



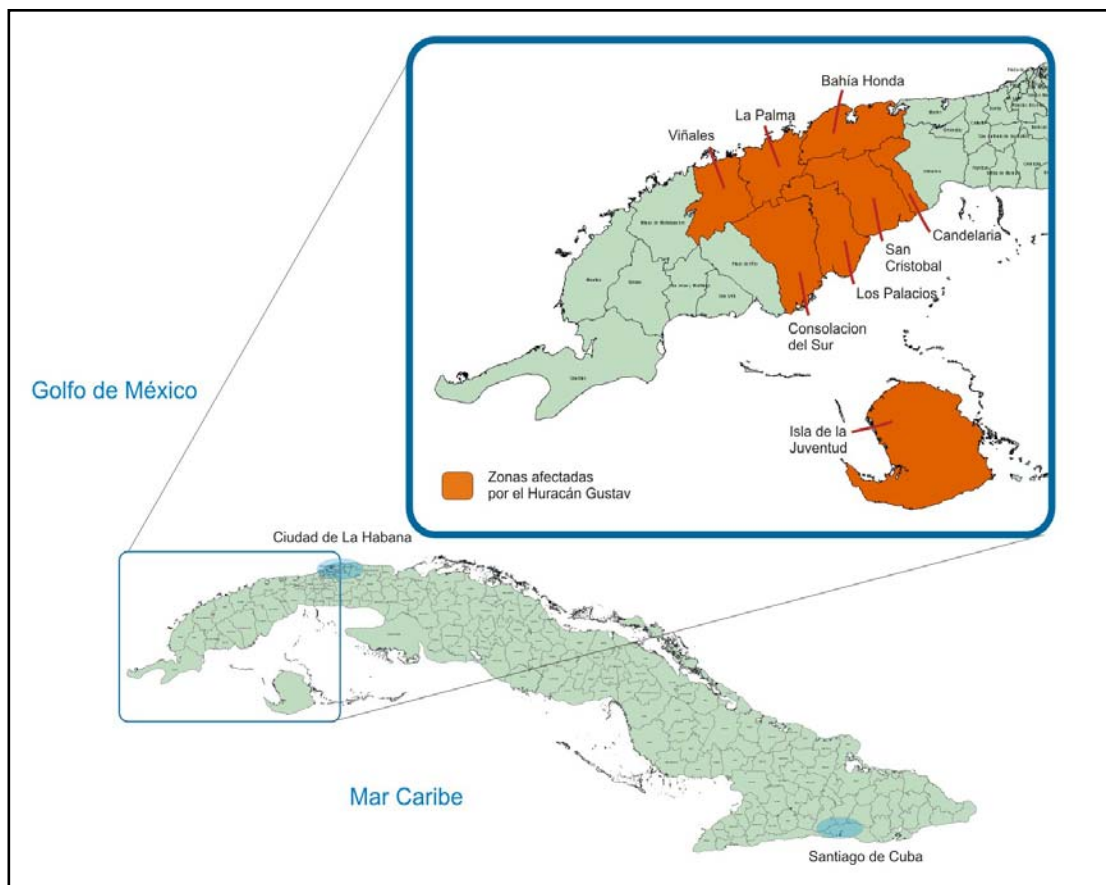
**United Nations
Office of the Resident Coordinator in Cuba**

From: Office of the Resident Coordinator in Cuba

Subject: Situation Report No. 8 “Hurricane GUSTAV”- September 3, 2008- 17:00 hrs.

Situation:

Considered as the most devastating hurricane to strike Cuba in the past 50 years, GUSTAV crossed the island on the night of 30 to 31 August 2008. The United Nations System -UN- in Cuba continues to work on the identification of damages caused in the country by the hurricane, especially in the affected areas of Pinar del Rio province and the Special Municipality of Isle of Youth. It must be underlined that despite the widespread destruction of infrastructure and agriculture, not a single human life was lost.



The Government has declared the recuperation phase in all affected areas and has launched a massive reconstruction and rehabilitation effort.

The lack of electricity in many areas makes it impossible to cook or boil water, given that most of the population uses electric stoves.

The Government and the UN remain on alert to threats from tropical storms HANNA, IKE and JOSEPHINE. Tropical Storm HANNA has over the past two days been causing heavy rains and sea penetrations in eastern Cuba; about one hundred and fifty people have been evacuated from the city of Baracoa, where waves are reaching two meter heights.

The Resident Coordinator/Designated Official, in consultation with the SMT has decided to maintain PHASE 1: PRECAUTIONARY in the entire country.

Measures of response adopted by the Government of Cuba

Authorities in the areas most affected by the hurricane continue their efforts to protect the population, restore basic services and continue work towards economic recovery and the restoration of the natural environment.

In protection of human health, medical teams are attending those in need while sanitation teams work in inhabited areas and proceed to the preventive vaccination of those persons in need.

Special attention is given to the restoration of water and basic sanitation services. This is made possible by the placement of generators at water sources and in waste processing centers.

Doctors, nurses and medical technicians are stationed at evacuation centers for families who have lost their homes.

Work is also conducted for public feeding, both through the delivery of basic food rations to families as well as through the provision of meals to evacuees at their respective centers and to sanitation and other work teams that support restoration activities.

The restoration of basic services is another prioritized task in affected areas. Brigades are working towards the progressive restoration of electricity, telephone and telegraphic services, radio and TV transmissions and public transport, although given the enormous extent of damages it will be several days before they return to normal.

Construction materials are being distributed to facilitate personal and family initiatives towards the reconstruction of homes. Besides this, brigades that count with the support of members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR) are performing cleaning activities, clearing of debris and cleaning large areas to allow for the repair of homes. Large FAR trucks are carrying roofing materials to affected areas.

Facilities are given to those who lost their homes by lodging them in schools, where they receive free food, medical attention and recreation. In Pinar del Rio and the Isle of Youth the beginning of the new school year, 1 September, has been deferred to 8 September.

Work is being conducted for the full restoration of industrial and agricultural activities, as well as community services, such as post and telegraph. In agriculture, damaged produce now lying on the ground is being collected for immediate transport to markets, and cultivated fields are being repaired and proper care provided to farm animals, such as cattle, pigs and fowl for the production of eggs and for human consumption.

Many industrial installations have lost their roofs and are being rehabilitated. Should they have electricity, those centers are in production while repairs are conducted.

Preliminary Damages:

The considerable impact of Hurricane Gustav is still being assessed by national authorities. The following statistics and information should be considered above and beyond that which has already been reported in previous situation reports.

The National Electrical Union report estimates initial damages to infrastructure in the western region of Cuba and the Isle of Youth to be valued at 15 million Cuban pesos. In addition to collapsed high-tension towers, 4,500 posts are reported down, 530 transformers damaged, and 5,000 street lights have been destroyed; 38,700 electrical isolators and 800 tons worth of conductors are beyond repair.

Significant damage to approximately 100,000 homes is being reported in the territories of Pinar del Rio and Isle of Youth.

Province of Pinar del Río:

More than 60% of the territory has been directly affected by the hurricane; the municipalities of Los Palacios, La Palma, Bahía Honda, San Cristóbal, Viñales, Consolación del Sur and Candelaria having borne the brunt of the damages.

Agriculture and Fisheries:

- 1 909 tons of rice for planting are at risk of fermentation in the drying facility of Los Palacios.
- The municipality of La Palma has lost more that 15, 000 cans of coffee, 12 800 tons of tubers, grains and leafy greens, and 640 tobacco curing houses have been affected.



<http://www.juventudrebelde.cu/cuba/2008-08-31/imagenes-de-los-estragos-de-gustav-a-su-paso-por-territorio-cubano/>

Water and Sanitation:

There is limited access to water due to the destruction of water tanks in multi-family or individual dwellings.

Food:

Public food stores, storage facilities and bakeries have been seriously affected.

Health:

Hospitals and Polyclinics have been significantly affected.

Telecommunications:

Up to the present moment, communication has not been re-established with the municipality of Bahía Honda.

Electricity Service:

The majority of the area's residents (60% of the total inhabitants) still do not have electricity in their homes. A similar situation is affecting numerous production centers and services.

A total of 137 high-voltage towers, located primarily in the municipalities of San Cristóbal and Consolación del Sur, were destroyed.

La Palma is reporting damages totaling of 53 kms of primary electrical lines.

Housing

Damages are concentrated in the mid-west of the province. Without having yet counted Bahía Honda Municipality, the current tally of housing damages is at 90,000 homes.

- In the municipality of Los Palacios 79% of dwellings have been affected either totally or partially. There are 421 families receiving sheltered in other homes.
- The municipality of La Palma is reporting that more than 9,500 dwellings have been affected. As of yesterday September 2nd, there were still 340 individuals being sheltered elsewhere. This figure however is expected to rise as information on partial or total housing damage comes in from various consejos populares (administrative zones).



<http://www.guerrillero.co.cu/018020/0813.htm> Bahía Honda



<http://www.guerrillero.co.cu/018020/0815.htm> La Palma

Education:

503 educational centres have been affected.

Special Municipality Isle of Youth:

This territory has been devastated by Hurricane Gustav. Communication difficulties continue to limit the amount of information regarding the extent of the damages at the present time.

Water and Sanitation

There is limited access to water due to the destruction of water tanks in multi-family or individual dwellings.

Food

The food industry has been affected mostly by the sustained damages to roofs.

Out of a total of 16 bakeries only 2 are operational and able to offer service to the population.

Health

The Hospital "Héroes de Baire" is having difficulties in providing service due to the impact of the hurricane.

Telecommunications

The three radios and television broadcasting towers as well as the telephone tower (height of 20 meters) are down.



<http://granma.co.cu/2008/09/03/nacional/artic03.html>

Electricity Service:

A high percentage of the electricity circuit has been affected, forcing the need to reconstruct the entire system.

Housing

Preliminary calculations indicate that out of 25,000 homes some 20,000 have been totally or partially affected.



<http://www.ain.cu/2008/septiembre/01cvlage.htm>

Education

Due to the significant impact of the hurricane on educational institutions, the start of the school year is currently delayed.

Industry

The roofs of industrial installations have suffered considerable damage.

<http://granma.co.cu/2008/09/03/nacional/artic03.html>



The environment

Damages to local ecosystems, not yet assessed, are considered to be catastrophic:

- The Botanic Gardens and the Jones Jungle were flattened, with not a tree left standing
- Hurricane winds flattened all native vegetation. Local species, such as the Belly Palm tree, were struck down by 150-mile an hours winds, which also wreaked havoc in pine and fir forests.
- Several parrot colonies have disappeared
- Installations for horse breeding were destroyed, although all animals survived
- Researchers are waiting for the flood waters to recede in order to assess damages in the monkey and crocodile breeding areas.
- The sinking of the boat used by biologists and other scientists is now preventing access to the Cantiles and Campos Keys, where several hundred monkeys were being raised in natural conditions

Actions Taken by the United Nations System in Cuba:

The United Nations System (UNS) in Cuba continues to work to assess the damages caused by Hurricane Gustav in the territories of Pinar del Rio and the Special Municipality of the Isle of Youth.

A joint UN visit to Pinar del Rio, has been agreed with the national authorities and is planned for Friday September 5th with Civil Defense.

The UNETE team is providing daily situation reports compiled from official and public information sources available in the Cuban press. Although the source is secondary, this information provides an initial assessment of the damage.

The Resident Coordinator/Designated Official in consultation with the SMT has decided to maintain security PHASE 1: PRECAUTIONARY in the entire country. This decision is based on the following:

1. The severe damages caused by hurricane GUSTAV in the province of Pinar del Rio and the special municipality of Isle of Youth.
2. The possible threats imposed by impending meteorological phenomena (HANNA, IKE, JOSEPHINE).

Any mission by UN personnel outside of Havana or international missions to Cuba must have previous Security Clearance, which can be requested through the UNDSS webpage. <https://dss.un.org/dssweb>. For internal missions, the appropriate form must be filled out and sent to the Designated Official, Ms. Susan McDade.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) as well as UNDSS, both located in Panama, are in constant contact with the Resident Coordinator/Designated Official in order to offer their support.

Two specialists from OCHA and the Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recuperation (UNDP) will be arriving this evening, 3 September, to work with the UN in support of recovery efforts.

Several UN headquarters and regional offices have been in contact with their respective agencies.

The Resident Coordinator continuous contact with the national authorities and officially offered the support and assistance of the United Nations System to the recovery process.

As of today 3 September, MINVEC has indicated that the following inputs are essential for the Isle of Youth and Pinar del Rio, respectively:

Isle of Youth

Damages to housing

Total loss	2,720
Partial loss	2,229
Total loss of roof	5,501
Partial loss of roof	1,483
Partial damages in multi-family buildings (doors, windows, roof water tanks)	8,812

Priorities of the territory:

- Hydro sanitary equipment for schools, evacuation centers and homes.
- Mattresses (1,000)
- 500-gallon plastic water tanks for multifamily buildings (400)
- Doors (1,000)
- Windows (1,000)
- Aluminum tiles
- Materials for equipping food processing centers (Isothermal tanks for the transportation of food and transport equipment for light loads)
- 55-gallon water tanks for homes
- Bedding, sheets, etc
- Canned food
- Personal hygiene items
- Chlorine tablets

Pinar del Rio Province

1. Damaged homes	86,691
2. Damaged schools	503

In order to repair them, aluminum doors and windows and roofing (in its most diverse styles) are needed.

3. Irrigation systems

4. Materials for the reconstruction of the San Cristobal hospital, which was completely destroyed (beds, mattresses and aluminum doors and windows)

National authorities have identified the following priority areas for cooperation in Pinar del Rio and the Isle of Youth:

- Inputs for the recovery of the electricity network, primarily for the Isle of Youth
- Material inputs to reconstruct the roofing of homes
- Cash donations in support of the recovery effort conducted by the Government of Cuba

On September 4, at 9 AM, there is a meeting of the International Donor Community, convened by the RC which will take place in the offices of the World Health Organization (WHO) in Havana.

Information:

For further information, please contact the **Office of the Resident Coordinator in Cuba**, at the following e-mail addresses:

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Consult the United Nations Website in Cuba: www.onu.org.cu

For national information, consult:

Instituto de Meteorología de Cuba <http://www.insmet.cu>

Infomed Red De Salud Cubana <http://www.sld.cu/sitios/huracanes/>

Periódico Granma <http://www.granma.cubaweb.cu>

Periódico Juventud Rebelde <http://www.juventudrebelde.cu/>

Agencia Cubana de Noticias <http://www.ain.cu>