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ECHO DAILY FLASH

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations

7 January 2020

I. International

Yemen - Conflict (DG ECHO, WFP, media)

- Following targeted attacks on humanitarian premises in Al Dhale City on 23 and 26 December, 14 humanitarian actors were forced to suspend their aid programmes. As of 5 January, no international staff are in Al Dhale, only a Rapid Response Mechanism, implemented by a national organisation, remains in place. Humanitarian operations continue uninterrupted in areas under the internationally recognised Government's control.
- Following damage to the Red Flour Mills in Hodeida on 26 December as a result of artillery fire, the World Food Programme (WFP) was forced to suspend its grain milling operations for food aid. As of 5 January, milling has resumed at lower capacity (halved since the attack), enabling the dispatch of 5,098 metric tonnes to WFP warehouses.
- On 5 January, the de-facto authority in Sana'a gave orders to pay public servants regularly. Government employees are to receive half a salary every two months. Civil servants in Houthi-controlled areas have not received their regular wages since 2016. The continued non-payment of salaries has driven the collapse of the already-weak Yemeni public health system, with grave humanitarian consequences.

Australia - Bush fires (BOM, CFA Victoria, NSW RFS, GWIS, media)

- At least 25 have died as a result of Australia's worst bush fires, with New South Wales (NSW) most affected.
- According to NSW officials, at least 4.9 million hectares have been burnt, more than 1,588 houses destroyed and 653 damaged, since the beginning of the fire season. As of 7 January, at least 135 fires continue to burn across NSW.
- In Victoria State, more than 800,000 hectares have been burned and at least 43 houses destroyed. 55 fires are still uncontrolled. In South Australia, fires destroyed more than 80 houses according to media reports.
- The intense fires and resulting smoke continue to impact air quality in major Australian cities, including Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Adelaide.
- According to the the EU Joint Research Centre's Global Wildfire Information System (GWIS), the fire risk will remain high to extreme across eastern Australia over 7-8 January.

Indonesia – Floods update (AHA Centre, BMKG, media)

- Heavy rain continues to affect the Greater Jakarta Area, West Java and Banten causing widespread floods and landslides. 293 sub-districts in the 3 provinces have been flooded since 1 January.
- As of 6 January, 66 people have died, more than 100,000 have been displaced and housed in 128 temporary evacuation centres. Up to 500,000 have been affected by the floods.
- According to the Meteorological, Climatological and Geophysical Agency, more heavy rain is forecast over the next 24 hours.

Puerto Rico - Earthquake (GDACS, USGS, Government of Puerto Rico, media)

- An earthquake of 6.5 M at a depth of 10 km struck off the south-west coast of Puerto Rico, on 7 January at 8.24 UTC (4.24 local time). The epicentre was approximately 12 km west-southwest of Ponce City.
- Up to 2,000 people were exposed to very strong shaking and 327,000 to strong shaking. The seismic event was preceded by several foreshocks including a 5.8 M earthquake, 15 km east-south-east of Guanica Municipality. An earthquake induced landslide was reported in Guayanilla Municipality.
- As of 7 January, media report at least 11 collapsed or damaged buildings, including schools and administrative buildings as a result of the 5.8 M earthquake but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage emanating from the 6.5 M earthquake.

Israel - Floods (IMS, Firefighting and Rescue Israel, Flood List, media)

- Several parts of Israel were hit by heavy rain on 4-5 January, triggering floods that resulted in 4 deaths.
- According to media reports, two people died in Tel Aviv, and 2 in Haifa District. Tel Aviv area was particularly affected, with houses and roads flooded.
- A warning for strong wind is in effect for central and northern areas. Winds and rain will continue to affect most of the country over 7-8 January.

Indonesia - Earthquake (GDACS, USGS, BMKG, media)

- An earthquake of 6.2 M at a depth of 20 km struck off the southern coast of Simeulue Island (western Indonesia) on 7 January at 6.05 UTC (13.05 local time). The epicentre was approximately 15 km south-southwest of Sinabang Town (Simeulue Regency).
- According to Indonesia's Meteorology, Climatology and Geophysics Agency, no tsunami warning was issued.
- Up to 26,000 people were exposed to strong shaking but as of 7 January, there are no reports of any casualties or damage.

Australia - Tropical Cyclone (GDACS, JTWC, BOM, media)

- Tropical Cyclone BLAKE formed over the Indian Ocean on 3 January, moving south-west towards the Kimberley Coast (north Western Australia).
- On 7 January at 0.00 (UTC), its centre was located approximately 30 km north-west of Lagrange (Broome Municipality), with maximum sustained winds of 74 km/h.
- BLAKE is forecast to weaken as it moves south, making landfall over southern Broome on the afternoon of 7 January. Media report over a hundred people sheltered in a centre in Broome.
- Strong winds and heavy rain is forecast over coastal areas over 7-8 January and a flood warning has been issued for western Kimberly.

II. Europe

Floods and flood warnings during the last 24 hours reported by national services (European Flood Awareness System (EFAS))

United Kingdom: Warning level 2/3 for the South of England.

III. Factsheets

Palestine (DG ECHO)

- More than 2 million Palestinians, out of 5.2 million, need humanitarian assistance.
- Since 30 March 2018, more than 300 Palestinians have been killed and over 35,000 injured (8,300 of which were children) in protests near the perimeter fence between Gaza and Israel.
- The European Union provided EUR 22.5 million in humanitarian funding for Palestine in 2019.
https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/middle-east/palestine_en

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