



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

### PRESS RELEASE

#### **EU provides emergency relief to flood victims in Sri Lanka**

*Colombo, 12 June 2018* – Following the devastating floods and landslides which have struck Sri Lanka over the last weeks, the European Commission gave €160 000 (approximately LKR 29 million) in humanitarian funding to bring emergency assistance to the communities affected by the recent floods. Some 17 500 people in the seven most affected districts of the country will benefit from aid. Priority will be given to those who have been displaced.

This EU funding supports the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society in delivering relief assistance to those families who are currently living in temporary shelters or evacuation centres. They will receive cash grants which will enable them to purchase essential household items. Priority will be given to access to clean water and sanitation, particularly through the cleaning of wells with contaminated water. First aid and medical services will also be provided, together with hygiene awareness sessions to avoid the spread of waterborne diseases.

The funding is part of the EU's overall contribution to the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC).

Since May 19, the southwest monsoon weather conditions have caused heavy rainfalls in the southwest parts of Sri Lanka, triggering floods and landslides in various locations. According to information released by the national Disaster Management Center, close to 175 000 people have been affected across 19 districts, and 26 people killed. Puttalam, Gampaha, Ratnapura, Colombo, Kurunegala, Kalutara and Kegalle are amongst the worst affected districts.

#### **Background**

The European Union together with its Member States is the world's leading donor of humanitarian aid. Relief assistance is an expression of European solidarity towards people in need around the world. It aims to save lives, prevent and alleviate human suffering, and safeguard the integrity and human dignity of populations affected by natural disasters and man-made crises. For more information, please visit [ECHO's website](#).

The European Commission has signed a EUR 3 million humanitarian contribution agreement with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to support the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). Funds from the DREF are mainly allocated to "small-scale" disasters – those that do not give rise to a formal international appeal.

The Disaster Relief Emergency Fund was established in 1985 and is supported by contributions from donors. Each time a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society needs immediate financial support to respond to a disaster, it can request funds from the DREF. For small-scale disasters, the IFRC allocates grants from the Fund, which can then be replenished by the donors. The contribution agreement between the IFRC and ECHO enables the latter to replenish the DREF for agreed operations (that fit in with its humanitarian mandate) up to a total of EUR 3 million.

#### **For further information, please contact:**

Pierre Prakash, Regional Information Officer for Asia and the Pacific, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO): [Pierre.Prakash@echofield.eu](mailto:Pierre.Prakash@echofield.eu)