

Help needed for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia

SEVERE floods have struck the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia in recent days, leaving thousands of children homeless, without food, water or warm and dry clothes. Roads and bridges are flooded; schools and kindergartens have been shut down, countless homes are left without power, while rain-swollen rivers and surging water course through towns and villages, overflowing into homes, causing landslides and complete chaos.

The situation is so dramatic, that the entire families have lost their homes in the floods. Finding a shelter is an extremely stressful task for many.

These are the heaviest rains and floods recorded in the last 120 years. Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia has already declared a nationwide flood emergency. Many people have drowned and the numbers are still growing.

In Serbia, in the city of Svilajnac over a thousand flood victims had to seek refuge on their roof tops, waiting for the rescuers to come and save them. In Veliko Polje near Obrenovac the dam broke, and the river flooded the whole area. The situation is worst in Obrenovac and Baric which are completely submerged.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, over 950 000 people had to leave their homes and more than half of the entire population is endangered by the floods.

Floods that have affected Bosnia and Herzegovina have also caused massive landslides across the country, dislodging mine fields and endangering the surrounding area. There are approximately 2000 landslides underway forcing a large number of families to be evacuated.

The situation in eastern Croatia is also alarming. The Sava River has burst through dikes at Rajevo Selo and Račinovci, in the southeast of Vukovar -Srem County, and the evacuation of all the residents of the two settlements has begun.

The consequences of the most severe flooding ever in the Balkans are yet to be known. In the coming days, the temperature will rise dramatically, creating problems such as scabies, invasion of mice and snakes and contagious diseases. We are in a desperate need for hygiene products, food, water, baby food and diapers.

WAYS TO HELP

There **is an urgent need** for personal hygiene products, diapers for babies, incontinence protection for adults, canned food, powdered milk, baby food and milk formula, underwear, socks, disinfectants, surgical masks, gloves, bandages, flashlights, batteries for flashlights, water and cleaning products. Please note that, due to customs restrictions, we cannot accept used clothes or any food that is not packed in a can or an air-tight container.

Toys and material for children suffering in these difficult times would be highly appreciated as well.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

For the people of **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, a stand will be organised in the Agora building on Thursday, 22 May and Friday 23 May. Volunteers on the stand in front of the **Agora cafeteria** will be available to receive your kind contribution in donations and goods from the list above from 10:00 to 17:00 on Thursday and from 15:00 to 17:00 on Friday.

For people working outside of the Council of Europe, there will **be an external stand** in front of the Agora building on Friday, 23 May, from 12:00 to 14:00.

All of the donations will be sent directly to the people affected by the floods with the agreement of our Embassy in Paris and through the help of the national and entity Red cross organisations.

For more information on the donations for Bosnia and Herzegovina you can contact Jelena Mocevic via jelena.mocevic@coe.int

You can also help by donating to the official accounts of the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Paris:

Societe Generale – Paris Parc Monceau, N° 30003 03610 00050032363 54 with an obligatory subject: Aid to flood victims in BiH_ your name and surname.

SERBIA

For the people of **Serbia**, collection of humanitarian aid has been organised in three locations in the Alsace region:

1. TODA Company
4 Rue Louis Ampere , 67400 Illkirch
Daily from 13:00-19:00
Contact: 07 61 76 21 21
2. Serbian Ortodox Church in Strasbourg
2 rue de la Tour, 67200 Strasbourg
Daily from 16:00-19:00
Contact: 06 20 97 83 95
3. Amadieu family
26 rue du docteur Albert Schweitzer
68000 Colmar
Daily from 9:00-16:00
Contact: 06 82 52 30 80

If you wish to donate goods but cannot organise transportation to any of the locations above, please contact Bojana Lauritzen via b.k.lauritzen@gmail.com. You can also help by donating to the official accounts of the Republic of Serbia Relief Funds (in EUR):

Beneficiary:

Ministarstvo finansija, Uprava za trezor

IBAN: RS35908504619019323080

SWIFT: NBSRRSBG

Intermediary bank:

IBAN: DE20500700100935930800

SWIFT: DEUTDEFF

Or via paypal:

<http://www.floodrelief.gov.rs/eng/>

CROATIA

Donations can be sent to the Red Cross Organisation in Croatia's bank account: IBAN: HR 6923400091511555516 reference number 08 (eg Internet payment and payment slip) SWIFT: PBZGHR2X

For more information and photos from all critical and flood-affected areas on Twitter, follow the hashtag #poplave, as well as the hashtag #SerbiaFloods, #BosniaFloods and #CroatiaFloods for information in English.

All photos have been taken from twitter.