

PRESS RELEASE



Georgia

Georgia pledges GEL 100,000 to support the victims of the Asian Tsunami Tragedy

Tbilisi, 13 January 2005: The Government of Georgia contributed GEL100,000 (about US\$55,000) to support relief activities in response to the tsunami tragedy.

On January 12 the Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania announced this donation, provided to UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative Lance Clark and UNICEF Representative Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed. This support is being provided to UNICEF for its work regarding water, sanitation and health. Using emergency mechanisms, these funds will be quickly transformed into crucial relief aid for those in South and Southeast Asia struck by the earthquake and subsequent tsunamis on December 26, 2004.

The impacts of these natural disasters are staggering. More than 165,000 persons are dead, tens of thousands still missing, and millions in need of urgent medical care, infrastructure, food, water, shelter, and rehabilitation assistance.

In an immediate reaction to this tragedy, the UN initiated its relief mechanisms, dispatching relief teams to the region, assessing the damage created and channeling immediate assistance to the victims.

UNOCHA is handling overall coordination of aid to the disaster-struck region. WFP is providing emergency food aid, and playing a crucial role in the logistics actions needed to move and distribute relief assistance. UNICEF has directed its efforts towards providing clean water, adequate sanitation, basic nutrition and routine medical care; caring for separated children; ensuring that children are protected from exploitation; and helping children cope with their trauma by getting them back in school as soon as possible. UNHCR has undertaken crucial shelter and other relief actions, with a special emphasis on the worst hit regions of Indonesia and Sri Lanka. While the focus of UN agency activity is currently on the humanitarian relief effort, UNDP is supporting national authorities in recovery planning and has deployed expert teams in the region to contribute to the overall national and international efforts to initiate rehabilitation and recovery actions.

Under a Government decree signed by Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania, GEL100,000 will be transferred shortly (via the Ministry of Finance) to UNICEF for relief efforts to mitigate and

alleviate the sufferings of the victims. Thus, Georgia officially joins the group of countries around the world that have expressed their solidarity and sympathy for the victims of this horrific disaster by donating to the Secretary-General's appeal for relief and rehabilitation.

This tragedy calls for assistance of all countries and people and, thus, the UN and the Government of Georgia would like to use the opportunity to call for donations from institutions and individuals.

Such contributions can be done several ways. One is to go to the Internet web sites of the relevant UN agencies, such as WFP, UNICEF, UNHCR or UNDP, to make a donation directly to one of these agencies. Another is to make a bank transfer to UNDP, at the address shown below. UNDP will then channel these funds immediately to UN relief efforts. Lastly, one can come in person to UN House, to place a donation in the special box placed in the reception of UN House (9, R. Eristavi str.). Such donation will help the UN respond to the needs of those affected by this global emergency and will be immediately transferred through the UN system to relief and rehabilitation efforts in the countries in need.

Bank transfers can be done at:

GEL Transfer

TBC Bank

Code: 220101830

A/C: 609300 UNDP-Georgia

Ref: Fund Aid for Tsunami

USD Transfer

Intermediary: CITIBANK N.A.

111 Wall str., New York, NY 10043

SWIFT: CITIUS33

ABA: 021000089

TBC BANK's Correspondent Account: # 36127097

Beneficiary's Bank: TBC BANK

11, Chavchavadze Ave., 0179, Tbilisi, Georgia

SWIFT: TBCBGE22

Ben's Account: 40070313

Name of Beneficiary: UNDP

For further information please contact UNDP Georgia: 25 11 26/28 /31