

Israel Responds to Haiti Earthquake Disaster



A 220-person Israeli delegation arrived this week in Haiti to aid victims of the earthquake that struck the country late Tuesday.

Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a fleet of doctors, nurses and aid workers to provide medical care, food, shelter and other necessities to the tiny country. Relief efforts include a Home Front Command field hospital and rescue unit, workers from Magen David Adom, an organization similar to the American Red Cross, and Israeli police officers.

Amos Radian, Israel's Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, coordinated relief efforts with international aid agencies and authorities in Haiti's capital city of Port-au-Prince. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon estimated that up to half the buildings in the city and other hard-hit areas were damaged or destroyed in the earthquake, the Associated Press reported.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed condolences on behalf of the Jewish nation and explained why his country responded on a large scale.

"Our decision to immediately dispatch a large Israeli team of doctors, nurses, medics, search-and-rescue personnel, medicines and equipment for a field hospital and operating room to Haiti expresses the deep values that have characterized the Jewish people and the state of Israel all throughout our history," he said.

"Given Israel's security needs, we have accumulated much search-and-rescue experience over the years. We have applied

this experience previously in disaster scenes throughout the world-in Mexico, Argentina, Armenia, Kenya, Turkey and elsewhere."

The prime minister added, "I hope and wish that the Israeli mission will succeed this time as well in saving as many lives-in children, parents and families-in Haiti as possible."

[Source: Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs; photo credit: Scoop 80]

To support disaster relief efforts in Haiti, click here for a list of ministries providing humanitarian aid and medical assistance.