

**UNITED NATIONS OFFICE
FOR THE COORDINATION OF
HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS**



**OCHA-Geneva
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Telephone: +41 22 917 12 34
Facsimile: + 41 22 917 00 23**

**24-hour Emergency Duty System
Number: + 41 22 917 2010**



Photo: IRIN

**Pakistan earthquake: six months
after**

8 October – 8 April - Six months after the earthquake, reconstruction has begun in countless villages and hamlets. The internally displaced persons are gradually returning to their place of origin.

The relief efforts have been relatively successful. A second wave of deaths was avoided. No massive population movements took place. No epidemics broke out. More than 500,000 tents were delivered; some 5 million-iron sheets were distributed; over 6 million blankets/quilts were provided. A nutrition survey showed no major food deficiency compared to the pre-earthquake level. Recorded mortality in the affected areas was not higher than during the previous winter. Thousands of latrine slabs were installed; safe water was restored for over 700,000 people. Over 1 million children were vaccinated against measles. Countless helicopters -- from the Pakistani Military, United

Nations, NATO, United States and other countries -- airlifted food and non-food items.

Heavy rains continue to hamper relief efforts in some areas. Numerous landslides have occurred and have blocked several roads. There remains a very high risk of mudslides blocking key access roads in the coming weeks.

Efforts of the humanitarian response community currently focus on assisted IDP returns. According to UNHCR, more than 64,000 people have left the relief camps to return home. Thirty camps have closed, leaving 86,750 people in over 120 camps of over 50 tents. The IDP returns process is being monitored on a continuous basis, from the point of departure and en route, with the focus now shifting to place-of-origin monitoring. Surveys show that returns are voluntary;

UNHAS has exhausted its funding for the ongoing relief/recovery helicopter operation. With the exception of the four DFID funded helicopters, which are supported up to the end of May

2006, operations are in danger of being suspended. The 4 DFID funded helicopters are able to cater for only 10% of the current workload given to UNHAS by the humanitarian community.

In order to continue the operation up until the end of April 2006 and give the UN time to secure funding through the Action Plan and its process, UNHAS would immediately need some US\$ 4 million against the 18.5 million US\$ required until the end of August 2006.

It is expected that, in the absence of even limited airlift capacity, relief/recovery programmes will be seriously affected and delayed in the coming weeks and months due to landslides, flooding, and the need to adhere to minimum safety standards. Donkeys and mules are not available in sufficient numbers to convey the volume of tools, equipment and other items presently planned.

The OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG) mission, comprising of representatives from Belgium, Canada, ECHO, Finland, France, Germany, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and USA, visited Pakistan for six days. The aim was to review the overall humanitarian response to the earthquake and the role of OCHA, to comprehend the challenges foreseen for sustainable recovery and to develop an understanding of how best to support the Government of Pakistan in its recovery and reconstruction efforts.

.....

AFRICA

Drought in the Horn of Africa

7 April - United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief

Coordinator, Jan Egeland, launched on 7 April an appeal for \$426 million to support the urgent needs of more than eight million people severely affected by drought in the Horn of Africa.

Poverty-stricken and conflict-affected people living in parts of Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia have been suffering from water shortages and declining access to food resulting from several years of successive rainfall failures and the rapid erosion of assets and livelihoods. Initial funding from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) was made available to the United Nations agencies in all five countries to enable them to jump-start their activities ahead of the anticipated donor response to the regional appeal.

As part of the response to the recurrent drought and chronic food insecurity devastating the region, the United Nations appointed former Norwegian Prime Minister Kjell Magne Bondevik as Special Humanitarian Envoy for the Horn of Africa. As the Special Humanitarian Envoy, Mr. Bondevik travelled to Kenya from 21 to 23 February 2006; a more extensive mission to Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Somalia is planned for the end of April.

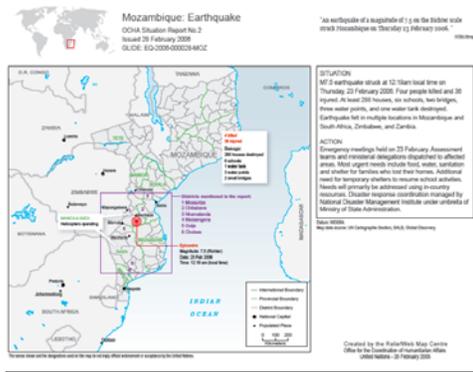
Tindouf Floods - Algeria

10 February 2006 - very heavy rain caused flooding in the region of Tindouf, Algeria --about 50-60kms from the Moroccan and Mauritanian borders-- in an area with refugee camps affecting reportedly 12,000 families.

An Emergency Cell was created involving UNHCR, WFP and CRA (Algerian Red Crescent). Rapid assessment missions were undertaken jointly by the three agencies on the same day, in order to evaluate the extent of the casualties, damages and most immediate needs. UNHCR

distributed tents, blankets, plastic sheets, mattresses and jerry cans to the affected area from their Jordanian stockpile. OCHA provided relief items through the Brindisi stock.

Mozambique Earthquake



On **23 February**, an earthquake of a magnitude of 7.5 on the Richter scale struck Mozambique in Machaze District in southern Manica Province. The earthquake was felt up to Maputo and Beira where thousands of people fled into the streets.

Four people were killed and 36 injured and at least 288 houses were destroyed in Machaze.

The Government requested technical support from the UN for strengthening its capacity to manage risks and disasters related to earthquakes. A Humanitarian Affairs Officer from the OCHA Regional Office for Southern Africa was deployed to assist the UN Resident Coordinator.

Namibia Floods

On **25 February**, the western side of Mariental town was flooded after the sluices of the Hardap Dam had to be opened. Five people have died because of the floods. As of 3 March 2100 people remain displaced.

DRC: Tornado in North Kivu

8 March – A tornado ravaged Oicha, north of Beni in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, causing considerable damage to Oicha and its surrounding areas. The areas are already host to several IDP sites.

Although the damage seems to have been mainly material, 3 deaths and 85 persons wounded, have been reported. The structural damage to the town of Oicha is considerable, approximately 1/3 of the city's buildings were seriously damaged or destroyed. More than 1000 houses, 38 schools, 15 churches, 62 commercial buildings and 6 IDP camps were seriously damaged in the Oicha-Eringeti area.

An assessment mission to Oicha was dispatched by OCHA, WFP and MONUC.

EUROPE

Serbia & Montenegro Floods

April - Due to snow melt combined with heavy rainfall, the Danube River has reached record water levels in Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria in the past days, flooding towns and villages. In Romania, officials say the Danube has reached its highest level since 1895.

During the past several weeks, Serbia has also had to face a problem of landslides, which have been followed by large floods. A total of 30 municipalities have been affected throughout Serbia (North and Central/Eastern parts).

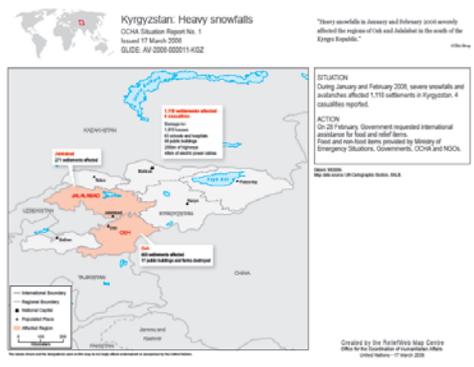
At present, the Government has not launched an international appeal, nor does the UN (or the Red Cross movement) see this as necessary, as

the relief needs appear to be at a level that national actors can address. However, there is concern about some under met relief needs (e.g., for some rural populations, elderly people, Roma, etc.) as well as a growing concern about impact of this emergency on food production and livelihoods. In addition, there is also concern that further flooding may occur as additional snowmelt occurs traditionally in May.

The United Nations agencies in Serbia and Montenegro have been closely following the emergency situation and the response.

The Governments of Spain and Slovakia have sent food and non-food relief items including coats, boots and other clothing, blankets, tents, stoves and heaters and olive oil. The Austrian Red Cross and Baptist Church of Hungary have committed 10 tones of flour and 10 tones of rice respectively. OCHA has provided an emergency grant of \$11,500 to cover transportation costs for the 20 tones of food provided.

Kyrgyzstan Heavy snowfalls



28 February - Heavy snowfalls and avalanches have affected more than 1000 settlements in the southern regions of Osh and Jalalabad in Kyrgyzstan. The Government reported four casualties, destruction of 17 public buildings and farms, and damage to 1815 houses, 63 schools and hospitals and 86 public buildings. The Ministry of Emergency Situations is assisting the affected families and providing food aid.

On 28 February 2006, the Government requested international assistance through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center, as well as OCHA to meet immediate needs for food and relief items.

ASIA and PACIFIC

Indonesia Earthquake

15 March - The recent 6.4 M earthquake and 5 metre tidal wave, that occurred in the aftermath of the earthquake, have caused two fatalities, and seriously injured one person. The quake also caused heavy damage to houses in Namlea District - Maluku Province. Some 1,200 persons from Batu Jungku and Pelang Village of Bata Bual Sub-District fled from their homes to mountainous areas.

The local government provided basic emergency assistance, food, medical supplies, blankets, to the affected people. The Resident Coordinator Office in Jakarta was in direct contact with the government and non-governmental institutions, as well as with the Indonesian Red Cross.

Iran Earthquake



Photo: IRIN

30 March - In the wake of the series of earthquakes that struck Lorestan province in western Iran in the night and early morning of 30 to 31 March 2006, the United Nations dispatched urgently-needed supplies and extended several emergency cash grants for relief efforts. The Government of Iran welcomed this international assistance.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has allocated \$50,000 for the purchase of urgently needed tents and blankets, including \$20,000 from its reserve fund and \$30,000 from the Netherlands' reserve fund. At the request of Italy, \$170,000 in relief supplies -- including water storage containers and purification units, generators, kitchen sets, tents and blankets -- stored in the United Nations' warehouse in Brindisi, were transported to Iran over the weekend, on behalf of OCHA and the World Food Programme (WFP). The Government has confirmed 63 deaths, 1,418 injured and some 160,000 persons affected. Although the number of deaths is relatively low, there is substantial damage to the infrastructure and a number of villages were completely destroyed.

According to the UN assessment mission, 320 villages were affected, with 35,000 to 40,000 homes partially or completely destroyed. In Boroujerd city, an additional 15,000 homes have suffered damage.

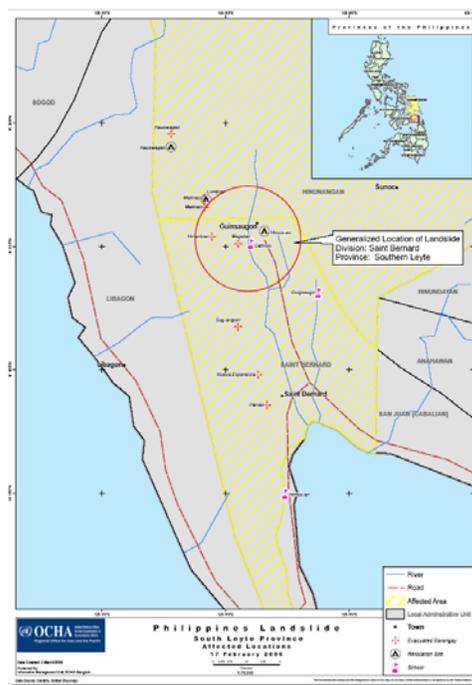
The UN Resident Coordinator, accompanied by senior Government

officials from the National Disaster Task Force and OCHA, visited the affected region on 5 April. As a result of this joint mission, a decision was made to set up Resource and Information Centers to ensure information sharing and coordination among the agencies and Government partners.

According to the Resident Coordinator, the UN agencies have contributed approximately USD 1 million towards relief and recovery efforts, either through cash or in-kind donations.

Pakistan has sent a planeload of relief items for the earthquake victims. The Russian Federation has delivered tents, blankets and space heaters totalling some USD 480,000. Japan has also provided tents, blankets and electric generators worth USD 85,000.

Philippines landslides



17 February - Following the deadly landslide caused by heavy rains in the Philippines, where almost 1,400 people were missing, an UNDAC team was deployed. UNDP mobilized

\$100,000 to help the victims in addition to an emergency grant of \$50,000 extended by OCHA.

The Philippine Government deployed almost 800 personnel to support the rescue and relief operations, while UNICEF provided health kits and essential medicine for 10,000 people affected by the disaster. Since the disaster, 11 villages surrounding Guinsaunon, which is in Southern Leyte Province, had been evacuated as a preventive measure. The landslide was 4 meters deep and covered an area of approximately 3 square kilometers.

The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC) in partnership with Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF) established an emergency telecommunications response mission in Leyte, Philippines to provide communication service mainly to local and international NGOs, local and provincial government officials, and coordination with UNDAC personnel. The mission offered support and provided people affected by the disaster with a link to the outside world. The mission also aimed to coordinate and strengthen emergency relief efforts in the worst affected zones through its satellite communications equipment.

Indonesia Flash floods and Landslides

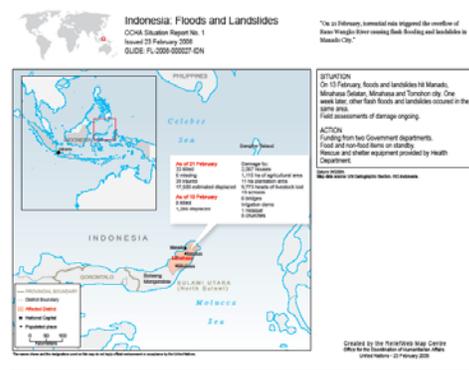


1 January - Flash floods and landslides, that occurred on 1 January and affected 10 sub-districts in Jember District of East Java Province, have killed 77 people, of whom 71 were from Panti Sub-District, the worst affected. The total number of displaced people registered is 6,761 persons temporarily, sheltered in 15 evacuation sites. 9,500 persons have been displaced.

The disaster damaged 500 houses in Panti Subdistrict, 55 in Tanggul Sub-District, 40 in Rambipuji Sub-District and 5 in Arjasa Sub-District. The United Nations Technical Working Group for disaster management deployed a joint assessment team, consisting of OCHA, UNICEF and UNDP to the affected area in Banjarnegara.

OCHA Office in Jakarta was in direct contact with government institutions and the Indonesian Red Cross.

Indonesia – Floods and Landslides North Sulawesi Province



On **21 February**, torrential rain triggered the overflow of Rano Wangko River causing flash flooding and landslides in Manado City, the capital city of North Sulawesi Province. These events followed the floods and landslides that hit Manado City, Minahasa Selatan, Minahasa, and Tomohon City on 13 February that left eight dead and resulted in the displacement of 1,286 people.

The Provincial Coordinating Unit for the Management of Disaster (SATKORLAK North Sulawesi) reported 33 deaths, 6 missing, and 39 injured. According to the Indonesian Red Cross approximately 17,500 people have been displaced. It was also reported that 2,067 houses, 1,115 hectares of agricultural area and 11 hectares of plantation area were damaged and 9,773 head of livestock lost.

The United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator's Office in Jakarta deployed a mission to conduct field assessments in collaboration with the relevant Government and non-governmental institutions.



27,500 families have been affected and 12,742 are in need of humanitarian aid. To date 23 persons have died as a result of the floods and 9,374 families have been evacuated.

OCHA has deployed an UNDAC team. An On-site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC) was set up in Santa Cruz and San Julian.

LATIN AMERICA

Bolivia floods



In January and February 2006, continuous floods, triggered by heavy rains, affected several departments across Bolivia. The most damaged areas are located in the departments of Santa Cruz, La Paz and Beni. The Government declared a state of emergency at the beginning of February and appealed for international assistance.

Colombia rainfalls/winter season

In early January, cold winds coming from the Pacific Ocean have triggered the early beginning of the first rainy season, causing floods, landslides, and gales. This year, rainy season, is intensifying and causing floods, landslides, and gales. Rains may continue until May. Consequently, the Institute of Hydrology, Meteorology and Environmental Studies (IDEAM) maintains its alerts in view of the high probability of landslides in the Andean and Pacific regions and along the Andean foothills, due to ground saturation.



At the end of 2005, the second rainy season, which started in October, affected 474,493 persons in 244 municipalities, causing 94 deaths. Seven people went missing, 114 were injured, 2,232 houses were destroyed and 21,173 houses damaged. This year's rainy season has affected 43,225 persons. A total of 38 people have lost their lives and 47 were injured. In addition, 232 houses were destroyed, and 3,737 houses and 6 educative centres damaged. In Manizales, 11 children died while on a school excursion, due to a landslide caused by the overflow of a river. OCHA field offices in Cali, Bucaramanga and Medellín monitored the situation through evaluation missions with local authorities.

The Government of Italy approved OCHA's request to allocate an Emergency Grant of USD 100,000. OCHA liaised with local and regional disaster committees, national authorities and the CRC in order to monitor the impact of the rainy season and help mobilize resources based on assessments of the needs of the affected population.

An interagency team composed of OCHA, IOM, WHO, UNDSS and WFP was established in Cali to monitor the impact of the rainy season in Valle del Cauca. OCHA is helping the local and regional authorities coordinate the response among the different institutions.

The National Directorate for Disaster Prevention and Attention¹ (DGPAD) reported 193 events associated to the rainy season this year, as follows:

Type of Events 1 January–18 April 2006:

Landslides	83	43%
Floods	82	42%
Avalanches	6	3%
Gales	22	11%
Total	193	100%

Source: DGPAD

Ecuador floods



February - Since early February 2006, 16 people have died due to floods, 11 of whom in Los Ríos province. According to the latest information, the floods have affected 28,000 families in the provinces of El Oro, Guayas, Esmeraldas, Los Ríos, and Manabí. The number of families requiring urgent assistance remains at 11,432.

Agriculture is the main activity of people living in flood-affected areas. As long as the water does not subside, farmers will be unable to produce. As a consequence, the affected families will require food assistance for three months until their livelihoods are restored.

¹ State entity created in 1989, through Decree 919, in order to ensure the management and coordination of the entities that are part of the National Disaster Prevention and Attention System.

The Government of Ecuador requested international assistance and international donations of food, domestic items, agricultural tools, clothing, mattresses, or cash to support flood victims and recovery activities. The Government is also asking for technical and financial support for the reforestation of upstream river basins and the conservation and exploitation of mangroves as a preventative measure for the next winter rainy season.

The Government of Ecuador received international humanitarian aid from Brazil: 14 MT of food, Venezuela: 40 MT of food and non-food items, the first consignment of which was received on 1 April, Argentina: 4 MT of food and 1MT of non-food items, scheduled to arrive on 11 April. OCHA released an emergency cash grant.

Guyana Floods

2 February - the floods resulting from heavy rainfall since December 2005 affected six regions of Guyana. Waters have receded somewhat, although several areas remain at least partially flooded and the soil is soggy.

An assessment led by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) focused on livelihoods and the drainage infrastructure and indicated that 437 people remained in five shelters, while food was delivered to an additional 47 shut-in people.

Colombia volcano Galeras



28 March - Increased seismic activity of the volcano Galeras, located in the department of Nariño in south-western Colombia, led the Colombian Institute of Geology and Mining to change its alert phase to Level II (likely eruption in days or weeks) on 28 March 2006 and declared that the situation is "extremely critical."

Flights over the top of the volcano confirmed that the main crater is capped and that gas and ash emissions are taking place in small quantity. Steam columns rose up to 500 m above the volcano. This behaviour has historically preceded volcanic eruptions. Several communities around the volcano are at high risk in Pasto, Nariño and La Florida. 8,463 residents would need to be evacuated. As of 6 April, 1,221 persons have moved to 5 temporary shelters.

The Columbian Red Cross, has mobilized response teams. The Government is taking measures to improve living conditions in temporary shelters. The UN System's Technical Emergency Team met on 31 March to review the situation and agreed that WFP, OIM, WHO and OCHA would each deploy a staff member to Pasto to join up with WHO, UNHCR, OIM and UNDSS staff already in the area and form a UN team. OCHA has sent a staff member and a vehicle to Pasto in order to logistically and technically support the UN team.

OCHA is prepared to accept cash contributions to be used for immediate relief assistance, in support of the UN Resident Coordinator in Colombia.

Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Response and Response Preparedness in Central America

28 February – 2 March - OCHA and CEPREDENAC organized two events in Guatemala: a 'High Level Meeting on Disaster Response and Preparedness in Central America'; and a 'Workshop on Forecasting and Possible Lines of Action in Central America for the 2006 Hurricane Season'. During the high-level meeting, a note of intention was signed between USG Jan Egeland, Aníbal Ernesto Quiñónez, Secretary-General of the Central American Integration System (SICA), and David Smith, Executive Secretary of the Natural Disaster Prevention Coordination Centre for Central America, (CEPREDENAC) to establish the basis of a future regional Cooperation Agreement on Preparedness and Response to Natural Disasters. *For more information, please contact:* David Smith, Executive Secretary, CEPREDENAC, at dsmith@cepredenac.org -



UN assistance El Salvador: photo Dusan Zupka

On 3 March, Mr. Egeland undertook a field visit to San Marcos La Laguna to obtain first-hand information on the

evolution of the projects carried out by the United Nations, in coordination with the Guatemala Government. Mr. Egeland met survivors of the tropical storm from the Lake Atitlán area. While in Guatemala, the ERC expressed his support for the families affected by Hurricane Stan as well as for the other countries of the region constantly threatened by natural hazards that frequently result in disasters.

The participants in the Workshop and the High Level Meeting recommended a concrete Plan of Action to overcome present difficulties and endorsed a final common resolution, which recommended actions to reinforce the preparation for the 2006 hurricane season, emphasizing the need to continue improving and strengthening preparation and response systems at the local, national and regional levels.

According to meteorological experts, the 2006 season could be as violent as that of 2005, which broke all world records with 27 tropical storms, of which 15 became hurricanes. The 2005 series of storms affected 3.6 million people in the nine countries that are represented in the Guatemala event--Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic. This represents a dramatic increase compared to the 14,400 persons affected in 2004. In Guatemala, tropical storm Stan caused economic losses of 7,473 million quetzals or USD 983 million, equivalent to 3.4% of 2004 Guatemala's GNP.

According to CEPREDENAC, Central America is one of the most vulnerable regions due to its exposure to a wide range of risks and to the increase of natural, socio-natural and man-made hazards. The number of disasters has also increased during the past three decades.

In past years, efforts have centred on the prevention and reduction of disasters rather than on strengthening response mechanisms. These essential measures to reduce the level of vulnerability of the countries and to promote development require continuous support that will produce results only in the medium and long term. For this reason the Guatemala event focused on measures of disaster management that need to be reinforced in the region, in particular in the fields of prevention, response mechanisms, coordination and international cooperation.

ISDR

Third international Conference on early warning



UN photo/Evan Schneider

26 to 29 March Bonn - The Third International Conference on Early Warning (EWC III) took place in Bonn, Germany from 26 to 29 March 2006. An initiative of the German government under the auspices of the United Nations, this event was an opportunity to gather governments, international organizations, NGOs, scientists, and individual experts to discuss recent developments in early warning. The conference was attended by the USG for Humanitarian Affairs,

Jan Egeland, and the UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery, President Clinton. In two parallel streams, a plenary forum and a scientific symposium, about 1,000 participants exchanged views on aspects of early warning in all categories of hazards. The plenary focused on action, through projects that illustrated good practice in early warning. A Checklist of early warning activities and a Compendium of early warning projects were produced before and during the conference.

“Early warning and preparedness are essential in preventing loss of lives and property due to natural hazards. This action-oriented conference will be an opportunity to highlight, through the presentation of projects in the field, the importance of early warning mechanisms for people’s daily lives,” said Jan Egeland, United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator, who addressed the conference. He presented a report on a Global Survey of Early Warning Systems, called for by the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, in January 2005 in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

Among the conference’s concrete outcomes is the establishment of a checklist of practical actions that will help countries and communities in developing effective people-centered early warning systems; a compendium of some 100 early warning projects for possible funding and implementation in all parts of the world; and the establishment of long-term mechanisms to disseminate information about activities and gaps in early warning around the world. The conference is intended to serve as a reference for practitioners and for future works in the early warning area. For more information please visit: <http://www.ewc3.org>

UN-EU Seminar in Brussels



20 March - A high level meeting on cooperation between OCHA and the European Union in emergency response and field coordination took place in Brussels on Monday 20 March 2006. Directors General of the 25 European EU nations emergency services and those of the 5 non-EU states participating in the EC Civil Protection Mechanism attended the meeting, chaired by the Austrian Minister of Interior.

The meeting was aimed at providing strategic and policy direction to the participants at the seminar, that, at technical level, take place in Salzburg from

8 to 11 May 2006. The seminar will review the SOP, attached to the OCHA/EC Exchange of Letters and provide comments on how to improve operational cooperation. Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Margareta Wahlstrom, the Chief Emergency Service Branch and the Chief of External Relations represented OCHA.

Natural disasters¹ in 2005: summary

	2005	1995-2004 yearly average
No. of country-level disasters	428	322
No. of countries affected	127	108
No. of people killed	89,916	77,320
No. of people affected	160 million	253,895,912
Economic damages (US\$)	159 billion	65.5 billion

1: The CRED CRUNCH newsletter does not include epidemics as natural disasters unless explicitly stated.

Source: CRED CRUNCH

Contact: byrs@un.org

More information can be found on Relief Web, OCHA on line, and IRIN websites:

www.reliefweb.int
<http://ochaonline.un.org>
www.irinnews.org

