

= Tropical Storm Aletta (1982) =

Tropical Storm Aletta was a weak but destructive tropical storm that killed 308 people while meandering off the coast of Central America in May 1982 . An area of disturbed weather developed into a tropical depression on May 20 , and into a tropical storm around noon on May 21 . The cyclone turned northeast , reaching its peak as a strong tropical storm on May 23 . Aletta meandered and gradually weakened , dissipating a few hundred miles southwest of Acapulco on May 29 . Moisture from the tropical system spread over Honduras and Nicaragua , causing flooding . Throughout the two countries , 308 people were killed and total damage was at \$ 457 million (1982 USD) . In the aftermath of the storm , many programs provided relief to the victims of Aletta .

= = Meteorological history = =

The origins of Aletta are from a tropical disturbance that was first noted on May 18 about 500 mi (800 km) south @-@ southwest of Acapulco . On May 20 , satellite imagery showed evidence of a weak atmospheric circulation . Based on this , the disturbance was upgraded into a tropical depression . Moving northwest , the depression became Tropical Storm Aletta 36 hours later over 86 ° F (30 ° C) sea surface temperatures . The system re @-@ curved towards the northeast due to strong upper @-@ level westerlies , reaching its peak intensity of 65 mph (100 km / h) on May 23 .

Shortly after its peak , Tropical Storm Aletta began to weaken . However , the tropical cyclone managed to maintain winds of 50 mph (85 km / h) for 30 hours before resuming a weakening trend . While the steering currents weakened on May 25 , Aletta slowed and moved in a large clockwise loop until May 28 . Shortly thereafter , Tropical Storm Aletta was downgraded into a depression . Tropical Depression Aletta dissipated on May 29 roughly 180 mi (290 km / h) southwest of Acapulco .

= = Impact and Aftermath = =

The outer rainbands of Tropical Storm Aletta produced torrential rains and high winds over Central America for several days , and precipitation totals were as high as 23 @. @ 3 in (590 mm) in some areas with a peak of 57 @. @ 32 in (1 @, @ 456 mm) in Chinandega . A red cross official stated that " Entire families were swept away by [flood waters] and we know nothing about them " . Because all sewers in Nicaragua were damaged , the water was contaminated . Ninety percent of the banana crop and 60 percent of the corn crop was completely destroyed . Throughout the country , 108 people were killed , (10 of which drowned in floodwaters) . Roughly 20 @, @ 000 people were homeless and total damage was estimated at \$ 365 million (1982 USD) ; damage to highways , factories , and farms exceeded \$ 100 million . In the northern portion of the country , a mudslide buried three small mountain villages , leaving 270 missing and only 29 survivors . About 15 @, @ 000 sought to two emergency shelters . Many bridges were damaged . Since the capital city of Leon was hardest hit , a disaster area was declared for the nearby area . Aletta was considered the worst disaster in the country in three years .

Across Honduras , 200 people were killed and 5 @, @ 000 people were without food or water in just 13 communities . A total of 80 @, @ 000 people were homeless which were later housed in schools , churches , and health victims . Total damage was placed at \$ 101 million (1982 USD) .

On May 27 , the governments of both Honduras and Nicaragua appealed for international aid . Soldiers quickly sent food and medical to at least 50 communities in both countries . A second appeal was made shortly afterwards , which proposed for \$ 5 @. @ 1 million in medicine and other supplies . The red cross and United Nations (UN) appealed for \$ 3 million in international relief . The UN granted Nicaragua a month 's worth of food supply , but officials feared that this would not be enough . The government of Cuba announced that they would send 12 @, @ 000 construction workers as well as 2 @, @ 000 teachers , doctors , and officials to Nicaragua . Canada donated \$ 220 @, @ 000 via the League of Red Cross Societies . To prevent an epidemic of diseases such as typhoid fever , the Health Ministry started a program to give out vaccines which costs \$ 5 @. @ 1

million . The U.S. Embassy in Managua provided \$ 25 @, @ 000 in donations . The U.S. Embassy in Honduras attempted to outline a fact @-@ fining mission to assess the damage and provide relief .