for residents to return to Belize City, however according to the Red Cross thousands had opted to remain in emergency shelters long afterward. On October 29, U.S. Charge d'Affaires Joel Danies declared a disaster for Belize due to the impacts of Hurricane Mitch. In response, USAID/OFDA immediately provided \$25,000 for the local purchase of food for distribution to displaced populations inhabiting emergency shelters. In addition, USAID/OFDA provided funding for two DOD Black Hawk helicopters based in Honduras to conduct overflight assessments and evacuations. Weather conditions during the storm's peak never permitted these aircraft to fly and as Hurricane Mitch turned and tracked away from Belize the helicopters were deployed to support emergency logistics requirements in Nicaragua. A four-person USAID/OFDA assessment team (comprised of a USAID/OFDA/LAC Regional Advisor and three Miami-Dade disaster specialists) was in Belize from October 29 to October 31. The team assessed needs of the evacuated population and reported that food stocks were adequate in Belmopan, but in short supply at Belize City. The team also reported that sanitation and hygiene were poor in all flood-affected areas. No additional USAID/OFDA assistance is anticipated for Belize.

Costa Rica: Heavy rains along the entire Pacific coast of Costa Rica prompted the National Emergency Commission to evacuate at-risk populations. The Government of Costa Rica (GOCR) has since granted permission for people to return to their homes although approximately 1,700 people remain in temporary shelters up to a week after the storm had passed. Four people are reported dead as a result of the storm while four are still missing. On October 23, the U.S. Charge d'Affaires to Costa Rica Richard L. Baltimore III declared a disaster due to severe flooding caused by Hurricane Mitch. USAID/OFDA responded by providing a total of \$45,000 to the U.S. Embassy in San Jose. Funds were used to rent local helicopters to provide overflight assessments and the delivery of food, water, and medicine to affected populations. No additional USAID/OFDA assistance is anticipated for Costa Rica. As of November 18, there are four USAID/OFDA

DART personnel stationed at the DART Headquarters in San Jose to coordinate the disaster response in the region.

Region: USAID/OFDA has provided \$5 million to DOD for reconstruction activities in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. These funds will support the purchase of reconstruction and engineering materials and supplies, including gravel for road repair. USAID/OFDA has provided an additional \$4 million to DOD for continued aircraft support in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, which contributes to the positioning of more than 40 DOD helicopters in Central America. As of November 12, these aircraft had flown over 400 missions in support of USAID/OFDA relief efforts. To date, USAID/OFDA has provided \$2 million to the PAHO to address emergency water and sanitation needs of Hurricane Mitch victims. USAID/OFDA has also provided \$160,000 to the U.S. Embassy in San Jose for the regional deployment of emergency supplies and personnel.

USAID/OFDA Assistance in Honduras	\$6,731,999
USAID/OFDA Assistance in Nicaragua	\$4,844,267
USAID/OFDA Assistance in Guatemala	\$1,257,013
USAID/OFDA Assistance in El Salvador	\$1,123,451
USAID/OFDA Assistance in Costa Rica	\$45,000
USAID/OFDA Assistance in Belize	\$25,000
USAID/OFDA Assistance to the Region	\$11,160,000
Total USAID/OFDA Assistance for Hurricane Mitch (to date)	\$25,186,730

PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION FOR VICTIMS OF HURRICANE MITCH

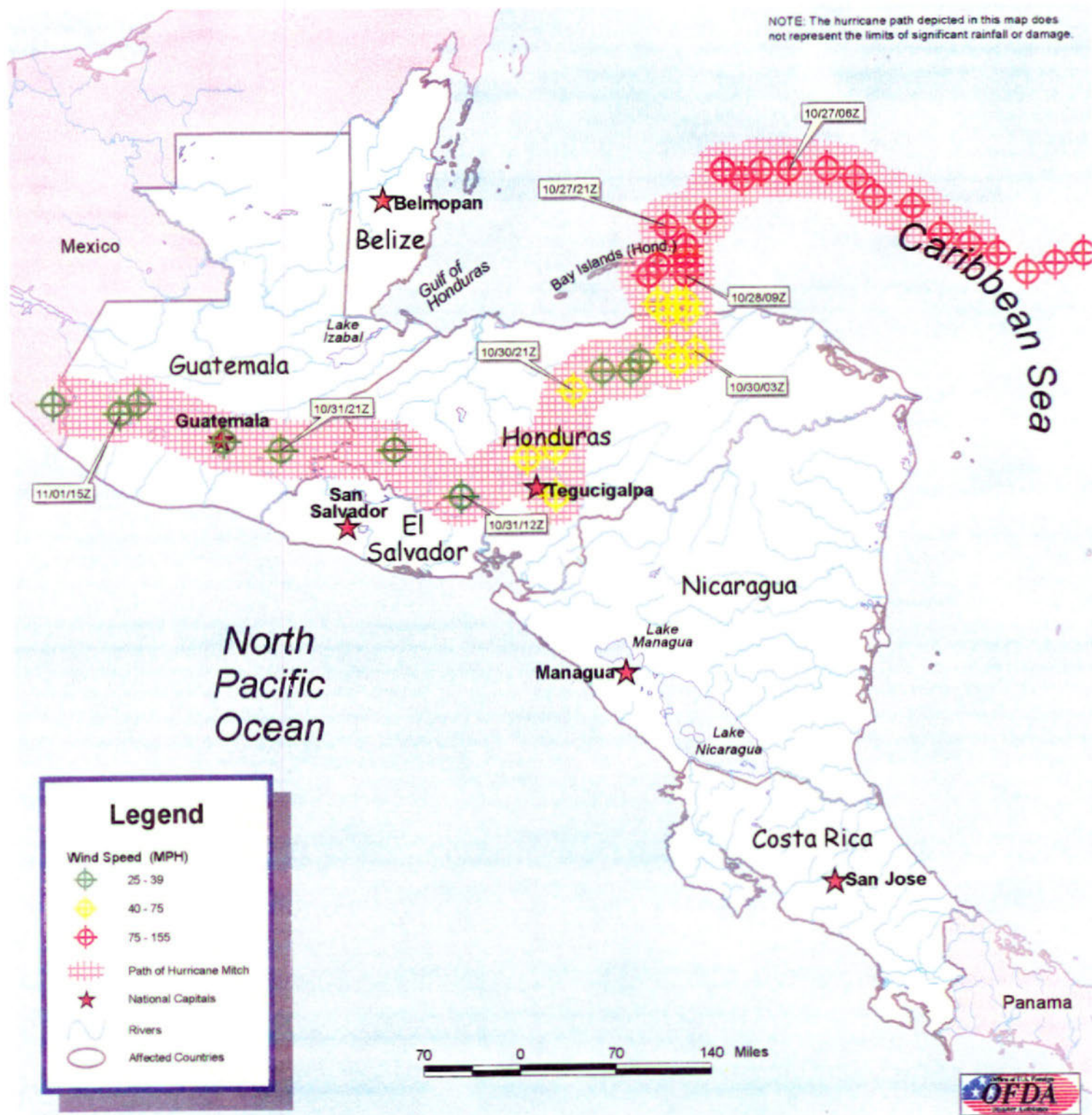
Disasters often generate an outpouring of interest and concern by the American people which lead to spontaneous collections of relief supplies, i.e. food, clothing, medical supplies etc. **In the interest of effective coordination of such public response we encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary donations to appropriate organizations.**

As transportation of relief supplies is limited by capacity, infrastructure damage and continuing weather constraints, it is difficult to move supplies into the affected countries. Unsolicited commodity donations often place an unnecessary burden on relief workers and local governments to store, transport and distribute supplies to those affected populations in need. This can also detract from the provision of more urgently needed relief assistance. USAID/OFDA can not provide assistance for the transport of donated goods.

USAID encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) who are currently working in, or with local affiliates, in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Belize, Costa Rica and El Salvador to provide monetary donations. A list of PVOs may be obtained by contacting InterAction directly at 202-667-8227 x 106, or via the internet at www.interaction.org. Those interested in providing specific relief services or supplies should contact Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) for information and guidelines. VITA can be reached at 703-276-1914, or via the internet at www.vita.org.

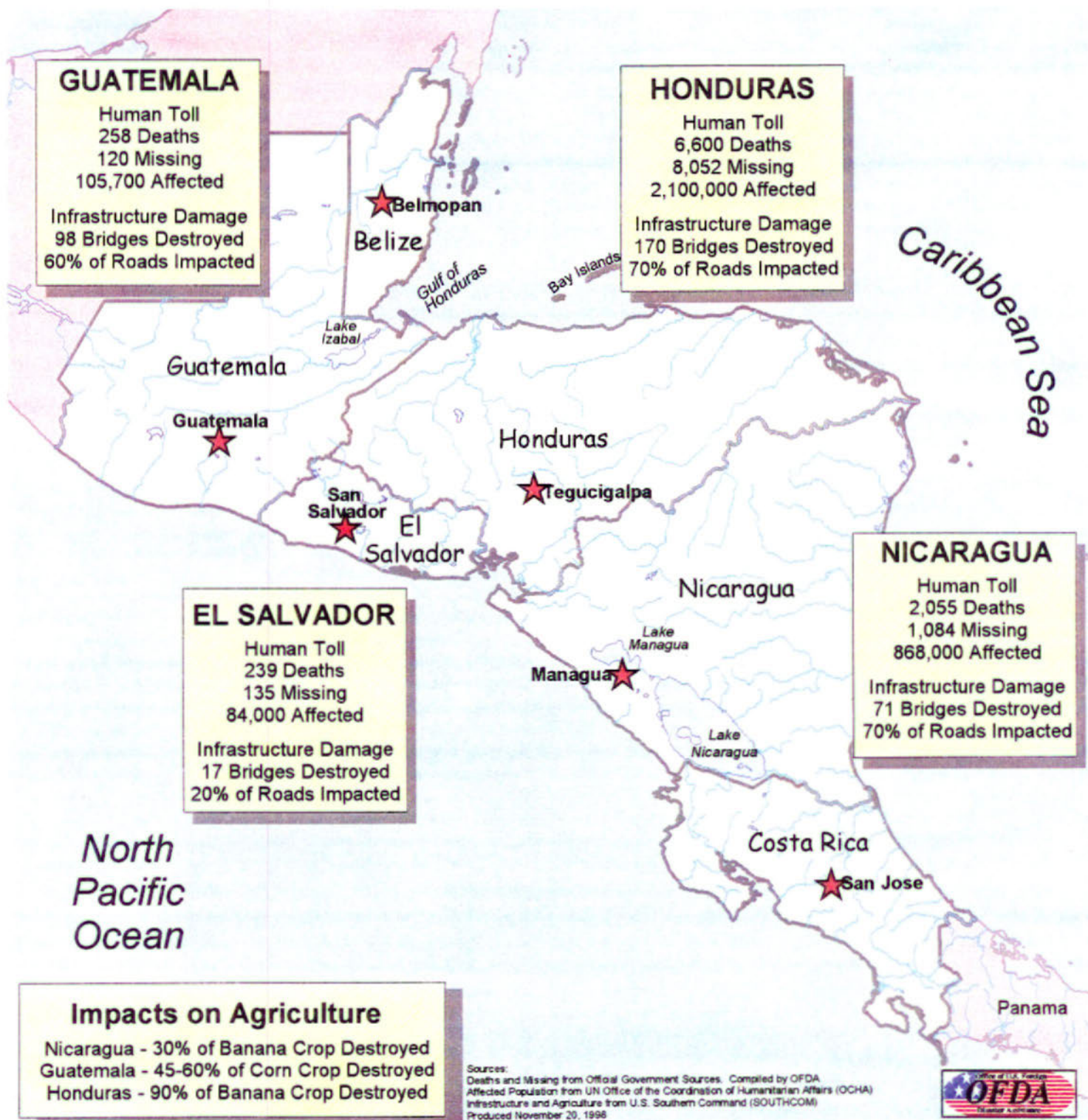
Track of Hurricane Mitch

From October 26 to November 1, 1998



Effects of Hurricane Mitch

October - November, 1998



United Nations





US Government Response to Hurricane Mitch

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)..... \$70 Million

U.S. Department of Defense (DoD)..... \$130 Million

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)..... \$63 Million

Total U.S. Government Funding as of November 20, 1998 = \$263 Million



Other U.S. Government Assistance

5,600 U.S. Military Personnel Dedicated to Relief Effort

Over 6 Million Pounds of Relief Supplies Carried on 35 Denton
Humanitarian Flights



U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO HURRICANES MITCH AND GEORGES

Q: *Who is coordinating the relief effort for the U.S. government?*

A: A disaster of the magnitude of Hurricanes Mitch and Georges has involved almost every part of the U.S. Government in response. The White House, National Security Council, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Department of Defense, Department of Agriculture, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and others have all been contributing to this effort. J. Brian Atwood, Administrator of USAID, is the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance. In this capacity, he has directed the USAID Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance to implement foreign disaster assistance programs.

Q: *What do the programs provide?*

A: The programs are designed to get emergency relief to people in need, including things like: emergency food, clean drinking water, emergency shelter, and more. For more information, go to the USAID Website at www.info.usaid.gov.

Q: *How much has the United States provided in emergency relief?*

A: The U.S. Government has pledged over \$290 million for relief and reconstruction efforts in response to Hurricane Mitch, and more than \$84 million in response to Hurricane Georges. This includes contributions from USAID, the Department of Defense, and the Department of Agriculture.

Q: *Where can I get the most up to date information about the Hurricanes?*

A: Please go to the USAID Website: www.info.usaid.gov.

Q: *Is there one number I can call?*

A: The USAID toll free number is 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

Q: *How can the public and the private sector help?*

A: We encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary donations to appropriate organizations in lieu of commodities. USAID encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) who are currently working in, or plan to work in, or with local affiliates in Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic and Haiti to provide monetary contributions. For a list of PVOs, contact InterAction directly at 202-667-8227, ext. 106, or via the internet at www.interaction.org.

Q: *What if my company wants to help?*

A: If you represent a corporation or organization that wants to help with technical expertise or donations, you should call the USAID Emergency Response Business Desk at 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

Q: *If relief supplies have already been collected, who should we contact for transportation assistance?*

A: Those interested in providing specific relief supplies or services should contact Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA) for information and guidelines. VITA can be reached at 703-276-1914, or via the internet at www.vita.org. The Denton Program is also available for transporting critical relief supplies on a space-available basis by the Department of Defense. Please call USAID at 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

Q: *What are the VITA and Denton Programs?*

A: VITA (Volunteers in Technical Assistance), under contract by USAID, serves as a clearinghouse and helps coordinate offers of humanitarian relief with the non-governmental organizations working on the ground. The Denton Program, run jointly by USAID and the Departments of Defense and State, is designed to transport humanitarian relief supplies on military cargo planes and ships with excess space.

Q: *How can technical experts, such as doctors and engineers, volunteer their skills for the disaster response?*

A: Technical experts are encouraged to find a sponsoring organization in one of the disaster affected countries, by contacting a nongovernmental organizations already working in the affected areas. Such experts should contact InterAction directly at 202-667-8227, ext. 106, or call VITA directly at 703-276-1914 to identify appropriate sponsors who may need their services. These volunteers will need a passport and visa to enter the affected countries. USAID does not have resources to support such technical experts.



WHAT TO DO TO HELP IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANES MITCH AND GEORGES

The U.S. Agency for International Development encourages the public to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) who are currently working in or with local affiliates in Central America and the Caribbean.

- A list of PVOs may be obtained by contacting InterAction at 202-667-8227, ext. 106, or via the Internet at www.interaction.org. InterAction is a coalition of voluntary humanitarian and development organizations which work overseas.
- Those interested in providing specific, technical relief services or supplies should contact Volunteers in Technical Assistance's (VITA) Disaster Information Center for information and guidelines. VITA, under contract with USAID, serves as a clearinghouse and helps coordinate offers of humanitarian relief with the non-governmental organizations working on the ground. VITA can be reached at 703-276-1914, or via the Internet at www.vita.org.
- If you need assistance in ensuring a financial contribution is routed effectively, or in finding transportation for your donations, please call USAID's disaster relief toll free number: 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of the American people. To ensure that the most urgent needs are met, we encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary contributions to appropriate organizations rather than collecting clothing and other items for donation. If you want to donate goods, please also try to raise funding for shipment.

- The ability to transport relief supplies is limited by infrastructure damage and continuing weather constraints, making it difficult to move supplies into the affected countries. We need to be sure that our first response efforts are focused on the immediate crisis and reaching the people in urgent need. Therefore, it is essential that donations are prioritized to meet the critical needs of the crisis.
- The following are items of priority need: non-perishable foods such as canned goods; over-the-counter medicines with one or more years before expiration; towels; unused, cleaned and sorted clothing; and, hygiene items such as toothbrushes, toothpaste and soap.
- Unfortunately, USAID does not have the capacity to pay to move donated goods or volunteers. However, USAID helps identify transportation in partnership with non-governmental organizations and the Department of Defense.



KEY NUMBERS TO CALL

- **For private sector donations and business wanting to help**

Call USAID Emergency Response Business Desk: 1-800-872-4373 or
1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

- **For monetary donations and contact with NGOs/PVOs**

Call InterAction: 202-667-8227, ext. 106, or via the Internet at www.interaction.org.

- **For small donations of goods and technical services**

Call VITA: 703-276-1914, or via the Internet at www.vita.org.

- **For large donations of goods and services**

Call USAID: 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

- **For further information and updates**

Go to the USAID Website: www.info.usaid.gov.



WHAT TO DO TO HELP IN RESPONSE TO HURRICANES MITCH AND GEORGES

We greatly appreciate the generosity of the American people. To ensure that the most urgent needs are met, we encourage concerned citizens to provide monetary contributions to appropriate organizations rather than collecting clothing and other items for donation. If you want to donate goods, please also try to raise funding for shipment.

- The quickest way for the public to provide help is to contact directly those private voluntary organizations (PVOs) which are currently working in or with local affiliates in Central America and the Caribbean.
- A list of PVOs may be obtained by contacting InterAction at 202-667-8227, ext. 106, or via the Internet at www.interaction.org. InterAction is a coalition of voluntary humanitarian and development organizations which work overseas.
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KEY NUMBERS TO CALL

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- **For monetary donations and contact with organizations working in disaster areas**

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- **For small donations of goods and technical services**

Call VITA: 703-276-1914, or via the Internet at www.vita.org.

- **For large donations of goods and services**

Call USAID: 1-800-872-4373 or 1-800-USAID-RELIEF.

- **For further information and updates**

Go to the USAID Website: www.info.usaid.gov.

The USAID
response
to hurricane
disasters

How Can I Help?

Country Reports

The White House

Press

USAID Homepage



Hurricanes In Central America

1998 has proved to be a very deadly and costly hurricane season for Central America. Two of the most devastating hurricanes have managed to claim thousands of lives destroy billions of dollars worth of property.

Hurricane Georges struck the eastern Caribbean (St. Kitts and Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda) on September 20 and 21 and the Dominican Republic and Haiti on September 22. The storm resulted in infrastructure damage and loss of life throughout the region, particularly in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Of all eastern Caribbean islands that incurred damage as a result of the hurricane, St. Kitts was the most affected. The extent of damage throughout the region indicates that it could be several months (or years, for the most affected countries) before life returns to a completely normal state.

On October 24 Atlantic Tropical Storm Mitch was upgraded to a hurricane that developed into one of the strongest and most damaging storms ever to hit the Caribbean and Central America. At its height on October 26 and 27, the hurricane had sustained winds of 180 mph and dumped heavy rains over Central America. The storm produced torrential rains that caused catastrophic floods and landslides throughout the region. More than 10,000 people were killed by Hurricane Mitch, with tens of thousands more left homeless. Damage from the storm is in the billions of dollars.

The United States has rapidly responded to the urgent humanitarian needs of the region. As the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance, USAID Administrator J. Brian Atwood is coordinating a government-wide effort to provide relief and assistance to the region. These pages describe this unprecedented humanitarian effort and also provide information on how you can help our neighbors in the Caribbean and Central America that have been devastated by this disaster of near biblical proportions.

USAID is an independent federal government agency that

conducts foreign assistance and humanitarian aid to advance the political and economic interests of the United States.

Have a question or comment about USAID or the USAID website?
Visit our [contact page](#) to find the appropriate resource.



DATE: Tuesday, November 24, 1998
TIME: 1:45 p.m.
LOCATION: The East Room
The White House
Washington, DC

Press Notes:

This event is open press. Press who are not currently White House passholders, should fax their name, date of birth and social security number on company letter head to 202/456-7805 no later than 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 24, 1998. There will be an escort from the White House Briefing Room at 12:00 p.m. to pre-set and again at 1:30 p.m. for final access. Lighting and a mult is provided.

EVENT: NGO Briefing
DATE: Tuesday, November 24, 1998
TIME: 3:30 p.m.
LOCATION: President's Hall (O.E.O.B. 450)
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Press Notes:

This event is open press. Press who are not currently White House passholders, should fax their name, date of birth and social security number on company letter head to 202/456-7805 no later than 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, November 24, 1998. There will be an escort from the White House Briefing Room at 2:30 p.m. to pre-set and again at 3:10 p.m. for final access. Lighting and a mult is provided.

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HRC NCo briefing 11/29

Dévine
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briefed by all prez
recovery efforts
mit in Am troops
reconstruction

Ngo's

this has had enormous int'l response -
Chrác, Mexico

challenge - Coordinating the aid
announcements

M/S BC \$70m.

now \$250m.

(mainly USAID, WDA, DoD)

AID - food, med, shelter, relief, econ efforts \$70m.

DoD - ~~5600~~ 5600 deployed, Helos

WDA - \$63m. wheat, corn, etc

O Corps crisis corps

IADB - \$17m (in AID)

Debt Relief now issue

* Deportations delayed til Jan
the nation can't accomodate the deported.

Complications -

Econ, ptt, social
will affect us.

All govts are democ. elected.
new leaders....

ex) Guat. (36 yr civil war) -
in peace accord, demil. of army, incr. \$ on
educ/welfare..

* Public/Priv. Work together

Govt limitations -
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NCo briefing
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

**BRIEFING FOR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PUBLIC
INTEREST GROUPS ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S RELIEF EFFORTS FOR
CENTRAL AMERICA**

Tuesday, November 24, 1998
Presidential Hall (Room 450), Old Executive Office Building
3:30 P.M.

AGENDA

- I. Welcoming Remarks**
Maria Echaveste
Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff
- II. Presentation on the Impact of Hurricane Mitch**
Harriet C. Babbitt
Deputy Administrator, USAID
- III. U.S. Military Relief and Reconstruction Efforts**
Major General John Maher
Deputy Director of Operations
Joint Chiefs of Staff
- IV. NGO Presentation**
Marge Tsitouris
Director, CARE Emergency Group
- V. Observations of Devastation in Central America**
Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Gore
- VI. Details of the Response from the United States Government**
First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
- VII. Closing**
Maria Echaveste
- VIII. Questions & Answers**

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 16, 1998

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton announced today in Tegucigalpa, Honduras a major expansion in the United States' contribution to relief and reconstruction efforts in Central American countries struggling to cope with the devastating effects of Hurricane Mitch. Current estimates of U.S. emergency assistance now reach over \$250 million.

In the coming weeks, the Defense Department will more than quadruple its personnel from 1,300 to over 5,600 and further expand its helicopter fleet from 39 to 55 in the region. Starting this week, the Department of Defense will deploy a second package of military support estimated to cost \$55 million for the first 30 days. The package includes 16 additional helicopters, engineering and road-building units, bridges, medical detachments and supplies, a field hospital, and 11 water purification systems to help alleviate the suffering and begin to rebuild countries shattered by catastrophic flooding. In addition to Joint Task Force Bravo in Honduras, a second Joint Task Force was established today in El Salvador to coordinate U.S. military relief efforts in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. President Clinton has already approved \$75 million in defense equipment and services to cover current efforts.

The First Lady also announced a significant increase in food aid to help Honduras and Nicaragua, the countries most devastated by the deadly storm, feed its people and free up resources to address other emergency needs. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) will provide an additional \$15 million in emergency food aid to help meet immediate food needs. This brings AID's Honduras food aid response to \$25 million, consisting of approximately 50,000 tons of rice, beans, vegetable oil and corn meal.

Also, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has approved a further donation of 100,000 tons of wheat to Honduras and Nicaragua worth approximately \$12 million. USDA will also provide \$20 million in grants to Honduras and Nicaragua for the purchase of beans, dry milk, vegetable oil, rice and other basic commodities. In addition, USDA will provide another \$10 million in concessional loans for food purchases to Guatemala and El Salvador, bringing total U.S. food aid to over \$81 million.

Already, as a result of damage to roads and bridges, an emergency air convoy of 25 USAID financed flights has carried 1,300 tons of rice, beans, corn and vegetable oil to the region. Private U.S. citizens have already contributed \$5 million in relief supplies, being transported into the region in another 50 U.S. Government financed flights. In addition, 10 flights have delivered plastic sheeting, water containers and other relief supplies from stockpiles in the U.S. to the region.

The First Lady also announced that the U.S. is prepared to provide debt relief of up to \$50 million for Nicaragua and Honduras, the two countries most severely affected by Hurricane Mitch. These actions would have the immediate effect of relieving these countries of the obligation to service their bilateral debts to the U.S. through the year 2000. The U.S. believes that these countries should be relieved of all their debt service obligations for the next two years and will be working with our partners to accomplish this objective. The U.S. will take a leading role in organizing a meeting of international donors in early December in Washington to discuss long-term financial assistance.

Beyond the immediate crisis of caring for the hundreds of thousands of displaced people, the First Lady is particularly concerned about the long-term effect of the storm on the burgeoning micro enterprise sectors in these countries. Many small businesses have lost their modest investments in equipment, vehicles and infrastructure. To help put these micro entrepreneurs back on their feet, the First Lady announced that the Inter-American Development Bank and USAID will provide \$17 million in grants and loans to rebuild workplaces, reestablish inventories and generate employment for those hit by the storm.

The First Lady also announced a new infusion of current and former Peace Corps volunteers who will lend their expertise to help meet both emergency relief and long-term reconstruction needs. The Peace Corps Crisis Corps of returned volunteers will be sending several dozen former volunteers to Honduras and Nicaragua to contribute critical skills to the rebuilding effort.

The First Lady's announcement comes on the heels of President Clinton's joint radio address last Saturday with Mrs. Tipper Gore, who led a Presidential Mission to the region last week. The President announced that the Department of Justice will extend the stay of deportation for citizens from Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala through the end of the year and that he will examine on an urgent basis recommendations for further relief.

A Fact Sheet is Attached.

THE CLINTON/GORE ADMINISTRATION RELIEF EFFORTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE MITCH

President Clinton has been leading an aggressive relief effort in response to the disaster caused by Hurricane Mitch in Central America. Today, First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton visited Honduras and Nicaragua and announced the deployment of a second package of military support that will allow the U.S. to substantially increase relief and reconstruction efforts. The First Lady also announced additional food aid, debt relief, and other assistance, bringing total U.S. assistance to more than \$250 million. Many United States government agencies are working tirelessly with us to help bring disaster relief to Central America. Here are some specifics:

Department of Defense

The President has directed the Department of Defense to release \$75 million in emergency assistance for Central America. Over 1,300 soldiers are in the region as part of a special Joint Task Force of the four branches of service of the U.S. Military. This force will increase to more than 5,600 in the coming weeks. This task force is assisting in relief efforts on a number of fronts:

Dozens of U.S. military helicopters and aircraft operate daily and have delivered over 2.5 million pounds of relief supplies (food, water, blankets, sheeting, sanitation services) to date; additional helicopters arrived in the area on November 12, bringing the total to 39.

Military engineering units are clearing and repairing key roads;

DOD has transported \$5 million in relief supplies donated by U.S. citizens under the Denton Program;

DOD's new package of support will deploy to the region this week to supplement current efforts. This support includes: 16 additional helicopters, engineering, bridge companies and road-building units, medical detachments and supplies, a field hospital, and 11 water purification systems;

A second Joint Task force was established today in El Salvador to coordinate military relief efforts in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador.

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

A 31-member Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) from USAID is present in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador, coordinating U.S. relief activities with national and private voluntary efforts;

USAID is providing \$30 million to purchase and distribute plastic sheeting, blankets and

other relief supplies, procure food locally, provide health, water and sanitation services (including restoration of Tegucigalpa's water system), and purchase supplies for road repair and reconstruction. Ten flights have delivered relief supplies from stockpiles in the U.S. to Central America;

USAID is providing \$25 million in emergency food aid, including 50,000 tons of rice, beans, oil and corn meal;

USAID is airlifting food to the region and has delivered almost 1,300 metric tons on 18 flights to Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala;

An estimated 6,000 metric tons is expected to arrive in the region by ship before the end of the month;

USAID and the Department of Housing and Urban Development will lead a mission, in partnership with the private sector, to address housing reconstruction and infrastructure repair needs;

USAID and the Inter-American Development Bank will provide \$17 million in grants and loans to rebuild workplaces, reestablish inventories, and generate employment.

Department of Agriculture:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing 100,000 metric tons of wheat, worth approximately \$12 million to Honduras and Nicaragua;

USDA will provide \$20 million in grants to Honduras and Nicaragua for the purchase of beans, dry milk, vegetable oil, rice, and other basic commodities;

USDA will also provide another \$10 million in concessional loans for food purchases to Guatemala and El Salvador.

Department of Treasury:

The U.S. is prepared to provide debt relief of up to \$50 million for Nicaragua and Honduras, thereby relieving these two countries of their obligation to service their debt with the United States through the year 2000. The United States believes that these two countries should be relieved of all of their debt service obligations for the next two years and will work with our partners to accomplish this objective;

The United States will take a leading role in organizing a meeting of international donors in early December in Washington to discuss long-term financial assistance.

Department of Justice:

The President has asked the Immigration and Naturalization Service to extend a stay of deportation for nationals from Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala through the end of the year. In addition, the Administration is examining on an urgent basis recommendations for further relief.

Peace Corps:

Additional members of the Peace Corps and former Peace Corps volunteers will travel to Nicaragua and Honduras to offer their expertise to help meet emergency needs and begin the rebuilding effort.

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La Casa Blanca

Oficina del Secretario de Prensa

Retenido hasta las 3:00 p.m. EST
Lunes, 16 de noviembre de 1998-11-17

16 de noviembre

DECLARACION DEL SECRETARIO DE PRENSA

LA PRIMERA DAMA HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
ANUNCIA UNA MAYOR AMPLIACION DE LA CAMPAÑA DE SOCORRO
ESTADOUNIDENSE EN CENTROAMERICA

La Primera Dama Hillary Rodham Clinton anunció hoy en Tegucigalpa, Honduras, un mayor aporte de las contribuciones de los Estados Unidos a los esfuerzos de socorro y reconstrucción en los países centroamericanos que están luchando para afrentar los efectos devastadores del Huracán Mitch. Se calcula que, actualmente, la asistencia de emergencia de los Estados Unidos ha sobrepasado los 250 millones de dólares.

En las próximas semanas, el Departamento de Defensa cuadruplicará con creces su personal, pasando de 1.300 a más de 5.600, y aumentará su flota de helicópteros de 39 a 55 en la región. A partir de esta semana, el Departamento de Defensa distribuirá un segundo paquete de apoyo militar con un costo estimado de \$55 millones durante los primeros 30 días. El paquete incluye 16 helicópteros más, unidades de ingeniería y construcción de carreteras, puentes, destacamentos y materiales médicos, un hospital móvil, y 11 sistemas de purificación de agua para ayudar a aliviar el sufrimiento e iniciar la reconstrucción de los países gravemente afectados por las inundaciones catastróficas. Además de la Fuerza Especial Conjunta Bravo, en Honduras, se estableció hoy día en El Salvador una segunda fuerza especial para coordinar los esfuerzos de socorro militares estadounidenses en Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador. El presidente Clinton ya aprobó \$75 millones en servicios y equipo de defensa para abarcar los esfuerzos actuales.

Asimismo, la Primera Dama anunció un aumento considerable en materia de alimentos para ayudar a Honduras y Nicaragua, que son los países que más se han visto afectados por la tormenta mortífera, para alimentar a sus pueblos y liberar recursos a fin de solucionar otras necesidades urgentes. La Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional (USAID) proporcionará otros \$15 millones en ayuda de emergencia para alimentos con el fin de responder a las necesidades inmediatas de alimentos. Con esta cifra, la ayuda en materia de alimentos de la USAID a Honduras asciende a \$25 millones y consiste en aproximadamente 50.000 toneladas de arroz, frijoles, aceite vegetal y harina de maíz.

Asimismo, el Departamento de Agricultura (USDA) ha aprobado otra donación de 100.000 toneladas de trigo para Honduras y Nicaragua, por un valor de \$12 millones, aproximadamente. El USDA también proporcionará \$20 millones en donaciones a Honduras y Nicaragua para la compra de frijoles, leche en polvo, aceite vegetal, arroz y otros productos de primera necesidad. Además, el

USDA proporcionará otros \$10 millones en préstamos concesionarios para las compras de alimentos a Guatemala y El Salvador, con lo cual la ayuda de alimentos de los Estados Unidos asciende a más de \$81 millones.

Como resultado de los daños a carreteras y puentes, un convoy aéreo de emergencia de 25 vuelos financiados por la USAID ya ha transportado 1.300 toneladas de arroz, frijoles, maíz y aceite vegetal a la región. Varios ciudadanos particulares estadounidenses ya han contribuido con \$5 millones en suministros de socorro, que se están transportando a la región en otros 50 vuelos financiados por el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos. Además, 10 vuelos han llevado a la región material de plástico, contenedores de agua y otros suministros de socorro procedentes de las reservas estadounidenses.

La Primera Dama también anunció que los Estados Unidos están dispuestos a aliviar hasta \$50 millones la carga de la deuda de Nicaragua y Honduras, que son los dos países más gravemente afectados por el Huracán Mitch. Estas medidas tendrán el efecto inmediato de aliviar a estos países la obligación de servir sus deudas bilaterales con respecto a los Estados Unidos hasta el año 2000. Los Estados Unidos son del parecer que estos países deberían ser aliviados de todas sus obligaciones del servicio de la deuda durante los próximos dos años y estarán trabajando con sus socios para lograr este objetivo. Los Estados Unidos desempeñarán un papel principal en la organización de una reunión de los donantes internacionales a principios de diciembre, en la ciudad de Washington, para tratar la cuestión de la ayuda financiera a largo plazo.

Además de la crisis inmediata de atender a los cientos de miles de personas desplazadas, a la Primera Dama le preocupa en particular el efecto a largo plazo que la tormenta pueda tener en los sectores florecientes de la microempresa en esos países. Muchos pequeños negocios han perdido sus inversiones modestas en equipo, vehículos e infraestructura. Para ayudar a estos microempresarios a recuperarse, la Primera Dama anunció que el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo y la USAID proporcionarán \$17 millones en subsidios y préstamos para reconstruir los lugares de trabajo, reestablecer los inventarios y generar empleo para los afectados por la tormenta.

La Primera Dama también anunció una nueva infusión de voluntarios presentes y pasados del Cuerpo de Paz que ofrecerán sus servicios especializados para ayudar a responder a las necesidades de socorro de emergencia y reconstrucción a largo plazo. El Cuerpo de Paz para Casos de Crisis enviará varias docenas de ex voluntarios a Honduras y Nicaragua para que contribuyan con sus conocimientos esenciales en los esfuerzos de reconstrucción.

El anuncio de la Primera Dama se hace tras el discurso radial conjunto del Presidente Clinton, el sábado pasado con la Sra. Tipper Gore, quien encabezó una misión presidencial a la región la semana pasada. El Presidente anunció que el Departamento de Justicia prorrogará la deportación de los ciudadanos de Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador y Guatemala hasta finales del presente año, y que examinará con carácter prioritario las recomendaciones de socorro ulterior.

**CAMPAÑA DE SOCORRO DEL GOBIERNO
DEL PRESIDENTE CLINTON Y EL VICEPRESIDENTE GORE
EN CENTROAMERICA DESPUES DEL HURACAN MITCH**

El Presidente Clinton ha estado a la cabeza de una campaña intensa de socorro en respuesta al desastre causado por el Huracán Mitch en Centroamérica. El día de hoy, la Primera Dama Hillary Rodham Clinton visitó Honduras y Nicaragua y anunció el despliegue de un segundo paquete de ayuda militar que permitirá a los Estados Unidos aumentar considerablemente los esfuerzos de socorro y reconstrucción. Asimismo, la Primera Dama anunció la asistencia en cuanto a alimentos, alivio de la carga de la deuda y de otro tipo, con lo cual la asistencia estadounidense total asciende a más de \$250 millones. Muchos organismos del Gobierno de los Estados Unidos están trabajando incansablemente con nosotros para ayudar en las operaciones de socorro en Centroamérica. A continuación se resumen estos esfuerzos:

Departamento de Defensa

El Presidente ha ordenado al Departamento de Defensa que libere \$75 millones en asistencia de emergencia para Centroamérica. Más de 1.300 soldados están en la región como parte de una Fuerza Especial Conjunta de las cuatro ramas de servicio de las fuerzas militares estadounidenses. Esta fuerza aumentará a más de 5.600 en las próximas semanas, y está ayudando en las actividades de socorro de diferentes formas:

Docenas de helicópteros y aeronaves militares de los EE.UU. viajan diariamente, y hasta la fecha han entregado más de 2.500 millones de libras de suministros para las operaciones de socorro (alimentos, agua, frazadas, material de plástico, servicios sanitarios); otros helicópteros más llegaron a la región el 12 de noviembre, con lo cual su número asciende a 39.

Las unidades militares de ingeniería están despejando y reparando las carreteras principales.

El Departamento de Defensa ha transportado \$5 millones en suministros para las operaciones de socorro donados por ciudadanos estadounidenses gracias al programa Denton.

El nuevo paquete de apoyo del Departamento de Defensa se desplegará a la región esta semana para complementar las operaciones actuales. Estas operaciones incluyen: 16 helicópteros más, unidades de ingeniería, puentes y construcción de carreteras, suministros y destacamentos médicos, un hospital móvil y 11 sistemas de purificación de agua.

El día de hoy, se estableció en El Salvador otra Fuerza Especial Conjunta para coordinar las operaciones de socorro en Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador.

Agencia de los Estados Unidos para el Desarrollo Internacional

El equipo DART de la USAID, integrado por 31 personas y especializado en la asistencia para casos de desastre, se encuentra en Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala y El Salvador para coordinar las actividades de socorro estadounidenses con los esfuerzos nacionales y privados de carácter voluntario.

La USAID está proporcionando \$30 millones para comprar y distribuir material de plástico, frazadas y otras provisiones de socorro, obtener alimentos locales, prestar atención de salud, proporcionar agua y servicios sanitarios (incluida la restauración del sistema de abastecimiento de agua de Tegucigalpa), y adquirir materiales para reparar y reconstruir las carreteras. Diez vuelos han llegado a Centroamérica cargados de materiales de socorro procedentes de las reservas estadounidenses.

La USAID está proporcionando ayuda de emergencia por un valor de \$25 millones en alimentos, incluidas 50.000 toneladas de arroz, frijoles, aceite y harina de maíz.

La USAID está transportando alimentos por vía aérea a la región y ya ha entregado casi 1.300 toneladas métricas en 18 vuelos a Honduras, Nicaragua y Guatemala.

Se espera que unas 6.000 toneladas métricas lleguen a la región por barco antes de finales de mes.

La USAID y el Departamento de Vivienda y Desarrollo Urbano encabezarán una misión, en colaboración con el sector privado, para abordar las necesidades de reparación de la infraestructura y la reconstrucción de viviendas.

La USAID y el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo proporcionarán \$17 millones en subvenciones y préstamos para reconstruir lugares de trabajo, restablecer inventarios y generar empleos.

Departamento de Agricultura:

El Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos (USDA) está proporcionando 100.000 toneladas métricas de trigo a Honduras y Nicaragua, por un valor de aproximadamente \$12 millones.

El USDA proporcionará subsidios a Honduras y Nicaragua, por un valor de \$20 millones, para la compra de frijoles, leche en polvo, aceite vegetal, arroz y otros productos de primera necesidad.

El USDA también proporcionará a Guatemala y El Salvador otros \$10 millones en préstamos en condiciones concesionarias para la compra de alimentos.

Departamento del Tesoro:

Los Estados Unidos están dispuestos a proporcionar alivio de la carga de la deuda hasta \$50 millones a Nicaragua y Honduras, aliviando así a estos dos países de su obligación con el servicio de la deuda que tienen con los Estados Unidos hasta el año 2000. Los Estados Unidos son del parecer que estos dos países deberían ser aliviados de todas sus obligaciones del servicio de la deuda durante los próximos dos años y trabajarán con sus socios hacia el logro de este objetivo.

Los Estados Unidos desempeñarán un papel principal en la organización de una reunión de los donantes internacionales a principios de diciembre, en la ciudad de Washington, para abordar la cuestión relativa a la asistencia financiera a largo plazo.

Departamento de Justicia:

El Presidente ha pedido al Servicio de Inmigración y Naturalización que suspenda hasta finales de año la deportación de ciudadanos de Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador y Guatemala. Además, el Gobierno está examinando, a título de urgencia las recomendaciones relativas a socorro adicional.

Cuerpo de Paz

Otros miembros del Cuerpo de Paz y ex voluntarios del Cuerpo de Paz viajarán a Nicaragua y Honduras para ofrecer sus conocimientos con el fin de ayudar a satisfacer las necesidades de emergencia e iniciar las operaciones de reconstrucción.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

Embargoed For Release
Until 10:06 A.M. EST
Saturday, November 14, 1998

RADIO ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT
AND MRS. GORE
TO THE NATION

The Roosevelt Room

THE PRESIDENT: Today I would like to talk about the hurricane that struck Central America two weeks ago and what we in the United States are doing to help. I'm joined by Tipper Gore, who will describe her trip leading our delegation to the region.

As Hurricane Mitch swept across the Caribbean we were spared the brunt of the storm. But our neighbors in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala were not so lucky. We know the terrible death toll in those nations — more than 10,000 lives so far. But that figure only begins to convey the devastation.

Hundreds of thousands are homeless. Mudslides and collapsed bridges have made it difficult to send help. In huge areas people have still almost no food and water. Roads, farms, schools, hospitals, all have been destroyed.

Tipper Gore led our presidential mission to the region, and she just reported to me on the conditions there. I'd like to ask her now to tell what she saw.

MRS. GORE: Thank you, Mr. President.

In Honduras, we visited a neighborhood devastated by the storm. We joined the effort to clean up a school that will become a medical facility. That night I slept in a tent outside a shelter with homeless families, where I met a woman who was six months pregnant, a grandmother who was carrying for four of her grandchildren, and a man who was alone and blind. They had all lost everything. They are now living together in one room, sleeping on mats.

In Nicaragua, I visited a refugee site for more than a thousand men, women and children whose homes along a riverbank are gone. The conditions are unimaginable. The government has allocated a plot of land which is divided into parcels, one per family. Their shelter consists of sheets of plastic. Disease is rampant, and their biggest concerns right now are food, water and medicine.

Yet everywhere I was struck by the spirit of the people. They are not defeated. They're cleaning up and they are rebuilding their lives. In Honduras, community leaders are working to help

those most in need to get supplies to the outlying areas. In the makeshift shelters in Managua, many people were measuring foundations for new walls they will build when the materials are available.

You can see that this disaster has destroyed their homes, but not their spirits. They will survive. And we will stand with them as they do so.

THE PRESIDENT: Thanks, Tipper. Thank you for the trip and for your recommendations for what the United States should do next.

Next Monday the First Lady will also visit the region. We want to do everything we can to help -- now and over the long run. To quickly address the catastrophe, I ordered \$80 million in emergency aid. Over 1,300 American troops are assisting with relief efforts, providing food, water and medicine. Engineers are rebuilding roads. Helicopters and planes are delivering vital supplies -- 1.3 million tons to date. And more help is on the way.

In the wake of Mrs. Gore's trip, I am announcing today that we will offer \$45 million in additional defense goods and services to provide the resources our troops need to continue their critical work toward recovery.

I've also asked Secretary of the Treasury Bob Rubin to find the best way to provide debt relief and emergency financial aid from the United States and the international community. We've already encouraged international institutions to provide more than \$500 million in near-term financial aid, and we're working with them to secure sufficient money for reconstruction.

Finally, we intend to extend our stay of deportation through the holidays for citizens of the affected countries living in the United States, while examining on an urgent basis recommendations for further relief, consistent with the recommendation Mrs. Gore made to me.

A storm shows no respect for boundaries, and we should respond the same way. Many American citizens have relatives in Central America; our nations are related, too. They are our friends and our neighbors. We are going to share the future together. America is at its best when lending a helping hand to friends in need. Central Americans have taken great strides in the last decade in ending conflicts and strengthening democracies. We must not, and we will not, let a hurricane drown these aspirations.

The United States will spare no aid to people of Central America -- our fellow Americans -- as we all strive to build a better world in a new century.

Thanks for listening.

END

LA CASA BLANCA

Oficina del Secretario de Prensa

Espérese para su difusión
hasta las 10:06, hora oficial del Este,
del sábado 14 de noviembre de 1998

DISCURSO POR RADIO DEL PRESIDENTE Y LA SRA. GORE A LA NACIÓN

Salón Roosevelt

EL PRESIDENTE: Hoy quisiera hablarles sobre el huracán que azotó a América Central hace dos semanas y sobre la ayuda que Estados Unidos está brindando a los damnificados. Me acompaña Tipper Gore, quien relatará el viaje a la región en el cual encabezó nuestra delegación.

Cuando el huracán Mitch pasó por el Caribe, nosotros nos salvamos de lo peor de la tormenta, pero nuestros vecinos de Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador y Guatemala no tuvieron tanta suerte. En esos países, el huracán cobró más de 10.000 vidas. Sin embargo, esa cifra nos permite vislumbrar apenas la magnitud de la devastación.

Cientos de miles de personas quedaron sin techo. Debido a las avalanchas y el desmoronamiento de puentes, es difícil enviar ayuda. En extensas zonas, la gente casi no tiene alimentos y agua. El huracán destruyó caminos, granjas, escuelas y hospitales.

Tipper Gore encabezó nuestra misión presidencial a la región, y me acaba de informar sobre la situación. Voy a pedirle que nos relate lo que vio.

LA SRA. GORE: Gracias, Sr. Presidente.

En Honduras visitamos un vecindario devastado por la tormenta y participamos en la limpieza de una escuela donde se instalará un hospital de campaña. Esa noche dormí en una carpa junto a un refugio para familias que quedaron sin techo. Allí conocí a una mujer que estaba embarazada de seis meses, una abuela que estaba cuidando a cuatro nietos y un hombre solo y ciego. Habían perdido todo lo que tenían. Ahora viven todos en un cuarto y duermen sobre esteras.

En Nicaragua visité un centro de refugiados para más de mil hombres, mujeres y niños que vivían en la ribera de un río y perdieron la vivienda. La situación es inimaginable. El gobierno ha

asignado un terreno dividido en parcelas, una por familia. Su abrigo consiste en láminas de plástico. Cunden las enfermedades, y ahora la principal preocupación es la falta de alimentos, agua y medicamentos.

Sin embargo, en todas partes me sorprendió la tenacidad de la gente. No se sienten derrotados. Están haciendo limpieza y reconstruyendo su vida. En Honduras, los dirigentes comunitarios están ayudando a los más necesitados a llevar suministros a las zonas más alejadas. En los refugios improvisados de Managua, muchas personas estaban midiendo los cimientos de las paredes que levantarán cuando consigan materiales.

Es obvio que este desastre les ha destruido sus hogares, pero no el ánimo. Sobrevivirán, y estaremos a su lado en la lucha.

EL PRESIDENTE: Gracias, Tipper. Gracias por el viaje y por sus recomendaciones con respecto a lo que Estados Unidos debe hacer ahora.

El lunes próximo, la primera dama también viajará a la región. Queremos hacer todo lo posible para ayudar, ahora y más adelante. A fin de responder rápidamente a la catástrofe, ordené el envío de ayuda de emergencia por valor de US\$80 millones. Más de 1.300 soldados estadounidenses están colaborando en la labor de socorro, proporcionando alimentos, agua y medicamentos. Hay ingenieros reconstruyendo caminos, helicópteros y aviones transportando suministros vitales 1.300.000 toneladas hasta la fecha y más ayuda en camino.

A raíz del viaje de la Sra. Gore, ofreceremos US\$45 millones en bienes y servicios de defensa adicionales a fin de proveer a nuestras tropas los recursos que necesitan para continuar su trabajo decisivo de apoyo a la recuperación.

También he pedido al Secretario del Tesoro, Bob Rubin, que busque la mejor manera de aliviar la deuda y proporcionar ayuda financiera de urgencia de Estados Unidos y la comunidad internacional. Ya hemos exhortado a varias instituciones internacionales a que proporcionen más de US\$500 millones en asistencia financiera a corto plazo y estamos trabajando con estas instituciones a fin de obtener fondos suficientes para la reconstrucción.

Por último, prorrogaremos hasta después de las festividades de fin de año la suspensión de la orden de deportación de ciudadanos de los países afectados que viven en Estados Unidos, mientras examinamos con urgencia las recomendaciones relativas al suministro de socorro adicional, según lo que me recomendó la Sra. Gore.

Las tormentas no respetan fronteras, y nosotros debemos responder de la misma forma. Muchos estadounidenses tienen familiares en América Central. También tenemos lazos como naciones: son nuestros amigos y vecinos, y con ellos compartiremos el futuro. Estados Unidos brilla cuando tiende una mano a los amigos que lo necesitan. Los centroamericanos realizaron enormes esfuerzos durante la última década para poner fin a los conflictos y fortalecer la democracia. No podemos permitir que un huracán ahogue estas aspiraciones, y no lo haremos.

Estados Unidos no escatimará ayuda a los pueblos de América Central, nuestros
compañeros centroamericanos, en la labor de construcción de un mundo mejor en un nuevo siglo.

Gracias por escucharme.

FIN

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL 10:06 A.M. EST
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1998

FACT SHEET

Administration Response to Hurricane Mitch

At the direction of the President, the Administration is engaged in a robust relief effort in Central America in response to the disaster caused by Hurricane Mitch.

The President announced today that he is directing the drawdown of an additional \$45 million in defense articles and services. These funds will allow the Department of Defense (DOD) to further expand relief and reconstruction efforts in Central America. DOD and the U.S. Agency for International Development are actively involved in rescue operations, as well as providing food, water and medical care. They are also beginning to help rebuild roads, bridges, houses, schools and medical facilities.

Mrs. Gore led a Presidential Mission to the region on November 9-10. The First Lady will visit Central America November 16-19.

The assistance announced by the President today raises U.S. contributions to Hurricane Mitch to \$125 million dollars. There will be substantial assistance in the days and weeks ahead.

Following is a summary of the assistance currently being provided by the U. S. Government:

Department of Defense

Personnel: Over 1300 soldiers are in the region as part of a special Joint Task Force formed to coordinate the military's ongoing response. Initial military activities were funded under a Presidential drawdown of \$30 million.

Transport and Delivery: Dozens of U.S. military helicopters and 13 fixed wing aircraft operate daily and have delivered over 1.3 million pounds of relief supplies to date. Ten Chinook heavy lift helicopters arrived in the region on November 12, bringing the total to 39.

Engineering and repair: SEABEE and other units are clearing and repairing key roads. This weekend, the military will deploy a bridge company to the region to supplement efforts.

U.S. Agency for International Development

Personnel: A 31-member Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) from USAID is present in the Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador, coordinating U.S. relief activities with national and private voluntary efforts.

Critical Relief Needs: USAID is providing \$30 million to purchase and distribute plastic sheeting, blankets and other relief supplies, procure food locally, provide health, water and sanitation services (including restoration of Tegucigalpa's water system), and purchase supplies for road repair and reconstruction. Ten flights have delivered relief supplies from stockpiles in the U.S. to Central America.

Food Aid: USAID is providing \$20 million in Title II emergency food aid, including rice, beans, oil and corn soya blend for children. USAID is airlifting food to the region to meet initial needs, and has delivered almost 850 metric tons (1.87 million pounds) on 18 flights to Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala. An estimated 6,000 metric tons is expected to arrive in the region by ship before the end of the month.

Housing: USAID and the Department of Housing and Urban Development will lead a mission, in partnership with the private sector, to address housing reconstruction and infrastructure repair needs.

Department of Agriculture:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is providing 10,000 metric tons of wheat to both Honduras and Nicaragua.

Department of Treasury:

The President has asked Secretary Rubin to find the best way to provide debt relief and emergency financial aid from the U.S and the international community. The Department of Treasury is working with multilateral financial institutions to ensure that the affected countries have sufficient money for reconstruction.

Department of Justice:

The President has asked the Immigration and Naturalization Service to extend a stay of deportation for nationals from Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala through the end of the year. In addition, the Administration is examining on an urgent basis recommendations for further relief.

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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM: Tipper Gore
REGARDING: Presidential Delegation to Central America
DATE: Friday, November 13, 1998

Mr. President, the people of Central America have suffered a disaster of Biblical proportions. The pace of their recovery depends, to a large measure, on what we as their neighbors do to help them, and on the long-term involvement of the international community.

Every member of your delegation to Central America is deeply grateful for the opportunity you gave us to visit this region and witness firsthand the devastation that has resulted from Hurricane Mitch.

The scale of the disaster is beyond anything we have ever witnessed, beyond anything ever recorded in the region, surpassing even the devastation of the Managua earthquake of 1972. The human toll from this disaster is immense -- more than ten thousand lives lost. No one in Central America has been untouched by this tragedy.

The Devastation

On the first day of our trip, we went to the Manuel Bonilla school in Honduras. Before the storm, it was a resource for the entire community -- now, it's submerged in mud. A courageous and determined group of local men and women in the community are working to dig it out of the muck and turn it into a medical facility to heal the sick and injured. Our delegation pitched in to help -- spending the day shoveling mud and caring for young children, who are still bewildered by what has become of their homes, their neighborhoods, and their families.

That evening, we slept in tents outside a shelter in the Japon School, where we talked to people about where they were when the storm hit. Even though there was a warning system in place, many lived too far from town to hear it. Before they knew it, they had water up to their chests. I met one woman who was six months pregnant. I met a grandmother caring for her grandchildren. I even met a blind man who had to find his way out of danger by touching the wet and slippery walls. Each had lost everything. All are now living together in one large room. Disease is rampant.

The next day in Managua, we went to Ciudad Sandino to see the flood damage. An entire

village was completely washed away -- wiped out. People are finding what shelter they can beneath sheets of plastic draped over branches stuck in the ground. One small stream trickles through the area, but it is contaminated. The people are battling outbreaks of both cholera and malaria. They have to rebuild -- but are mostly concerned now about food and water. We spent the day unloading supplies -- baby food, water, and diapers.

Remarkably, Mr. President -- even among men and women who have lost hundreds of friends and family members -- people have not lost heart. Their spirit and determination in the face of this disaster inspired every member of this Delegation. They need help, but they are not waiting for help. They are doing everything they can to pick up what pieces remain and rebuild. In Honduras, they are already working on a plan to rebuild lost homes. In the make-shift shelters in Managua, many people had tape measures and were measuring foundations for new walls they will build as soon as materials arrive. They are suffering immense pain and grief, but their spirits defy fatigue and discouragement. They will get through this. And their North American neighbors will be by their side.

We were all heartened to see the hard work being put forth by our Embassy personnel, USAID relief workers, their private U.S. organizations, the U.S. military and all the other U.S. Government people who have rushed to the scene. The professionalism and determination of all those joined in relief efforts is uplifting and appreciated tremendously by the people of Central America.

As you know, the American relief presence in the region is large and growing. The announcement of \$70 million in aid you made last week, and the additional \$10 million you authorized me to announce on Tuesday, is a welcome and desperately needed investment in the recovery of our neighbor countries in Central America.

During our trip, I was graciously received by President Flores of Honduras and President Aleman of Nicaragua. Both are diligently coordinating relief efforts, even as they themselves share in the grief and suffering that have come to their people. They expressed their immense gratitude for U.S. efforts to help their countries through this crisis -- but the scale and scope of the disaster demands that they ask for more.

After seeing the extent of the damage -- the loss of hundreds of thousands of homes and the catastrophic collapse of important infrastructure --I have prepared, in consultation with our delegation and relief experts, a set of recommendations I believe will help address the needs of our Central American neighbors, in a way consistent with the close ties of friendship between our nations.

Recommendations/Policy Considerations

As I noted earlier, Mr. President, the efforts and accomplishments of our military personnel have been heroic, but they could multiply their impact if they had more resources. I understand that an additional \$45 million in draw-down authority is available now that could support expanded DoD efforts in relief operations. In addition, Mr. President, I recommend that you look for ways to

expand DoD's efforts further. They are doing a tremendous job.

Mr. President, I would also like to share with you the sense of urgency conveyed by Presidents Flores and Aleman as they discussed their concerns over their external debt, and their desires for enhanced trade with the United States. They both know it will take immense amounts of time and money to rebuild their countries. They believe that an even playing field in their trade relations with the United States would speed their economic recovery.

They also believe that their foreign debt -- under the present circumstances -- is an immense obstacle to rebuilding their economies. Mr. President, I recommend that you find the best way to provide bilateral and multilateral debt relief for these stricken countries, and to support offers of emergency financial assistance from the international financial institutions. I know your team has already been in deep discussions on these issues, and that you will do all you can to help relieve these countries of any burdens and barriers that will hinder efforts to rebuild their nations.

Also of concern to the Presidents are the immigration issues that confront Central Americans in the United States. I understand that the INS has authorized a temporary stay of deportations for Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Guatemala through November 23rd. Clearly, we cannot deport people whose native countries have been devastated. For humanitarian reasons, I ask that you suspend deportations through the holidays. I also ask that you review U.S. policy early in the new year, based on recommendations to be provided on an urgent basis by appropriate agencies. Finally, President Flores expressed concern about unequal immigration status among Central Americans residing in the United States. I ask that you consider introducing legislation that would put Central Americans on equal footing with one another in the eyes of I.N.S.

I also recommend the rapid deployment of skilled U.S. disaster experts and others who can work at the side of government officials, local groups, and those most immediately affected to aid them in their efforts. As I suggested in my Tuesday phone call to you, the Federal Emergency Management Administration and the Agency for International Development could work together to deploy Spanish-speaking FEMA officials who have recent experience in Puerto Rico and elsewhere. They could make an immense difference.

As you know, the Peace Corps maintains a "reserve" of experienced "Peace Corps Alumni" they call their "Crisis Corps." They have names of about 2,000 volunteers, who can be very effective in working with non-government organizations and local groups on relief and recovery projects. These volunteers could be mobilized to provide short-term assistance in the Central America recovery effort. We need to draw attention to this unique resource and encourage its full use. In the longer-term, we should encourage the Peace Corps and USAID to make this resource even more effective by finding ways to speed deployment, and perhaps explore ways to give these volunteers the right to return to their places of employment after spending time overseas during a disaster.

We should look to USAID, the Peace Corps and other groups to expand our existing mechanisms for dealing with disasters such as Mitch, and to explore new initiatives to draw on our wealth of human resources. This could include gathering significant numbers of private citizen volunteers, including our seniors.

The private sector is keen to support and participate in assistance efforts. USAID coordinates these efforts, and would be an experienced guide in helping expand private sector involvement. In particular, we should find ways to facilitate efforts of U.S. companies operating in disaster-stricken areas to provide goods and services to the relief effort.

It was apparent from our visit that the most valued and vital element of any relief effort is project coordination. Continuous improvement of project coordination should be an ongoing goal of our relief effort. There are many private organizations throughout the United States that have valuable talent and experience in this area. Building a registry of private organizations and a means for coordinating reporting activities -- perhaps using the Internet -- could help us improve and accelerate our crisis response. There is no doubt that -- over the next months and years -- the disaster relief operations in Central America will give rise to many novel approaches. Creating a storehouse of information on the relief efforts will help ensure we don't lose the benefits of the lessons we learn in this disaster -- so that we can take advantage of them to help minimize the grief and suffering that may come in future disasters.

Also, Mr. President, President Aleman said that he would greatly appreciate U.S. expertise to assist with reforestation in the aftermath of the catastrophic mudslide. The Nicaraguan people would like to develop a memorial park at the site of the disaster. In addition, the President wondered if it was possible to get technical assistance to help them better understand their volcanoes and the dangers associated with them. The U.S. Geological Survey and USAID have environmental experts standing by, ready to provide this assistance. Mr. President, I recommend you offer the Nicaraguan people the full benefit of U.S. expertise in this area, to help them speed their recovery, restore their environment, and remember their loved ones.

Finally, Mr. President, we may not be capable of preventing disasters, but we are capable of preventing deaths -- by anticipating disasters, warning the people in danger, and doing everything we can for their safety. Before I left for Central America, I received a fascinating briefing by the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and MEDEA. These organizations work together to use intelligence, geological, and weather data to prepare a remarkably vivid picture of the hurricane and its aftermath. Analysis of this type could have warned people living in high-risk areas to evacuate when the rains started. Even now, the information can help relief workers find the hardest hit areas and identify critical damage to road networks and utilities. This approach can also identify danger areas (such as areas at risk for mud-slides) so people can avoid them when they rebuild towns and roads. Perhaps most valuable, this technology can allow us to monitor the long-term environmental impact of the storm and literally watch the recovery process. That way, we can identify problem areas -- such as failing crops -- before they become major crises.

The United States has this technology right now. But we do not have it deployed where we need it. The Vice President has been promoting the development of this concept -- referred to as G-DIN, the Global Disaster Information Network -- for more than a year now. I understand that relatively modest investments can help expand this network, and help ensure that the people who really need this information -- both in the US and abroad -- can get it when and how they need it.

Conclusion

Mr. President, our friends and neighbors in Central America are well aware of your personal commitment to address their immediate and long-term recovery needs. They are touched by our generosity; we are moved by their bravery -- moved not just to emotion, but moved to action. This is a decisive moment in our relations with the people of Central America. They need us now, desperately. And they will never, ever, forget any kindness we can show them in their time of need.

The members of the delegation and I again thank you for the honor of representing you in Honduras and Nicaragua. We are all eager to be of continuing service as we help our Central American neighbors rebuild their homes, their lives, and their nations.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 5, 1998

FACT SHEET

U.S. Government Response to Hurricane Mitch

Hurricane Mitch has taken a catastrophic toll on the Central American countries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, causing a massive humanitarian crisis and challenging U.S. strategic interests in the hemisphere. President Clinton has ordered a comprehensive relief effort by the United States Government to meet the urgent humanitarian needs of the victims of this natural disaster.

U.S. Agency for International Development:

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team to the region to coordinate U.S. relief efforts with national disaster response offices. Eighteen DART team members are currently managing relief operations in the five Central American countries which have suffered the most damage from the storm.

To date, USAID has provided \$3.7 million to support DoD logistical operations and meet the most immediate needs of the victims. This relief consists of deliveries of plastic sheeting, blankets and water containers, emergency health care, and local purchases of food and other emergency supplies.

USAID today announced that its Office of Food for Peace is providing \$20 million in emergency food assistance to the Central American countries affected by Hurricane Mitch. An initial \$5 million in food aid will be airlifted to Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala, with the first flight scheduled for November 6. Rice, beans, oil and corn soya blend for children form the initial components of the USAID food aid response. USAID also announced today that it will provide an additional \$16.3 million through its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance for water, sanitation, and other relief assistance.

Department of Defense:

The Department of Defense has been actively engaged in search and rescue operations, and the delivery of relief supplies. U.S. Southern Command began search and rescue and aid distribution missions in the region on October 31. Forty-eight rotary and 25 fixed-wing missions have flown to date, with an additional 21 rotary and 9 fixed-wing missions planned in the near future. Over 710 rolls of sheeting, 15,000 water jugs and 6,000 blankets have been delivered through these missions. Southern Command has rescued approximately 75 people and delivered

450,000 pounds of relief supplies. Southern Command is establishing a special Joint Task Force in the region to coordinate the military's ongoing response.

In addition to these efforts, the President is directing that, up to \$30 million in defense articles and services be provided for disaster relief in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala. The assistance will be available for the provision and transport of emergency supplies, personnel, search and rescue personnel; and engineering support to address the devastation of infrastructure; and other items.

Department of Agriculture:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture also announced today that it has authorized the delivery of 10,000 metric tons of wheat to both Honduras and Nicaragua. This assistance is part of the 2.5 million metric ton food initiative announced by President Clinton in July. through the Presidential Food Initiative. [More from USDA to be added here.

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