

OCHA FLASH NOTE

THE CARIBBEAN - HURRICANE TOMAS

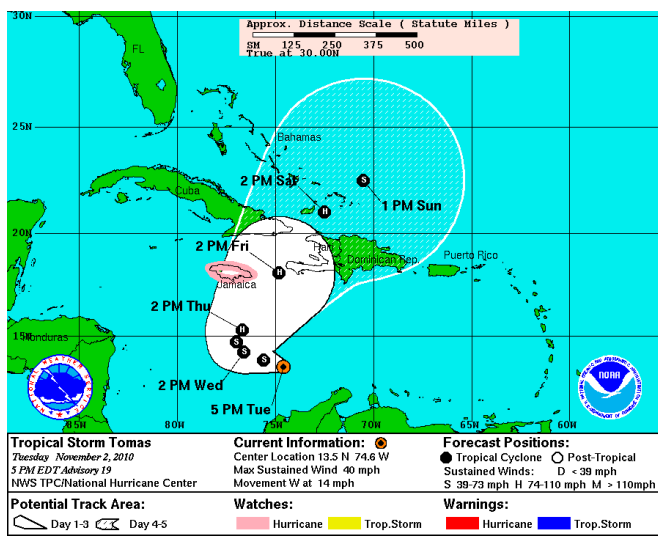
This note is compiled from disaster monitoring and inputs from Regional Humanitarian partners.
For input, feedback and suggestions send an email to ocha-rolac-web@un.org

Volume 1

Updated: November 02 2010 - 18:00

HURRICANE TOMAS

Tomas, the nineteenth named storm of the Atlantic season formed on October 29. Tomas made landfall in Barbados as a tropical storm at 2:00 a.m. on Saturday, 30 October. It strengthened to a Category 1 hurricane and severely impacted the island states of Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and Saint Lucia. The predicted route for Tomas will impact Haiti and Dominican Republic on Friday November 5. Concerns are that an impact from Tomas could also worsen cholera outbreak in Haiti.



Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

- The Government declared affected areas in the North as disaster zones (Park Hill to Sandy Bay)
- Shelter population has decreased, currently 820 remain in shelters. Shelters in the Grenadines have closed.
- Some 1,200 houses were damaged and 14 totally destroyed
- Distributions of relief and shelter supplies is

underway

- 7 Governments buildings damaged
- 7-8 schools damaged. Schools closed for the week
- Water and power supplies affected
- Banana and plantain crops damaged

Santa Lucia.

- Five (5) dead
- Communication remains a challenge
- 11 radio stations are non-operational. Two stations remain on air
- Damage to government buildings
- Major damage to roads and bridges
- The community of Soufriere is completely cut off due to landslides.
- The international airport is closed
- Disruption in electric and telecommunication services
- Evacuated population is returning to their homes although 1,000 people remain in emergency shelters.
- The government of Saint Lucia declared a national disaster and has requested international assistance.
- 100% of banana crops affected

Barbados.

- Some 500 houses damaged
- 75 - 80 percent of the electricity is down
- Classes were cancelled until Thursday
- Health centres are closed due to lack of water
- Water supply is significantly reduced in some areas

San Martin,

- 100 houses were damaged
- 500 people are in temporary shelters.

RESPONSE AND HUMANITARIAN NEEDS

- Most urgent needs are constructions and shelter materials;
- The Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) has estimated a payout of US\$8.5 million for Barbados, US\$3.2 million for Saint Lucia, and US\$1.1 million for St Vincent and the Grenadines
- The International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) has mobilized resources out of the Guadeloupe to assist in recovery efforts in Saint Lucia.
- IFRC is planning a multiple small-country appeal for around 600 families, focusing on shelter, and is also mobilizing DREF funding.

COORDINACION

- The Eastern Caribbean Donors Group Rapid Needs Assessment Team and CDEMA's Technical Emergency Assessment Team have been deployed to Barbados and St. Lucia. Three priority areas are water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health and food.
- OCHA has a Regional Disaster Response Advisor working closely with humanitarian actors in the Caribbean.
- CDEMA Coordinating Unit continues to maintain contact with the impacted States closely monitoring the situation and coordinating the regional response.
- CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU) is on standby and ready to provide response support
- Eastern Caribbean Donor Group met in Barbados

on October 31.

- UNICEF, UNDP and WHO/PAHO have sub-regional presences in Barbados from which they are providing support.
- A British navy ship will assist St. Lucia with interventions in WASH and shelter.

FINANCING

- USAID/OFDA pledged US\$50,000 to Saint Vincent and Grenadines and Saint Lucia
- The Australian Agency for International Development has pledged US\$100,000.
- CDEMA has initiated action for accessing the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) grant of \$200,000 for each of the affected states.

PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS

Haiti

The Government of Haiti, humanitarian organizations, and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) have activated their contingency plans and are mobilizing basic supplies in preparation for the possible arrival of Hurricane Tomas. Members from the Regional Risk, Disaster and Emergency Work Group (REDLAC) are on standby to deploy relief supplies and other response mechanisms. The majority of the agencies already have staff in Haiti working in response to the cholera outbreak and to the earthquake.

Dominican Republic

Tomas is expected to cause impact in the western areas of the country. Heavy rains from the hurricane could impact the many dams in the area, which are already at top levels. Floods and landslides are expected. Authorities confirm that they have 1,610 shelters with capacity for 480,940 people in 23 provinces ready. The National

Emergency authorities are prepositioning humanitarian kits (food, hygiene and water) to an estimated caseload of 160,000 people for 3 to 7 days of operations.

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*For more information on Hurricane Tomas and other crises, visit: www.reliefweb.int and www.redhum.org
(information in Spanish)*