

Natural Disasters in the South Pacific

Recovery efforts in American Samoa, Indonesia, and the Philippines

I extend my thoughts and prayers to all those affected by the devastating tsunami in the South Pacific, and earthquakes and typhoons throughout Southeast Asia. The President has declared American Samoa a major disaster area, as whole villages were destroyed by the tsunami. The U.S. government continues to respond to the disasters, and currently, a team of more than 300 responders from FEMA, American Red Cross, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Health and Human Services and other federal agencies are on the ground in American Samoa. We pray for the tens and thousands of survivors and their loved ones in the islands and here on the mainland.

Two earthquakes also hit Indonesia, resulting in a death toll of over 500. In the Philippines, 290 people have been killed by an earlier storm in and around Manila and 3.1 million have been affected by the floods, leaving hundreds of thousands homeless.

Below is information on how you can help. Federal agencies are encouraging monetary donations to nonprofit organizations, as any donated items will have to be physically shipped to the South Pacific, which takes a substantial amount of time and requires additionally funding for transportation.

Reuniting Families. To facilitate the reunification of families separated due to American Samoa tsunami the Red Cross has activated their “Safe and Well” program, which assists families with locating missing loved ones. Families can register on the Red Cross Safe and Well Website at <https://disastersafe.redcross.org/> or call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) to register their loved ones.

The American Red Cross has deployed volunteers on the ground in American Samoa and is working to meet the mass care needs of the affected population by providing food and supplies in the area. Your financial support will help the American Red Cross respond quickly to disasters like the Pacific Islands Tsunami in American Samoa and Samoa. You can donate by calling 1-800-REDCROSS (1-800-733-2767) or (1-800-257-7575 (Spanish)), or visiting www.redcross.org, to donate to the American Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund.

The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) Member organizations are actively involved in relief efforts in American Samoa and preparing for Typhoon Melor in the Northern Marianas Islands. For a list of National VOAD members and links to their websites please go to this website <http://www.nvoad.org/>

Relief Web. Information on organizations responding to the humanitarian situation in the

Philippines is available at www.reliefweb.int .

USAID: www.usaid.gov – Keyword: Donations

The Center for International Disaster Information: www.cidi.org or (703) 276-1914