

Friday, 11 March, 2011 8:00 PM, EST

SITUATION REPORT #1

Japan Earthquake and Tsunami Alert

Summary

An 8.9-magnitude earthquake in Eastern Japan near the city of Sendai has triggered a tsunami and led to more than 350 fatalities. Sendai has a population of 2,370,280 and is located only 370 km away from Tokyo. The final death toll is expected to be much higher. The impact of the tremor caused extensive damage infrastructure: several airports have been closed and many communities are without power. 5,000 people have been evacuated around the nuclear plant in Fukushima due to potential hazards in the area.



A massive tsunami hits the coastal areas of northeastern Japan, March 11, 2011 (Source: REUTERS/KYODO).

Alerts and Contingency Plans

• The impact of the tsunami is expected to reach Central and South America in the next hours. All countries are on alert, including El Salvador, Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Peru, Panama, and United States are developing contingency plans for the potential emergency.

Evacuation

• Some governments issued evacuation from coastal areas. Chile evacuated Easter Island and three hospitals in coastal areas of the mainland. In Mexico, all coastal provinces and several areas in Baja California, including Rosarito and Ensenada, have been evacuated. In Ecuador, six health facilities in coastal areas were evacuated and hospitals are taking contingency measures. El Salvador has closed schools in the coastal departments in preparation for the tsunami expected to make landfall at 23.00 EST.

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Health Sector

- The Ministry of Public Health and Social Assistance in Guatemala has issued an orange alert and hospital directors are evaluating the vulnerability of healthcare staff and facilities. Panama's Institutional Health System for Emergency and Disaster (SISED) has been activated to coordinate the national health sector response.
- The United States government has issued a warning to all west coast states and is monitoring developments in other regions of the Americas. The department of Health and Human services has mobilized contingency resources.

