

Brussels, 9 March 2010

Factsheet Chile earthquake (08/03/2010)



(Concepcion before and after the earthquake: Flooded areas and damaged roads. Source: DigitalGlobe)

1. LATEST AVAILABLE FIGURES

GLOBAL	
Number of fatalities (minimum estimate) ¹	528
Number of injured (minimum estimate) ²	500
Total number of people affected in some way	2,000,000
EU NATIONALS	
Europeans resident in Chile (maximum estimate) ³	147,287
Europeans tourists present on 27.02 (maximum estimate) ⁴	15,228
Europeans accounted for	2355
Europeans unaccounted for (maximum estimate)	977
Europeans confirmed or presumed dead	2
Europeans injured	1

¹ Source: : OCHA situation Report N4 of 05 March

² Source: ONEMI, Media reports and SITCEN Consular Unit

³ EU citizens on consular lists of EU Member States' Embassies.

⁴ EU citizens on consular lists of EU Member States' Embassies.

2. SITUATION in CHILE

On 27 February a powerful 8.8 magnitude earthquake hit central Chile. Since the initial quake, the U.S. Geological Survey reports 150 aftershocks. Nine of these aftershocks have had a magnitude of 6.0 or greater, on 6 March, including a strong 6.6 magnitude aftershock near Concepción on 6 March. On 4 March the Government sharply corrected downward the number of deaths, because of confusion over the number of people who had disappeared (especially in the Maule Region where death numbers were lowered from 587 to 316). The official death toll, on 8 March, was reported to be 528 persons. Rescue officials have informed that they are not keeping records of people reported to have disappeared especially those linked to the tsunami, even though some have estimated that up to 500 people could be missing. A 30-day curfew has been imposed in the most affected regions of Maule and Bio-Bio.

More than one week after the quake, there is still a lack of reliable information about damage and needs. More than 350 people died in the coastal town of Constitución (Maule region) due to waves from a tsunami. Two EU Member State citizens are confirmed dead (one Swedish and one Spanish), one Belgian citizen is injured. The death toll is expected to continue to rise as communications are restored with the most affected areas.

Those Member States that have Consulates in Chile confirmed that they would seek to provide assistance to any MS citizen that requests it. Some EU Member States have substantial numbers of nationals in Chile (Italy 50,000, Spain about 31,000, Germany about 30,000 and the UK about 5,000). However, these figures mostly refer to people with dual nationality, which are long-term residents in the country and are certainly not in need of evacuation.

Most affected regions: Maule, Bio-Bio, Araucania, Santiago, Valparaíso and O'Higgins. Search and Rescue (SAR) Teams are still operative in affected areas. Evacuation of injured still ongoing mainly in Bio-Bio and Maule regions.

The latest official reported figures show over 2 million people have been affected by the quake. An estimated 500,000 houses have been seriously damaged and some 1.5 million houses have been affected. A national state of emergency has been declared for Maule and Bio-Bio regions. President Bachelet has affirmed that 80% of the Chilean population has been affected in some way.

First estimate from Eqecat – a U.S. company involved in risk analysis for insurance companies – indicate that the quake could cost between USD 15 and USD 30 billion (the equivalent of 15% of Chile's GDP). Chile's national debt stands at 6% of its annual GDP, the country's Social and Economic Stabilization Fund holds USD 11.3 billion (source: Global Insight). Copper are located mostly in the north of the country and they seem benot affected by the earthquake. The World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) have opened credit lines for Chile.

Chile's new government takes office on Thursday 11 March. Albeit the polemics between the Chilean Navy and ONEMI on the failed tsunami alert, President elect Sebastián Piñera has said that he wants the current head of ONEMI, Carmen Fernández, to stay on after his administration takes office.

Main Challenges for International assistance

Security: The government has imposed a night-time curfew (from 9 pm to 6 am local time) in seven cities: Curico, Molina, Sagrada Familia, Concepción, Talca, Cauquenes, Constitución (AFP). The Chilean army and the Navy are contributing to security on the ground with 14,000 soldiers, 50 transport planes, and 3 vessels.

Health In southern Chile, six hospitals collapsed and two others were damaged severely and left unable to function. Hospitals in the Metropolitan Region, where Santiago is located, are functioning. In the disaster zone (from Valparaíso to Araucanía), eight hospitals are unusable and ten have suffered major damage and are being evaluated. A principal public hospital has closed in Santiago. It is reported that, due to extent of damage, it may be less costly to rebuild rather than repair. In terms of loss of health services, Maule is the most affected. Four of its seven hospitals do not function. The other three hospitals are known to have been damaged, but continue to function providing limited services.

Electricity supply: The Chilean national company has announced that 89% of their clients already have electrical supply, even if 165.000 families are not yet receiving the service. Important shortfalls still persist but work is ongoing to re-establish full service

Airports: Santiago airport has resumed 24 hour operations on 5 March for international and domestic flights, but is still not at full capacity. On 7 March, Chile biggest company has reached 70% of its capacity and it is estimated that next 10 March the operations will be re-established in a 100%.

Roads: Many roads are damaged (see details in Google Maps) ⁵.

The Chilean government has officially requested on 1 March 2010 international assistance in the following domains: mechanical bridges, field hospitals with surgical capacity, satellite telephones and relay stations, generators, salt water purification systems, shelter, self-dialysis units⁶, field kitchens, USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) teams. On 3 March President Bachelet declared to the press that there is no shortage of food and fuel in the country.

4. EU Emergency response

4.1. Humanitarian Effort

On 28 February DG ECHO adopted a € 3 million Primary Emergency Decision. With the funds available, support is being given in emergency telecommunications, helping to re-establish health services, mainly through provision of equipment such as generators and water purification systems, emergency medicines and supplies (including essential vaccines), epidemiological surveillance, shelter, safe water, and distribution of Non Food Items - such as basic equipment for cooking, water storage, coverage against cold and articles for personal hygiene.

A team of humanitarian experts has been deployed to the affected area. Close contact is being maintained with ECHO partners, the EU Delegation in Chile, Member States, ONEMI and regional partners.

⁵ More information is available on <http://maps.google.cl/maps/ms?hl=es&gl=cl&ie=UTF8&oe=UTF8&msa=0&msid=101583086025908752159.000480adeb622070a2cd4>

⁶ Autonomous units

UN Secretary-General has pledged to release from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) up to \$10 million to support relief and recovery efforts, especially regarding health, emergency shelter, education and water and sanitation. According to OCHA, the different UN agencies are working in order to identify projects before new government will take power next 11 March.

To avoid outbreaks of Hepatitis A, Chile has asked for 800.000 doses of the vaccine and PAHO/WHO is looking into securing a donation from pharmaceutical producers. Further detailed information is expected in the coming days, as many humanitarian agencies are carrying out needs assessments.

4.2 Civil Protection coordinated by MIC

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism issued a pre-alert message to the Participating States immediately after the earthquake on 27 February and was activated on 1 March, following the request for international assistance from the Chilean President (see point 3). Several Participating States offered in-kind assistance including mechanical bridges, tents, mobile power generators, field kitchens and damage assessment specialists.

MIC has deployed a EU Civil Protection coordination and assessment team, composed of 6 experts. The team is supported by a Technical Assistance and Support - TAST module (developed by DEMA-DK), under the Preparatory Action for EU Rapid Response Capacity.

On the 5 March the EU CP Team arrived to Chile and started to undertake joint assessments with OCHA, several UN agencies and ECHO in the most affected areas. Most of the team will be based in Penco, where it will establish the base of operations and from there undertake assessments of the most affected areas in coordination with the national authorities. Coordination in Santiago will also be ensured with 2 experts staying in the capital

5. EU Ongoing Cooperation with Chile (Background)

Relations between Chile and the EU are long-standing and excellent. The EU-Chile Association Agreement entered into force in 2005 and is the cornerstone of the relationship, covering a wide range of political, cooperation and trade issues. Chile actively supports EU policies and standards in the region. Political dialogue meetings take place regularly at all levels. The EU is the main source of FDI for Chile and EU-Chile trade amounted to €16 billion in 2008.

The envelope for development cooperation with Chile for the period 2007-2013 amounts to €41million, matched by the same amount from Chile's side. Funds are earmarked for three priority sectors: social cohesion, innovation & competitiveness and education. These funds are programmed in close cooperation with the Chilean authorities.

For more information and to download relevant documents please consult the EU External Action site at:

http://eeas.europa.eu/news/index_en.htm

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre funded by the Instrument for Stability provides maps and analysis at:

<http://www.gdacs.org/>