

# **THE TURKEY EARTHQUAKES EVALUATION**

*An Analysis of the Red Cross and Red Crescent's  
Response to the Earthquakes of August and  
November 1999 in North West Turkey*

*July 2000*

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### EARTHQUAKE ACTIVITY OF MARMARA AND SURROUNDING AREA AFTER 17 AUGUST 1999

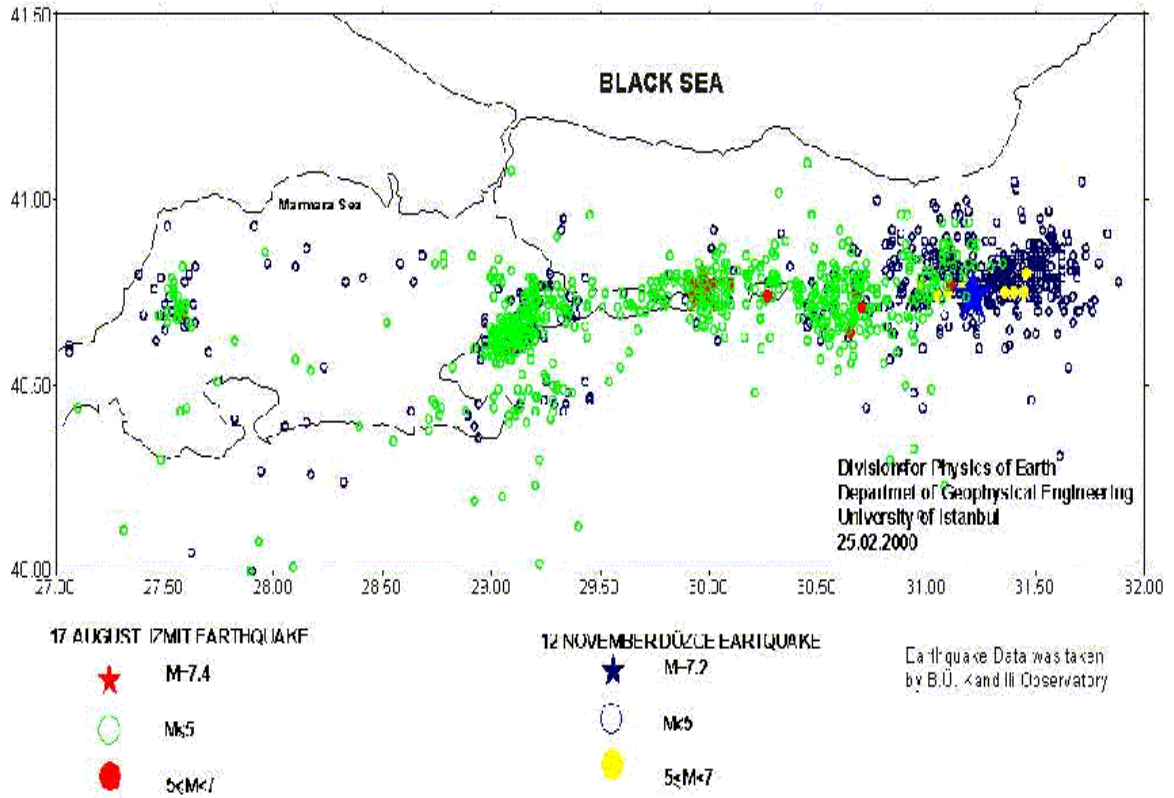


Figure 1

## Glossary

CMC	Crisis Management Centre (Turkish Gov)
DREF	Disaster Relief Emergency Fund
DROC	Disaster Response and Operations Coordination Division (Secretariat)
ECHO	European Community Humanitarian Office
FACT	Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (Int. Federation)
'Federation'	The Secretariat and delegations and offices of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies	The entire Red Cross Red Crescent Movement, excluding the International Committee of the Red Cross.
LDKM	Lojistik Destek Koordinesyon Merkezi (Logistic Support Coordination Centre – the Turkish authorities' logistics/warehousing system)
METU	Middle East Technical University
NS	(Red Crescent/Red Cross) National Society
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
OFR	Operation Funding and Reporting Department (Secretariat)
PMCMC	Prime Minister's Crisis Management Centre
PNS	'Participating' National Society: one which acts as a donor in any given context.
RC	Red Cross or Red Crescent
TRCS	Turkish Red Crescent Society (also known as 'Kizilay')
UNDAC	UN Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Introduction

At 03:02 on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1999 an earthquake struck north-western Turkey. Its epicentre was about 11 kilometres south east of the city of Izmit, at a depth of 17 kilometres. With a magnitude of 7.4, it was the one of Turkey's most destructive earthquakes of the century. Izmit, and the surrounding conurbations of Adapazari, Yalova and Gölçük, are situated within Istanbul's industrialised and densely-populated hinterland, which contains around 40% of Turkey's total population. The earthquake left over official figures of 17,100 dead, 44,000 injured and some 250-300,000 people without homes.

A huge communal effort on the part of the Turkish people mobilised local and national resources. A state of emergency was declared by the Turkish Government, and an intensive search and rescue operation was conducted by national and international teams. Tent cities sprung up, as well as informal 'clusters' of makeshift shelter materials pitched close to people's damaged or destroyed houses and flats. A large relief operation was conducted by the Turkish authorities, the TRCS, the International Federation and some other international agencies, which aimed at addressing the basic needs of 300-400,000 people. This reduced to a figure of around 250,000 within a few weeks.

Despite the prevention of fatalities through hunger, exposure and the spread of disease, the operation soon became problematic. In addition to the difficulties of access and communications, there were very apparent failures in coordination, in understanding of needs and in the integration of the roles and functions of the main actors. The perceived lack of response speed displayed by the military and other state bodies, and the torrential rains experienced by those living in makeshift shelters a week after the earthquake, created a high-profile media campaign attacking the state's disaster response, in which the TRC was implicated. The focus narrowed on the perceived disorganisation of the authorities, and the inadequacies of the traditional TRCS tents that had been widely distributed.

Meanwhile the International Federation's response was characterised by: an overwhelming donor reaction to its Appeal, a lack of influence in the distribution system, a lack of interface with the TRCS and Government-appointed operatives on the ground and in Ankara, and an inability to help the TRCS provide adequate winterised tents quickly. Several Red Cross National Societies created large programmes in the affected area, working to varying degrees with the TRCS, the International Federation and the local authorities.

However, with local coping mechanisms proving to be robust, and with national and international resources being in adequate supply, many of the emergency needs quickly receded in October and November. The shelter issue, however, took several more months to resolve, and the rehabilitation and psycho-social needs of the region were only beginning to be addressed.

As the situation in the Izmit region slowly began to stabilise, a second large earthquake of a magnitude of 7.2 struck on the 12<sup>th</sup> November at 18:57 in the upland region of the western Pontic Mountains. Whilst the death toll – around 845 - was much lower than the first earthquake, an affected population of around 180,000 people in Duzce, Bolu, Kaynasli and outlying villages faced winter without proper shelter. Some 80% of all housing stock in Bolu was estimated to be unusable, and temperatures were already dropping to minus 2 degrees at night, with snow imminent.

The overall response to the second earthquake was better, as there were capacities already on the ground, and as the Government and military took a much more comprehensive role in coordination. However, the shelter issue once again became critical, and the Turkish Government increased its efforts to fulfil an existing pledge to provide 26,000 prefabricated housing by the end of November. The TRCS and the International Federation refocused on the provision of tents as well as continuing with supplies of food, hygiene and medical items. More tent cities were created whilst huge camps of prefabricated houses were constructed. Apart from the issue of shelter and immediate psycho-social needs of the population, acute relief needs again declined fairly rapidly.

By the end of January 2000 the relief operation was beginning to wind down, with the Red Crescent/Red Cross Movement, UNICEF and others now concentrating more on an integrated approach to the rehabilitation phase. For the Movement, this focused on three areas: rehabilitation/construction, health and disaster preparedness, with other programmes such as social welfare and water/sanitation also suggested. These are in the process of being integrated to the TRCS' priorities, which include blood, DP and first aid.

The earthquakes have necessitated a re-examination of assumed strengths and competencies within the state and national Red Crescent structures. The TRCS commissioned an independent body to recommend a template for an in-depth review and change process within the National Society.

## **Main Findings**

The Movement's response to the events above can be summarised as follows:

### **Strengths**

Despite many problems and obstacles – some of the Movement's making and some imposed upon it - the operation has been characterised over the 8-month period by a generally acceptable performance in addressing immediate and ongoing needs. The several conspicuous weaknesses should not completely over-shadow the operation's achievements in basic service delivery.

Despite coming under public and political pressure, the TRCS, together with the rest of the Movement, succeeded in providing assistance for over 200,000 people, and as the major humanitarian organisation present, played a part in helping to prevent a serious deterioration of situation.

The TRCS seems to be willing to learn from the experiences of the operation: the structural review and disaster preparedness initiatives are methodologically sound, and could lead to a stronger National Society in the future.

The Movement's overall response was swift in response to both earthquakes, with a rapid deployment of an International Federation presence and competent search and rescue teams and ERUs.

The areas of intervention, geographically and sectorally, were mostly appropriate. The Movement provided a comprehensive, well-resourced portfolio of services.

The Movement directly alleviated suffering, and prevented a worsening of the humanitarian situation, through: its rapid response activities in the first three-five days, the TRCS feeding programme, the auxiliary health services, camp sanitation items and the significant (but late) winter tent and heating provision.

Relations between the TRCS and the Federation, and between the Federation and PNS were maintained during some extremely difficult periods when they could well have deteriorated – and whilst still problematic, show signs of improvement.

The Federation also performed well in: the deployment of experienced delegates; its logistics capacities; its international media coverage and local media strategy; support functions within Geneva, including parts of the Europe Department and some service departments; the timely release of an Emergency Appeal that correctly defined the broad areas of intervention.

The mobilisation of PNS cash and material resources, both through the Appeal mechanism and on the ground, was rapid and substantial. The PNS responded well to the call for winterised tents procurement and delivery during a critical time.

Some PNS projects were of high quality, and addressed needs in an appropriate, cost-efficient and timely manner.

The Movement has displayed a sustained commitment to ongoing and future needs.

## Weaknesses

The Movement's efforts were very inefficient and not as responsive as they should have been.

The Movement's competencies and specialised knowledge of earthquake response (particularly in an urban, 'developed' context), were predominantly held by various NS, but these were not integrated or consolidated by the Secretariat. Therefore, the Federation Secretariat and National Societies together lacked a coherent, strategic methodological approach in their response to the Turkey earthquakes.

There was a highly significant lack of preparedness by the TRCS and by the International Federation regarding risk analysis, scenario planning, organisational positioning and a prior understanding of mutual roles and capacities. This includes TRCS' agreed roles, functions and independence within the state's disaster response mechanism.

There was a lack of preparedness regarding some key relief items, most notably winter shelter items, on the part of the TRCS and the Federation Secretariat.

Planning, operating procedures, and coordination strategies and mechanisms within the TRCS were inadequate, and undermined an efficient, coherent response.

The local resources of the TRCS – its branches and volunteers – were under-used.

Coordination strategies and mechanisms of the Federation and PNS were also inadequate, and also undermined an efficient, coherent response. The Federation Secretariat and the National Societies globally lack a united approach as to the coordination role of the Secretariat and its delegations, and this impacted upon the operation. The Turkey delegation's coordination role was unclear to both the delegation and to PNS, and was undermined by the strength of PNS agendas and some strongly bilateral attitudes.

The Federation's procurement of goods, including tents, hygiene parcels, and specialised items, was often damagingly slow. Its performance in the distribution of relief items, whilst compromised to some extent by external factors, was basically unsatisfactory.

The Federation Secretariat and delegation was also weak in: the full digestion and dissemination of the Assessment Team Report; the production of integrated ongoing assessments; strategic planning at field level.

Important aspects of the Federation's operation, particularly some parts of the rehabilitation phase, were basically donor-driven by PNS.

Some PNS projects were conspicuously over-resourced.

The Federation Secretariat and National Societies have no clear, comprehensive policy on construction, and its role in the fields of rehabilitation and disaster mitigation.



## ***Summary of the Recommendations***

### **The International Federation Secretariat**

#### ***Preparedness***

The Secretariat should revise its approach to the utilisation of its field offices and delegations in the field of disaster planning. This includes ensuring that Country Assistance Strategies exist for all countries with high vulnerability to disasters, and that they contain properly detailed scenario mapping and analyses of the respective roles of the Government and the National Society, and their strengths and weaknesses in disaster preparedness and response.

It should expect framework agreements with the host National Society to be furthered by its delegations and offices in each country at significant risk of a major disaster. These should detail operational contingencies in the event of a disaster.

In highly disaster-prone countries where no International Federation presence exists, it should consider creating offices, of however minimal a presence, or sharing ICRC offices. Alternatively, the Federation Secretariat should make specific and regular efforts to detail its disaster planning and preparedness with the National Society through missions from Geneva or through its regional delegations.

The Federation Secretariat and donor National Societies should indicate their commitment to the Movement's disaster planning by making resources available to maintain the presence of strategic representations in countries highly prone to disasters.

#### ***Assessments***

The Secretariat should consider some brief needs assessment training for Information Delegates and members of the Media Service.

The Secretariat should consider creating standard formats for all pre-Appeal assessment reports (whether in an 'ad hoc' or a FACT context), and should ensure that a consolidated final report is disseminated to all concerned.

Whether through FACT or existing ad hoc mechanisms, the Federation should not continue to solely prioritise its material response, but should also give equal prioritisation to its emergency coordination role in the field. The coordination of host National Society capacities with those of the Federation and PNS is of particular importance here, and should be given much more consideration at the assessment stage. Options for delegated projects and other forms of coordinated PNS operationality should be thoroughly explored at the assessment stage.

Federation delegations should ensure that ongoing field assessments are brought formally into operational planning, and that a formal re-assessment or review is initiated after major developments have altered needs in the field.

### ***Appeal Process***

The Secretariat should pursue recent recommendations for a revised Appeal process, with a immediate basic appeal to be followed by a full Appeal after 90 days.

### ***Secretariat Organisation***

The Secretariat should consider the creation of a cadre of trained or previously experienced ‘on-call’ Desk Officers from within existing Secretariat staff for short-term secondment to emergency operations, either as dedicated Desk Officers for specific emergencies, or to take on other regional duties in caretaker roles, allowing existing Desk Officers to concentrate more completely on emergency responses.

The Secretariat should urgently address the poor interface between its logistics and relief functions: particularly with regard to their respective departmental capacities, cultures and operating procedures.

Measures should be taken to address the Logistics Department’s workload in order to maintain its current strengths.

The Secretariat should review its current departmental capacity regarding relief, and should consider strengthening it.

### ***Human Resources***

The Secretariat should consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of deploying two (or more) Deputy Heads of Delegation – with particular attention on the importance of maintaining the central role for the Head of Delegation regarding personnel management.

The Secretariat should look at a standard induction package for all national staff working in its delegations and offices. This should be kept distinct from issues surrounding regionally recruited delegates and regional Basic Training Courses.

The Federation Employment Relations Service should conduct an internal, departmental review to ascertain the reasons for its good performance in the Turkish Earthquakes response, ascertaining in particular the effect of the recent changes in staff responsibilities and functions regarding recruitment and delegate maintenance.

### ***Logistics***

The Secretariat and National Societies should study their standard specifications and ranges of material aid in relation to their use in ‘developed’, urban contexts. They should aim towards a policy decision on whether the Federation wishes to provide a global minimum standard of care or whether it wishes to provide items and services that are culturally adapted to address the *perceived* minima of any given population.

The Secretariat should consider initiating a working group, involving National Societies and other major agencies, to review and standardise existing specifications for relief items required in cold-weather and/or urban disaster environments, and to identify areas requiring improvement in this field.

The Secretariat should make a policy decision as to whether it wishes to improve its own deployment of relief goods, or whether it wishes to move towards out-placing

this function to PNS and adopt a stronger coordinating role. Recent recommendations of the Solution Teams should be pursued. Options include: centrally and/or regionally positioned stocks; framework agreements with suppliers; and more precise consolidation and coordination of available PNS stocks.

The Secretariat should continue to develop the system of direct mobilisation of goods between the Logistics Department and donor NS.

### ***Procurement Procedures***

The Secretariat cannot respond to emergency needs effectively with its current procurement regulations. The revised procedures for emergency procurement proposed by the Solution Teams should be fully expanded to cover all possible variables and contingencies. The suggestion of a 90-day suspension of standard normal Federation procedures should be pursued, as should raising the spending authority of Heads of Delegation during emergencies.

Federation delegates should be made aware of their responsibilities in the tendering process, including the respective roles of programme managers and logistics regarding the generation of specifications. The Federation should adopt a more business-like approach to procurement, whereby specialised procurement officers are made available to programme managers in situations where complex or unusual goods are required.

If the Secretariat and its delegations are to further the use of host National Societies as procurement agents in emergency situations, it should ensure that procurement processes are compatible with the budgeting, accountability and cash-flow requirements of the delegation's financial systems.

### ***Relief***

The Secretariat and its delegations should ensure via the initial assessment (FACT or other) that if large amounts of goods are requested and consigned to a country, that there is a sufficiently strong relief capacity, either through the host National Society or the delegation, to adequately requisition, distribute and monitor those goods.

### ***ECHO***

Given the demands of an ECHO contract, and the global importance to the Secretariat of managing its relationship with Brussels, Desks in Geneva must assess carefully whether, despite the pressures of the immediate post-emergency phase, ECHO funding should always be accepted.

### ***Reconstruction***

The International Federation should urgently develop global policies on its conceptual and methodological approach to post-disaster reconstruction in order that the agendas of the vulnerable, host National Societies, governments and donors can be better reconciled.

The International Federation needs to consider what roles construction and reconstruction issues have in its global portfolio of disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness activities, and most immediately with regard to its current operation in Turkey.

### ***Co-ordination***

The International Federation needs to debate, at its highest levels, a clarification of the Secretariat's essential role during emergencies: is it to have a predominantly co-ordinating function, empowered by the NS to maximise their collective resources, or is it to retain a predominantly operational function, with a subsidiary and partial co-ordination function in the field?

The Secretariat should work towards a global minimum service-level agreement to be agreed by National Societies at the highest levels, which would act as a template for the provision of services to National Societies wishing to become operational in a given context. A more detailed service-level agreement should be created in the first two weeks of any given operation, and should be reviewed monthly by the delegation and representatives from the host and PNS.

The Secretariat should ensure that the possibilities for delegated projects or other forms of coordinated Participating National Society operationality are fully explored during the establishment of every major operation.

### ***Earthquakes***

The Secretariat should co-ordinate an initiative to collate the Movement's knowledge and capacities regarding earthquake response, to make a study of existing research and the practices of other agencies, and to coordinate improvements and the integration of the Movement's preparedness and response mechanisms.

### ***The Urban, 'Developed' Context***

The Secretariat should commission a study to collate existing research, experiences and National Society preparedness plans for emergency response methodologies in urban and 'highly developed' contexts. A brief, practical guide to programme planning and implementation within such contexts should be prepared, and disseminated to operational managers, NS and through centralised FACT and ERU channels.

## **The Federation Delegation, Turkey**

### ***Preparedness***

The International Federation, TRCS and PNS should ensure that the current level of mutual understanding and knowledge of respective capacities and procedures are improved, systemised and updated. A detailed framework agreement for future joint operations in an emergency context operation should be made, and revised as necessary. Turkey will have another earthquake.

### ***Planning***

The delegation and the PNS active in Turkey should develop scenario planning alongside their overall programme planning for 2000 and beyond. These should be reviewed every 6 months. They should include broad strategies – including possibly sectoral lead roles or interests - for immediate response and resource deployment for major disasters in the main seismically-active areas. These should be shared with

other agencies active in Turkey, and most importantly should be discussed with the TRCS for integration with TRCS' evolving disaster planning.

The Federation delegation should consolidate its planning for 2000, and begin to enter the Regional/Country Assistance Strategy timeframe this year. The Secretariat and delegation should request from active PNS brief details of their objectives, strategies and planned activities and budgets – according to a simple standard questionnaire. The TRCS should be encouraged to explain whatever planning discussions or documents they have (eg the restructuring timetable).

### ***Human Resources***

The Federation delegation should come to a swift decision as to the relocation of some or all of the delegates and staff to Ankara. It should fully consult on relocation arrangements, and should make clear to national staff its position concerning relocation issues.

The Turkey Delegation should further plans to provide induction to its national staff, and ensure that they are regularly briefed on the issues and discussions that may affect their work.

### ***Financial***

The Delegation should ensure that it has a full audit trail for locally-procured items, and further investigations should be carried out to ensure that the utilisation of local NS procurement to such a high degree was compatible with Federation financial systems and standards.

### ***Reconstruction***

The Federation Delegation should draft a brief but clear policy specifically on reconstruction in the context of this operation, after seeking inputs from the other major stakeholders (the TRCS, end-user representatives, the authorities and the donors). It should include preferred methodologies and approaches to construction that mitigate earthquake effects, encourage best practice and increase cost effectiveness.

### ***Co-ordination***

The Turkey Federation Delegation and those PNS with strong bilateral agendas should make special arrangements to reconcile their separate working arrangements with the TRCS and the authorities for the good of improved overall coordination.

The Turkey delegation should address more thoroughly the core issue of its coordination role in the field with PNS. This discussion should be kept distinct from a debate on the delegation's level of service provision. It should take the role of the TRCS more fully into account. The PNS must in turn empower the delegation to perform an overall coordination role if they wish it to perform better in this regard.

The Turkey delegation and the PNS should agree on a formal Service Level Agreement, which includes the standardisation of current inconsistencies in the delegation's arrangements with individual PNS.

## **The Turkish Red Crescent Society**

The TRCS should maintain its current commitment to re-examining and acting upon the numerous areas of proposed change as outlined in the METU 'Pre-evaluation Report on the Restructuring of the TRCS', with which this evaluation concurs.

The TRCS should also fully engage in discussion with the Federation delegation and PNS regarding organisational change, disaster preparedness and planning, communications, liaison mechanisms and monitoring/reporting.

The TRCS should review and modernise the design and specifications of its standard tent stock.

## **Introduction**

In August and November 1999 Turkey suffered two of the largest earthquakes to have affected the country in the twentieth century. Even in global terms, these were highly destructive, together covering a wide area of predominantly urban populations. The ensuing humanitarian crises presented huge challenges to the Turkish Red Crescent (TRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The needs were large and complex – and whilst both national and international resources were relatively plentiful, the mechanisms through which these could be targeted and distributed were inevitably overwhelmed by events of this scale.

These two earthquakes led to the creation of the biggest Turkish Red Crescent Society operation for many years, revealing both the strengths and weaknesses of this powerful and experienced National Society. For the International Federation, the Turkish earthquakes led to its largest Emergency Appeal of 1999 (excluding the joint Balkans Appeal with the ICRC). Many of the strengths and weaknesses revealed through its operation reflect the key debates and areas of possible change currently being discussed within the Secretariat. The strong response from over 40 National Societies to the earthquakes, including a high level of bilateral programming, also delineated some of the wider issues surrounding PNS operationality, expectations and relationship to the Secretariat and its delegations.

This evaluation was requested at a meeting of the Turkish Red Crescent, the International Federation and Participating National Societies in Ankara on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2000. It takes place in the context of wide-ranging proposed changes to both the Turkish Red Crescent, and to the way in which the International Federation Secretariat and its delegations co-ordinate and implement emergency operations. This evaluation attempts to position itself within this rapidly changing environment.

One exasperated Red Cross delegate once rightly said that it is easier to evaluate than to do. Whatever the lessons arising from this evaluation, it should be remembered that all components of the Movement worked under great pressure, with enormous commitment and in an extremely confusing environment, in order to alleviate the suffering of the victims of the earthquakes. In this they mostly succeeded. The report attempts to convey some of the complexities and dilemmas, and it is hoped that where there is criticism, it is made constructively.

### **The Structure of the Evaluation**

The main body of the report consists of a detailed examination of the main events that characterised the disaster and the response, followed by an analysis of the key issues. These have been divided into six main areas: needs and vulnerability, preparedness, the aid response, the coordination of the aid response, and the issues arising from the specific context of an urban natural disaster in a highly developed country.

### **The Terms of Reference**

The full TOR is given in Appendix 1. The objective is “to produce a balanced report...covering both the strengths and weaknesses of the operation and in particular the background and context in instances when the Red Cross Red Crescent performance did not match expectations/aspirations”. The evaluation is expected to

cover the entire scope of the Movement's response – therefore it concentrates on the main issues, and could not analyse every programme to any great technical depth.

### **Terminology**

The Turkish Red Crescent Society is also popularly known in Turkey as 'the Kizilay'. The former is employed throughout this evaluation, abbreviated to TRCS.

For reasons of brevity, the term 'Federation' is used to indicate the International Federation Secretariat and its delegations and offices. Where the inclusion of the member National Societies is intended, the full phrase 'International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies' is used.

### **Methodology**

The methodology consisted of:

- A review of all key documentation
- Interviews with key participants in the Movement's response. This included beneficiaries in both earthquake zones as well as 69 representatives of the TRCS, International Federation delegation and Secretariat, participating National Societies and the Turkish authorities.
- Two visits to Turkey (each of a week's duration) to visit the affected areas, TRCS HQ and branches, the offices of the International Federation and participating National Societies, and local authority facilities. Two visits to the Federation Secretariat of a total of three days were also made.
- Views were gathered through interviews, either direct or by telephone and e-mail.

### **Scope of the Evaluation**

The period that this evaluation covers is August 17<sup>th</sup> 1999 to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2000. According to the means available and the TOR, this evaluation does **not** attempt to:

- Give detailed advice on the future shape and direction of the specific programmes of the TRCS, International Federation delegation or the participating National Societies.
- Use formal techniques to gather beneficiary views and feedback.
- Examine to any great depth organisational agendas, structures and dynamics of either the TRCS or the participating National Societies.
- Examine in detail every TRCS or PNS programme or activity.
- Give extensive technical recommendations regarding specifications of relief items or methodologies in specialist fields (health, construction etc).

### **Acknowledgements**

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## **Chapter 1: Events**

This section is intended to chronicle the nature of events surrounding the August and November 1999 earthquakes in Turkey, and the Red Crescent/Red Cross operation that ensued. The issues arising from this chronology – the successes, failures and their causes - are explored in the remaining chapters.

### **a) Background to the Emergency**

Turkey is the most disaster-prone country in Europe, and its vulnerability stems mainly from the threat of earthquakes and tremors. On average there are 40 sizeable earthquakes each year, occurring in all parts of the country, and in the last decade Turkey suffered a number of serious earthquakes that significantly affected life and livelihoods. In 1992 there were two major earthquakes in the Erzincan and Izmir regions, of a magnitude of 6.9 and 6.0 respectively. In 1995 Dinar in the mid-south west of the country experienced a tremor of 6.4 magnitude, and in 1998 an earthquake of 6.6 hit the area of Adana in the mid-south. But until 1999, the most densely populated and industrialised area of Turkey – the north west – had not been seriously affected in recent times.

Earthquakes of significant magnitude are therefore relatively common in Turkey. The primary response mechanisms were through the Turkish authorities – including the military – and through the Turkish Red Crescent (TRCS).

The TRCS had developed in the 1980s and 1990s as a powerful regional Red Crescent Society. It had 648 branches, over 1,000 salaried staff and considerable fixed assets, including acquisitions of buildings and land between 1985 and 1996 worth almost USD\$29 million. Its total income in 1995 was US\$106 million, and its expenditure was US\$57 million<sup>1</sup>. With very high levels of revenue (thanks mostly to its commercial activities, such as interests in the mineral water, health and construction sectors), the TRCS' services portfolio was large: national blood donor and fractionation programmes, over 100 nurse training schools or programmes, assistance to asylum seekers, homes for the elderly, soup kitchens and dispensaries. The TRCS was also increasingly active in overseas assistance programmes, including a highly visible camp management programme in the Balkans in 1999. The TRCS was praised for its response to the influx of around 450,000 refugees from Iraq in 1991, and was regarded by the Government, the population and the International Federation as having an effective disaster response capability following the earthquakes of the earlier 1990s.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies had a presence in Turkey from 1991 until March 31<sup>st</sup> 1999. A Status Agreement was signed by the Turkish Republic in 1994, and was approved by Parliament in 1996. Initially set up in response to the refugee flow from Iraq, this small International Federation office maintained a low level of material and advisory assistance to the TRCS. In addition, a small number of National Societies had ongoing working relationships with the TRCS.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: 'Turkish Red Crescent Society, 1996 pp. 80-83 (English version)

Large earthquakes are frequent in Turkey. It is against this fact, and the capacities that existed within the Red Crescent and the Movement in Turkey in 1999, that the Red Crescent/Red Cross' preparedness for, and response to, the Izmit and Duzce earthquakes must in part be measured.

## **b) Chronology of Events**

### ***The First Week (17<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> August 1999): An Adequate Start***

In the chaos and confusion of Turkey's largest earthquake of the century, the first few days of the Movement's response saw rapid mobilisation and initially on an appropriate scale. The local branches of the TRCS, themselves victims of the earthquake, reflected the extraordinary energy and communal assistance shown by the local population. Branches mobilised within hours, providing assistance to the search and rescue effort, as well as some basic first aid. TRCS HQ in Ankara also reacted swiftly, sending emergency teams, two hospitals and a coordinating unit at Istanbul airport within 48 hours. Despite confusion as to the coordination role of the authorities and the role of the Turkish military, the State's lead role was becoming stronger by Day 4, and the TRCS were expected to play an auxiliary role within it. By day 6, the TRCS had distributed 19,000 tents (the vast majority being effectively 'summer' tents), 45,000 blankets, 23 mobile kitchens 14 MT of food, 4 mobile clinics and had established a large field hospital with almost 300 staff and blood collection centres.

The International Red Cross/Red Crescent's reaction in the first few days was also satisfactory on many levels. Three Federation delegates arrived on Day 1, including the future Head of Delegation, who was redeployed from Macedonia. In Geneva an Alert and a Preliminary Appeal were issued within 24 hours. By day 2, the Preliminary Appeal had received 5 million Chf – 50% of the total – and by day 3 the nascent delegation in Istanbul had logistics, finance/admin and reporting/information capacities, to be reinforced the next day by the Federation's Assessment Team leader. National Societies also responded well: 4 had search and rescue teams within 36 hours (German RC, Austrian RC and Bulgarian RC), with Japanese, Hellenic and American RC emergency teams arriving within 3 days. Many more NS pledged large amounts of cash, or dispatched goods which begin to arrive in quantity on day 4. By Day 6, a Federation assessment team of 18 people from 8 NS and the Secretariat was assembled in Istanbul, 2 field hospital ERUS (German RC and Norwegian RC) were operational, and over 60 NS delegates were present.

This period is characterised, inevitably, by difficulties of access to the affected areas, and a lack of information due to infrastructural damage. Many of the victims set up temporary shelters next to their homes, making any assistance programme extremely complex. There was also a high degree of movement of the population, with some fleeing the area whilst others flocked to it to offer their support. A coherent picture of the needs, and of resources to address the needs, was impossible – not aided by a high degree of confusion within the State response mechanisms as to respective roles, including those of the TRCS. Whilst, overall, the immediate response mechanisms

(such as search and rescue) performed relatively well in isolation, there was a significant lack of coordination within the first few days.

### **Week Two (23<sup>rd</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> August): Major Problems Emerge**

Firstly, it rained. For three days the affected area suffered torrential rain, turning the makeshift camps into mud, flooding the damaged mains water and sewerage systems, hampering the aid effort and threatening the vulnerable with serious health problems. It also exposed serious weaknesses within the national disaster response mechanisms.

Almost all of the tents distributed so quickly by the TRCS were shown to be inadequate. Based on traditional designs, some little altered for a century, the tents lacked proper waterproofing or rain flysheets, ground sheeting or flooring and heating compatibility. In addition, local Government structures – with regionalised Crisis Management Centres (CMC) now establishing themselves – allocated campsites with little preparation or design, swiftly leading to flooding and drainage problems.

Secondly, despite the enormity of the crisis which would have challenged the capacity of any country's response mechanisms, the weaknesses of Turkey's preparedness systems for such an event became clear. The increasing participation of the military, and the establishment of the CMCs, provided some strength to overall coordination, but logistics, assessment, communications and resource deployment systems were inherently over-centralised, bureaucratic, and lacking in clarity or expertise.

The TRCS to some extent reflected and to some extent suffered from these weaknesses, despite continuing to run a large relief operation that directly assisted many thousands of vulnerable people. It soon became apparent that most local branches were too weak to cope with a meaningful coordination role, and the entire TRCS operation in the field was run by HQ staff from Ankara – most of whom were given very little delegated authority. The branches were then effectively sidelined.

Misunderstandings emerged at all levels between the authorities and the TRCS regarding its role and areas of responsibility – particularly in the field of shelter. The TRCS lacked an integrated communication system that could operate independently of the national telecommunication infrastructure, making a coherent picture of the needs impossible. Despite the size of the TRCS' initial and subsequent response, there were few control mechanisms in place to document, strategically plan and report on goods flowing through the pipeline. The main regional warehouse was clogged with unusable or non-emergency goods, and control systems, warehousing facilities and handling equipment were inadequate. The distribution of all relief goods – whether Red Crescent/Red Cross or any other, increasingly came under the coordination of the Government authorities.

These issues caused serious problems for the International Federation. The delegation, still maintaining the generally-held view that the TRCS was a large Society well-experienced in disaster response, committed itself to working through and with the TRCS. In Ankara the TRCS did not prioritise contacts with the Federation, being almost wholly absorbed in trying to understand and deliver on the expectations of the Government. A lack of TRCS counterparts with whom to work through meant that the

Federation's role in the field was also limited – but it decided not to undermine the TRCS by working more directly with the Government structures. The sole dedicated counterpart made available to the Federation was the TRCS' official Liaison Officer in Istanbul – and thus the Federation's understanding of the crisis, its operation and its relationship with the TRCS became centred upon one individual. In addition, incoming relief goods from donating National Societies were impossible to track once in-country: the Government's distribution system did not log consignments by donor. Meanwhile, the Preliminary Appeal was being well-resourced by donor governments and National Societies who expected action and varying levels of reporting.

The many other National Societies then in the field were not so constrained by the need to work through the TRCS at all levels. Three ERUS (the Norwegian and German field hospitals being joined by the Austrian wat/san unit), 5 medical teams (Japanese, Belgian, Greek, Kuwaiti and Spanish RCs), a family contact programme (American Red Cross) and various directly managed relief consignments were able to operate through direct contacts with local authorities (including the TRCS) in the field. The ability of the Federation to meaningfully coordinate such efforts, given its concentration on the TRCS and its weak field presence, began to be questioned.

Despite the fact that large amounts of assistance, much of it from the TRCS, were getting to the vulnerable, and despite the speed with which local coping mechanisms and state resources prevented a serious increase in vulnerability, one issue emerged which was to influence the response for the next two months at least. The Turkish media, already sceptical of the immediate response, launched a series of high profile stories on the inadequacies of the tents, and on the burgeoning amount of goods in relief warehouses. The Government responded by highlighting the TRCS' role and responsibilities, and furthered a parliamentary commission into the TRCS' response to the crisis.

The TRCS was coming under intense public and governmental pressure to be seen to be responding to the tent crisis – with negative media coverage appearing almost daily – and it was increasingly looking to the Federation, which began to source these items with urgency, as well as asking the PNS for help.

### **Week 3 – Week 7 (September): More Problems**

In early September the rains eased, and health and hygiene in the camps improved. CMC estimated that some 127,000 people inhabited 139 tent settlements, with at least 100,000 more in tent clusters or other accommodation. The Government, reposting to continuing media criticism, declared plans to set up civil defence training for disaster response, deployed over a team of over 100 to address trauma and psychological needs, and announced that it would build over 50,000 prefabricated homes. Meanwhile, it began discussions with the construction sector on a reconstruction programme for 2000, and started a major drive to source winterised tents. By mid-September, consolidation of the tent cities had begun, with CMC reporting a fall in their numbers. By the end of the month, the first prefab homes were being inhabited, a new target of 26,000 prefabs by the end of November had been set, and schools opened in existing buildings or in tent classrooms.

A month after the earthquake, the TRCS had complete responsibility for the management and servicing of 5 camps for 25,000 people, were supporting over 30 smaller camps, and were feeding 50,000 people (20-25% of the estimated number of homeless) each day with 2-3 hot meals. This figure rose to almost 70,000 by the end of September. The Government assigned the responsibility of all tent cities to the TRCS, upon whom national expectations were now focused, and the winterised shelter issue became its predominant concern.

This coloured the TRCS' relationship with the Int Federation throughout September. But if the Federation's usefulness and purpose may have been unclear or marginal to TRCS' senior management and Board so far, its usefulness was now crystal clear: it could help provide the significant amounts of winterised tents required for the shelter programme. By September 20<sup>th</sup>, the Federation had placed an order for 10,000 winterised tents with a trusted supplier in Germany. Deliveries were to start in early October, and be completed by the third week in November.

For the Federation, there were other issues of concern emerging. The month saw the Federation's representative in Ankara replaced for 2 weeks. Neither representative had managed to further an effective and operationally meaningful relationship with the TRCS at central level, who were not able or willing to fully engage. On his return, the first representative recommended that the presence in Ankara was discontinued. This lack of interface was reflected in the field, where the Federation was asked by the TRCS to restrict its delegate numbers to around 15. The Federation chose not to dispute this openly, given the importance of improving the overall relationship.

The Federation had no permanent presence outside of Istanbul, no relief delegates, and very little influence over the logistics and relief distribution system. Although daily field assessments and visits were made, permanent and continuous relationship with CMC and TRCS operatives in the affected areas were impossible. Monitoring and reporting beyond the most basic level was not possible without huge amounts of individual investigative work by the few delegates available. Whilst the military's logistics tracking and control system was fairly efficient and well-documented, access to these reports and a complete lack of donor tracking made reporting difficult. The TRCS and the Federation concluded an 'agreement in principle' that every possible effort would be made by both parties to meet reporting and monitoring responsibilities. The Federation urged the TRCS to deploy "sufficient personnel to achieve the required level."<sup>2</sup>

Despite all of these restraining factors, the Federation issued an Emergency Appeal on the 8<sup>th</sup> September for 65 million Chf – the highest figure for a solely Federation operation in 1999. It was 90% covered within 9 days, with goods mobilisation complete by the end of the month: cash for local procurements and winter tents were the only major outstanding needs.

From the middle of September the delegation's Logistics department were looking for a warehouse through which Red Cross/Red Crescent's goods could pass. A 3,000m<sup>3</sup> facility was soon located at Samandira, 45 minutes outside of Istanbul. When the lease agreement for the warehouse, which needed the TRCS' input, was not

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Int Federation Emergency Appeal, Turkey Earthquake, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1999

forthcoming, the implications for monitoring and reporting were obviously grave enough to lead the Federation to temporarily suspend “the shipment of all Red Cross Red Crescent relief consignments”.<sup>3</sup> The matter was resolved within days and the warehouse opened on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Meanwhile, the National Societies with operations in Turkey consolidated their programmes. By mid-month the Austrian RC wat/san ERU was producing 200m<sup>3</sup> of potable water per day, and supplied Golchuk town and 5 TRCS camps. It developed a good relationship with Oxfam, who provided equipment and specialist personnel. Various handovers of PNS medical facilities to local health structures and the TRCS took place from mid-late September, including: the Norwegian field hospital (120 beds), the Spanish RC clinic (40 beds), the Belgian RC clinic (2 tents), the Japanese health team and Greek RC clinic. The American RC tracing service, which at one point had four centres, was also handed over. The Netherlands RC continued to prepare for deliveries of 2,000 tents and bedding, and the Iraqi Red Crescent prepared the ground for a 1,500 prefabricated settlement. The German RC handed over 30 mobile kitchens to the TRCS, and whilst other PNS health units were downsized, it maintained its large hospital ERU of 80 beds, with an expatriate staff of 29, and 40 Turkish doctors and nurses.

Despite the arrival of a PNS Coordinator in the third week of the emergency, the Federation’s co-ordination role continued to be unclear to the PNS, whilst their collective needs and expectations were never coherently explained to the delegation. A working environment with office facilities and help with housing was provided to the NS who needed them, and several smaller NS found the information collated by the delegation useful. The larger NS – such as the German and American RC, had different expectations, relying less on Federation for office support, but wishing to see a more macro-coordination role including liaison with central Government and Ministries. The Federation’s relative absence in the field, and their ongoing portfolio of trying to work through the TRCS, also created a sense that in terms of programming the PNS were in the driving seat, and that the Federation’s coordination role was not based on operational experience.

### **Week 8 – Week 12 (October-early November): Tents, tents, tents**

October saw improvements in many sectors: mains water supplies were providing around 80% of their normal quantities, primary healthcare facilities were operating at close to full strength, with only 13% now in tents. There were still needs, however: hospital beds in the affected area were running at 30% of their normal capacity, whilst the Turkish Ministry of Health estimated that some 25 million people showed signs of trauma that have led or could lead to psychological problems.

But the priority need continued to be tents. The winterisation of summer tents, and the construction of tent cities gathered pace. 120,000 people lived in 120 tented camps, which continued to be consolidated. At least another 80,000 remained in makeshift camps surrounding their houses and flats. The construction of prefabricated houses

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<sup>3</sup> Int Federation Sitrep No 17, 24<sup>th</sup> September 1999

intensified, with the Government rushing to fulfil its revised target of 26,000 by the end of November. By early November some 10,000 had been erected.

By late-October the TRCS were managing 18 camps of 40,000 inhabitants (or one third of the total camp population), and providing hot meals, medical and other services in 69 others. 80,000 people in camps were provided with daily hot meals, and almost 19,000 people living in makeshift camps also received meals. In total, the TRCS at this time were shelter and/or food to just under half of the 220,000 homeless vulnerable. Over 500 TRCS staff and several hundred volunteers were required for this huge relief operation.

Despite this sizeable operation, the media and public's perception of the failure of the Government's performance continued to be displaced onto the TRCS, where their own failings, particularly regarding their initial tent stock, were combined to create an intolerable pressure. Charged by the Government to manage all the consolidated tent cities throughout the winter, the TRCS' absolute and urgent priority was provide more winterised tents. The target figure was not clear, as this depended on the success of the Government's prefab construction.

On the 7<sup>th</sup> October the Turkish Red Crescent's President resigned, leading to an interim Presidency and huge uncertainty within the Society. This was exacerbated in the last days of October by the beginning of a parliamentary investigation into the TRCS' response to the crisis, and on the 6<sup>th</sup> November the Interim President and the entire Executive Board resigned, though continuing in their posts until an Extraordinary General Assembly in late November.

For the Federation's delegation in Istanbul, already physically separated from the TRCS' headquarters, these events made the establishment of a working relationship with the TRCS even more difficult. High-level discussions between the TRCS and Secretariat staff during the International Conference in Geneva agreed on the need for the Head of Delegation to be physically based in Ankara. But broadly, the only topic of discussion which generated full attention during this period was shelter.

At this stage, the Federation's credibility in the eyes of the TRCS, themselves under huge pressure, rested on their ability to provide winter tents. After the first shipment of the planned 14,000 tents arrived from the German RC, the Federation looked forward to being able to provide 10,000 from its own supplier. But as the first shipment arrived, it was clear that there were serious problems with the quality of the tents, especially with the waterproofing. By mid-October modifications were being made to the remaining 8,000 still in the factory. At the Movement's International Conference in Geneva in early November, senior TRCS representatives saw and approved the modified samples, but tests by the Societe General de Surveillance in Switzerland showed that there were still problems with waterproofing and weight. At this point the order was cancelled, with potentially disastrous results for the Federation/TRCS relationship.

Of the 11,500 tents (excluding locally purchased tents) scheduled to have arrived by the second week of November, only 4,600 had been received by Samandira warehouse – all provided by PNS. Of these, only 1, 840 (or 40%) had gone into the field.

The Secretariat immediately contacted directly those National Societies who might be in a position to procure and delivery winter tents at short notice. Individually suppliers were approached, often by the same National Societies. Local procurement of tents also intensified, and the TRCS, Spanish and other PNS had success in procuring over 3,000.

With the Samandira warehouse operational in early October, some degree of logistical tracking and monitoring was possible. But throughout the month, another major problem was revealed. Whilst the Logistics capability within the delegation was strong, there was practically no equivalent relief capacity. Indeed, it was not until the 12<sup>th</sup> November that the Int Federation Sitrep could report that the “field liaison [relief] delegates are now fully operational in the affected area” – 88 days after the earthquake!

The effect of this disparity between relief and logistics was a Federation warehouse becoming dangerously full of items, but with almost no field relief presence which could raise requisitions and move the goods into the field. For the month of October, 5,225 MT of goods were received by the Samandira warehouse, whilst only 456 MT (8.7%) were distributed. A critical blockage of the new International Federation’s pipeline was averted by a rapid increase in distributions (some 300 MT in the first week of November), and by a new event which again created a demand for immediate relief assistance – the earthquake of November 12<sup>th</sup>.

In other areas of the Federation’s operation there were successes. The water/sanitation programme continued to deliver important hygiene equipment and mains connectivity to several camps. The health programme were instrumental in creating the weekly health coordination meetings with other agencies and the Government. In early November there was a clear strategic move towards a rehabilitation phase, with proposals for a psycho-social programme, a health surveillance system and a construction advisor to design a more coherent strategy for Red Cross/Red Crescent engagement in this area. And despite the second earthquake, both ongoing work in the first affected area, and a general move towards the rehabilitation phase, was maintained.

### **12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November:           The Second Earthquake**

With its epicentre in the Bolu/Duzce area, the earthquake of November 12<sup>th</sup> was smaller in magnitude than the August earthquake, and in a less-intensively populated area. It also occurred in the early evening, when people were better able to respond. Nevertheless, some 845 people were killed, 5,000 injured and 150-180,000 people affected. Around 80% of Bolu’s population were unable to use their homes (around 24,000 people), and around 70% of the structures in nearby Kaynasli were unusable.

Turkish search and rescue teams were present within hours, and as the local media broadcast live pictures from the area, volunteer medics rushed to the scene. TRCS volunteers assisted the local population and the search and rescue effort, and Red Crescent ambulances were mobilised as Ankara again began to establish a relief operation. The International Federation and the NS in the country were also swift to



act. By 03:00 on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 5 Federation delegates arrived with medical supplies, soon followed by 17 truck-and-trailers carrying blankets, bedding and tents. The French, German, Spanish and Dutch RCs dispatched relief items, sanitation equipment and 2 hospital tents from their field offices during the night. German, and Austrian RC search and rescue teams arrived at dawn the following day.

By evening of the 13<sup>th</sup> the weather began to deteriorate, and the implications of an early winter in this high region were obvious. Over 20 international search and rescue teams had arrived or were en route, including those from the Greek, Italian, Dutch and Bulgarian RCs. The Prime Minister re-established the Crisis Management Centres in Duzce and Bolu, and UNDP began to coordinate NGOs and other agencies. After search and rescue, health and shelter once again became the priorities. The TRCS was distributing over 8,000 tents, 71,000 sleeping bags, a mobile hospital of 100 beds, 29 portable kitchens, medicines, blood and other items. Hot meal distributions via the portable kitchens were planned for 8,000. Given the huge stock levels in Samandira and the national response to the earthquake, the Federation asked for no relief items, but only for cash and winterised tents. The cancellation of the order for 10,000 winter tents meant that the need for these items was even more acute, and PNS were urged to source supplies. Meanwhile it was sending more trucks from its warehouse, using relief items which it had been slow to distribute after the August earthquake.

By the 18<sup>th</sup> November, temperatures were dropping below freezing at night, whilst most of the region's population were out of doors, in makeshift shelters. The shortage of tents or prefabs became critical, with the CMC seeking 10,000 winter tents immediately. The TRCS, having provided over half of the 18,000 tents distributed so far, were already managing 5 tent cities for around 12,000 people, as well as feeding 20,000 people with daily hot meals, and treating hundreds of patients each day through their field hospital and mobile clinic. They had more than 90 staff in the region. Red Cross/Red Crescent National Societies had respond swiftly to Geneva's request for winter tents, and some 5,000 were due in the next few days. The Federation had dispatched 28 trucks to the area in total, and had set up a temporary warehouse to better influence the distribution of goods along with the TRCS. Meanwhile, as the search and rescue teams left, the French Red Cross was supporting a UNICEF tent city with warehouse management, sanitation and a dispensary, and the Spanish RC was setting up a tent city in Bolu for 1,000 tents and facilities.

### **18<sup>th</sup> November – 31<sup>st</sup> December 1999: The Relief Effort Peaks**

This period saw a fairly rapid stabilisation of the situation in the Bolu/Duzce area, thanks to the smaller scale of the earthquake, a much-improved response and coordination structure, as well as the plethora of goods available in-country. By the end of November (weeks 2-3) energy, transport and communication infrastructures were largely re-established, seven deputy Governors had been appointed to coordinate different sectors (such as food, shelter, health, site-planning), and whilst there was a chronic lack of hospital buildings, sufficient medical staff and field hospitals provided minimum care. Although the agencies, particularly the TRCS, had taken on another huge workload, the needs in the first earthquake zone remained largely stable, and the relief distribution in both areas became more regularised.

However, continued aftershocks caused movements away from the area, which made an accurate assessment of need almost impossible. The race against time regarding shelter reached its crescendo as heavy snow fell on Bolu in late November, and temperatures dropped well below freezing at night. The Government failed to meet its pledged September target of 26,000 prefabs by the end of November – erecting only 15,000. However, around 1,000 prefab homes were being erected each day in the Bolu/Duzce area, and the target would be reached by mid-December. Despite the frenzied preparation of tent cities, more winter tents were required, and the TRCS locally procured 3,000 winter tents with financial support of the Federation, in addition to the 6,000 tents that other National Societies had provided.

By mid-December a total of 48,000 winterised tents, according to official figures, had been distributed, with the TRCS providing 14,500 and the International Federation another 9,500. And although there were ongoing problems with inadequate tent clusters, the race against time was almost won – most people had a basic level of waterproof, heatable shelter by the year's end. One month after the November earthquake the TRCS was feeding a total of 70,000 people twice or thrice daily, whilst the Federation had delivered 1,720 MT of relief to Bolu/Duzce – almost four times the amount distributed in the whole of October.

The end of the year also marked the beginning of a more stable rehabilitation phase. During the TRCS' Extraordinary General Assembly from the 20-22 November, a new President, Dr Gonen, was elected with a new Executive. Plans for a major review and possible restructure of the TRCS were initiated. The past few months had been particularly painful for the TRCS, and aside from public and political pressures, it recognised that if it was to improve its performance in disaster response, systemic changes were necessary.

Three assessment missions covering health, disaster preparedness and reconstruction were deployed in December to guide the operation's predicted focus on rehabilitation in 2000. And despite the distractions of the Duzce/Bolu earthquake, the TRCS, Federation and PNS continued their assistance programmes in the areas affected by the first earthquake.

### **January – April 2000: Rehabilitation**

The New Year started with a total of around 100,000 people living in prefab settlements, and 120,000 living in tent cities - 64% in the area of the Bolu/Duzce earthquake, where snow was falling frequently. In the Izmit/Golchuk areas many of the tent cities had now closed as people moved into prefab houses, although 45,000 were still under canvas. Prefab construction continued, although at a slower pace, with over 35,000 eventually built. The Government furthered its medium-long term reconstruction plans. Meanwhile, ECHO, WFP, UNDP and UNICEF were all still present to a limited extent, along with several smaller agencies. The TRCS began to scale down their hot food provision, replacing it in April with a three-month dry food programme, whilst beginning to look at preparedness stock replenishment and new initiatives in the fields of disaster preparedness, blood and organisational restructure.

The 17-strong Federation delegation began to reduce its staff numbers over this period. By the end of April 2000, there were 13 delegates and over 40 national staff.

After much discussion, the delegation formally moved to Ankara towards the end of the period, although as of April 31<sup>st</sup> all the delegates except the Head of Delegation remained in Istanbul. Mid-April also saw a handover of the Head of Delegation position for the first time in the operation.

Finally the Federation's ECHO-funded hygiene parcels began to be distributed in January after a delay of almost 3 months. Assessments and the provision of sanitation, water supply materials to camps continued, whilst the coordination role played by the delegation's health team also continued. A psycho-social support programme began its pilot in April, a disaster preparedness seminar was held for Turkish and international medical students, and discussions continued on the idea to use the Red Cross hospital in Armenia for treating some of the patients requiring specialised physiotherapy.

The PNS maintained a relatively high level of assistance throughout this period. The American RC concentrated on furthering and implementing the findings of the disaster preparedness assessment. The Belgian RC maintained their coordination of the construction of a 70-unit prefab settlement in Golchuk, whilst the French RC Akyazi school construction project continued. Its mobile clinic in the Kaynasli area was operational, and had handled over 2,000 consultations by mid-January. The German RC had an international team of 19. Medical equipment was still being dispatched, whilst the ERU hospital in Yenikoy now converted into prefab units, with half of it becoming a training centre and the base for a psycho-social support programme. The German RC also furthered several other projects, including prefab rehabilitation of Bolu hospital, Kocaeli University physiotherapy centre, 2 basic health centres, 2 blood banks and 3 schools, food distributions and school feeding programmes in Golchuk. The Italian RC maintained 2 international staffs who continued to coordinate distribution of 50,000 ECHO-funded hygiene parcels. The Iraqi RC finished a 1,500 prefab unit settlement near Izmit, whilst the Spanish RC continued support for the 1,000 population tent city in Bolu, with ECHO-funded relief items. The Swiss, Dutch and Japanese RCs completed their winter tent programmes.

In mid-February the TRCS hosted a major planning and information for the Movement. As well as the Federation and TRCS' plans and budgets, the objectives and projects of the three assessment teams (disaster preparedness, health and reconstruction) were presented for donor support, whilst the findings from the independent report on plans for structural change within the TRCS were shared.

The area of disaster preparedness is a crucial one for the TRCS, and its plans are being integrated with those of the DP Consortium of PNS, led by the American Red Cross. A large and long-term programme is envisaged, with the replenishment of stock, updating of warehousing premises and systems, improved internal communications, better management and procedures, and expertise-sharing in other areas. A follow-up assessment to the December exercise is planned.

The construction assessment produced a list of 38 projects, mostly concerning the reconstruction or rehabilitation of school and medical facilities. By the end of the period, 11 had received confirmed donor support, with 11 others under consideration. Two projects, Izmit State Hospital extension and the prefabricated extension for Kocaeli Hospital had been completed.

The patterns and extent of vulnerability experienced by the victims of the two Turkish earthquakes are extremely complex and hard to quantify. The context in which the disasters occurred, the events immediately after both earthquakes (such as torrential rain after the first, and snow after the second), and the large but confused response to the needs all serve to complicate the picture.

**a. The Context**

***A Large Affected Area***

The total area affected by the earthquakes was large – a 250 km strip on the North Anatolian Fault. This region contains three features that presented particular vulnerabilities: a low-lying area around Golchuk, (which was hit by a tidal wave of several metres); residential and industrial towns connected by a few main roads around the coast of the Marmara sea; and more mountainous areas around Duzce. The towns most affected by the earthquakes (Izmit, Golchuk, Yalova, Adapazari, Duzce and Bolu) also have high population densities. Such a topography presented problems of access for the search, rescue and relief teams. The August earthquake, being the larger, posed most problems: towns further from Istanbul (such as Adapazari) were not reached by significant external assistance for up to three or four days.

***Poor Building Construction, High Population Densities***

The scale of the damage was enormous in the densely populated towns. The housing stock consisted predominantly of blocks of flats - often of poor design and built with poor quality construction materials. Turkey's building code, whilst strict, was not regularly adhered to: beach sand contaminated with salt was found to have been used for the concrete supports of some buildings, whilst a lack of lateral supports contributed to the collapse of many others. Golchuk experienced a tidal wave that submerged houses and whole streets, whilst refinery fires, hazards from damage to industrial plants and from domestic gas supply systems posed further problems. Turkey's largest oil refinery in Izmit posed a serious technological threat – 8 of its 30 tanks caught fire, and threatened a nearby chemical factory. A mass evacuation of nearby homes added to the confused picture of homelessness in the first five days.

***Vulnerabilities of a Largely Urban Population***

The majority of the vulnerable were urban dwellers. The basic characteristics of vulnerability in an urban disaster have been well-documented. In the Turkish context they included:

- High levels of dependency on complex infrastructures, communications, supply and support systems. There was reported a lack of initiative or localised formal organisation, due to an expectation that the authorities would restore order. Some of the authorities themselves waited for orders from higher up the command chain. With roads, telephone lines and basic amenities suddenly ruptured, there were few alternative coping mechanisms for the urban populations to deploy in the first few days. It is not known if rural outlying villages were able to cope better in this regard.

- Despite this, there was a relatively rapid re-establishment of basic life-saving infrastructures through high levels of local and national re-organisation, and expertise. Local and national resource availability was also high: for example, supplies of water from Turkey's mineral water bottling plants (including the TRCS') helped to alleviate an immediate problem in some areas, and allowed time for more substantial emergency water supplies to be established.

### ***Vulnerabilities of a Highly Developed Environment***

These urban populations enjoyed relatively high living standards - essentially identical to that of any European industrialised area. This had several effects:

- Heightening the dependency on suddenly ruptured urban systems, but speeding the re-establishment of basic services.
- Creating highly complicated, localised patterns of vulnerability. For example, someone may have retained a good job and a high income, but may be living under a plastic sheet, whilst 20 metres away a home and possessions may have been unaffected but the occupants no longer have any income whatsoever. This made the task of needs assessment and beneficiary identification extremely difficult.
- So too did the phenomenon of people wishing to remain near their homes – to be near trapped or missing family members, or better safeguard belongings, and to better cope with an already disorienting, traumatic experience. The amount of space on grass verges and in small parks was often insufficient for tented accommodation, and ruptured sewerage systems posed health risks. Items relatively uncommon for rapid aid responses – such as chemical toilets – were therefore necessary for a brief period due to the cramped, urban spaces where many had made their camps. The provision of standardised services was inevitably geared to 'official' camps, and this more marginalised group presented difficulties for the responding agencies. Certainly until the Spring those in informal tent 'clusters' had more material needs, and generally received less assistance.
- Creating specific psychological problems. Whilst this is a relatively unexplored field, the Turkish earthquakes indicate that a sudden heightening of vulnerability in a sophisticated urban population causes widespread generalised trauma and acute individual cases which are hard to address.
- There is also a heightened perception - and thus an emotional experience - of vulnerability by populations whose standard of living has dropped suddenly from very high to basic (if not life-threatening) levels. This has been an important factor in the frequent dissatisfaction with international relief items, especially in the less-critical post-emergency phases.

## **2b. Needs, and the Response**

### ***A Very Confused Picture of the Needs***

Linked to the sheer scale and complex patterns of vulnerability is the very confused picture of need that emerged from both earthquakes, but particularly from the first.

Most fundamentally, a day after the August earthquake, the official death toll was placed at 1,069 (compared to the likely figure of tens of thousands) which indicates the clarity of the situation at that point.<sup>4</sup> As the overall picture clarified, another confusing factor was introduced to the death toll issue. In late August around 30,000 people reported by authorities as 'missing' suddenly disappear from official figures. There were various reasons given for this - ranging from the understandable difficulties of the exercise to possibilities that there was a political wish for the total death toll to be downplayed. Whatever the cause, an IBS Market Research Services survey concluded that “the actual number of fatalities [of the August earthquake] is far above the official figure”<sup>5</sup>

There was similarly confusing picture regarding the extent of the shelter needs. Reuters, quoting Turkish sources, estimated a homeless figure of 200,000 throughout late August.<sup>6</sup> On the 25<sup>th</sup> August, USAID quoted OCHA’s report giving the Turkish Reconstruction Minister’s estimation of 600,000 homeless.<sup>7</sup> On September 18<sup>th</sup> the Governor of Kocaeli reported that 350,000 were homeless in Izmit alone, whilst two days later Turkey’s President stated that the figure was around 100,000 families for the entire region.<sup>8</sup>

Such problems extend into most other sectors, to the extent that even now, an assessment of the overall needs to any degree of accuracy becomes impossible to establish. All that one could say, with hindsight, is that:

There were probably over 17,000 deaths, and possibly as many as 50,000 deaths as a result of the first earthquake, and around 1,000 as a result of the second. The total number of wounded was probably between 40-50,000. The number of homeless immediately after the August earthquake was between 200,000 and 400,000, and 150,000 to 200,000 after the November earthquake.

### ***Emergency Needs***

The largest and only indisputably life-threatening needs in both disasters were specific and very short-lived: emergency rescue and emergency medical services due to the collapse of buildings. After the period in which these needs could be addressed to prevent death or serious injury- that is within days of the event - the chances of acute, life-threatening vulnerability reduced dramatically. Less than 10 people are thought to have died due to any other material needs (such as exposure, hunger, dehydration or an ongoing lack of medicines).

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<sup>4</sup> Source: USAID Turkey Earthquake Factsheet, August 17<sup>th</sup> 1999

<sup>5</sup> Source: OCHA Sitrep No 23 (22<sup>nd</sup> September 1999)

<sup>6</sup> Source: USAID Fact Sheets, Turkey Earthquake Nos 13-16

<sup>7</sup> Source: USAID Turkey Earthquake Factsheet No 17 (August 25<sup>th</sup> 1999)

<sup>8</sup> Source: OCHA Sitrep No 23 (22<sup>nd</sup> September 1999)

### ***Brief Periods of Critical Shelter and Hygiene Needs***

Nevertheless, during 1-2 weeks after both earthquakes there was the possibility of grave health problems amongst the hundreds of thousands sheltering in makeshift or inadequate tents. The August earthquake was immediately followed by three days of heavy rain, which brought temperatures down to 10 degrees below the normal night-time temperatures for that time of year, turned rescue sites, camps and access routes into mud, and briefly threatened to spread disease through the decrease in the general standard of shelter and hygiene. It is to the credit of the local populations and the responding agencies that major health problems in late August were averted.

The Bolu/Duzce earthquake, occurring at the onset of winter in an upland area, also threatened to create significant vulnerabilities associated with shelter. Snow fell in some areas soon after the earthquake, as the government and agencies were still struggling to provide suitable winterised tents and prefabricated houses for the victims of the August earthquake. There was a period, lasting up to two weeks, when the speed of shelter provision seemed as if it might be overwhelmed by the needs of over 100,000 people in very cold weather. And yet, once again, local coping mechanisms and the significant national and international aid response averted a life-threatening shelter crisis.

### ***Mid-Term Relief and Maintenance Needs***

Beyond the critical rescue/medical and shelter/wat-san needs, the victims of the earthquakes mostly displayed ongoing, generalised maintenance needs. These included medical, food, personal hygiene, cooking and bedding items. It is in this area that the Movement has provided most assistance. The medium-term neglect of these needs would have caused sharp degradations of health levels, although it is likely that national coping mechanisms would have prevented the situation deteriorating to the extent that mass morbidity or mortality became a factor. As of January 2000, all basic maintenance requirements were being met.

### ***Long Term Rehabilitation Needs***

The longer term needs of the victims of the earthquake include permanent housing, temporary camp services, psycho-social provision and - along with the rest of Turkey's population - protection through adequate disaster preparedness by the authorities, TRCS and other bodies.

### ***Longer Term Shelter Issues***

Both prefab and tent camps now provide excellent medium-term shelter arrangements, including medical services, electricity, communal showers and toilets, phone lines, shops, and some welfare services. Despite the quality of services and the increasing re-integration of many camp inhabitants with the daily life of the town or city, the psychological effects of an extended stay in a military-style tented camp or uniform prefab settlement should not be under-estimated, and various organisations are rightly looking to address this issue.

In most areas there is no shortage of prefab accommodation for the majority of those remaining in informal tent clusters. Other shelter solutions offered by the Government (such as hotel accommodation and relocation) have not been widely utilised, such is the desire of many to remain near their homes. Fear of further quakes, a lack of confidence in the official classifications of the security of dwellings and the loss of a

state benefit for those moving from tents into prefabs have all been commonly cited as reasons why tent clusters remain. (Even in September 1999, the majority of people in tents preferred rental subsidy (which they would receive whilst living in tents) to prefabricated housing or other forms of shelter<sup>9</sup>).

Throughout the summer of 2000 these last informal settlements will not prove problematic; some inhabitants can use their flats or houses during the day, go to work if they have it, and many utilise the tents only at night. In addition, various housing projects are increasingly targeting those without adequate shelter. However, alternative arrangements for winter may be necessary if these remain in use by the autumn.

As of April 2000, fears of long term vulnerability based on unresolved shelter needs may be premature. The Government has proceeded with a large-scale rebuilding programme after having erected functional prefab cities as an interim measure. Many officials and Red Crescent/Red Cross staff felt it unlikely that non-permanent shelter would be required after 2001, particularly as the public's condemnation of the response to the August earthquake would be harmful politically if it were to re-emerge even 18 months later. However, this situation should be monitored – there are many examples globally of situations where temporary shelter solutions have been forced to solve permanent housing problems, creating long term vulnerability in the process.

#### ***Camp Community Services, Psychological Needs***

Whilst the material needs of camp/prefab populations are being adequately met or exceeded, there is a general lack of services geared towards providing sports, social activities and non-curricular activities for youth, as well as various events and communal activities for the elderly. The Federation were proposing to supplement what little exists through a programme due to start in May 2000.

#### ***Psychological Needs***

Perhaps the most persistent and damaging long term threat to the well-being of the earthquake survivors is trauma and post-traumatic stress. The region had not only experienced one of the most destructive earthquakes of the century, but also underwent many hundreds of aftershocks, some quite large and powerful in their own right. Therefore, people had been, and continued to be, scared and uncertain. By the end of October 1999, a visiting National Society delegate<sup>10</sup> reported that all the camps he had visited had outreach programmes run by the Ministry of Health or specific agencies or NGOs. However, whilst care for the most acutely affected is ongoing, latent problems, or more generalised conditions that nevertheless aggravate mental well-being, may well emerge over the coming months and even years.

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<sup>9</sup> Source: Turkish State Institute of Statistics, reported in OCHA Sitrep No 24, 27<sup>th</sup> September 1999)

<sup>10</sup> J. English, Assessment Report to Turkey for the British Red Cross, September 1999.



Despite Turkey's status as a highly disaster-prone country, and despite the capacities that existed within the National Society and the Movement in Turkey in 1999, many of the fundamental problems in coordination, efficiency and effectiveness that emerged as the operation unfolded can be traced to failures in disaster planning and readiness in both Ankara and Geneva.

**a) Turkish Red Crescent**

***Background: Strengths***

The Joint Disaster Preparedness Assessment reported in December 1999 that the TRCS had seven regional warehouses and a central facility of nearly 100,000 sq. m, 350 staff and 220 vehicles. Significant stocks were held. It also maintained three field hospitals, portable kitchens, deployable blood facilities and a canvas tent manufacturing capability, which could be activated to supplement or replenish stocks. These stocks and resources have helped the TRCS maintain a good reputation for its disaster response at home and abroad.

Apart from the Turkish military, the TRCS possessed the largest stocks of relief items in the country, and this had been adequate for the small-medium size disasters of recent years. And whilst the TRCS has come under much criticism since August 1999, it should be noted that its response to the two earthquakes was, in terms of supply, both swift and sizeable. Indeed, many other major National Societies would have been pleased to have achieved the levels of its mobilisation of both goods and personnel.

***Some Weaknesses Revealed***

However, the scale of the August earthquake, whilst far beyond that for which any National Society could completely prepare, revealed serious weaknesses in the TRCS' preparedness that had been largely obscured by its previous successes in smaller disasters. These centred around:

- An absence of a clearly defined and detailed role within a national disaster response mechanism
- A lack of formalised and internally disseminated disaster plans and standard operating procedures. This includes strategies for adequate cooperation and liaison mechanisms at all levels.
- A lack of staff and volunteer disaster response training programmes based on the above.
- No independent communications infrastructure
- The need for updated specifications for certain stock items, particularly tents.

Whilst these weaknesses did not seriously hinder the rapid mobilisation of significant amounts of material assistance, they did affect the efficiency of the response and the targeting and effectiveness of those supplies. They also created a serious obstacle for other partners in the coordination of the relief effort, which led to sometimes strained and confused inter-agency relations, and affected the success of other operations that relied upon the TRCS' effectiveness - most notably that of the Federation.

### ***TRCS' Role Within National Disaster Planning***

The lack of a clearly defined role within the country's disaster planning played a significant part in the TRCS' inability to limit political, public and media expectations and criticism. The national disaster planning documentation goes no further in regard to the TRCS than a general delineation of sectoral responsibilities and place within the State's response mechanism. However, the precise modalities, magnitude and duration of its role during the various phases of a response are not detailed.

Criticism of the overall response to the August earthquake from the media and public grew quickly, and expectations on the TRCS (particularly from the Government) surpassed all reasonable levels. With long-running allegations of a misuse of funds also being resurrected, the TRCS swiftly began to suffer an extremely damaging and negative media campaign, which focused on the quality of the standard TRCS tent issue. This caused massive turbulence within the Society, and in part contributed to the resignation of the President and the entire Executive Board.

### ***Management, Operating Procedures, Training***

Despite the sizeable mobilisation of resources evident in the TRCS' response to both disasters, there was a reliance on centralised decision-making which followed no coherent pre-existing planning mechanism of which field operatives were aware. Whilst this enabled corporate directives to be made with great authority, the decision-making process was subject to high-level external pressures, exerted a huge managerial workload upon relatively few key figures at Headquarters, and led to a lack of clarity and decision-taking at field level. The normal role of TRCS branches was previously concerned with ongoing fundraising and welfare services, with low levels of first aid and other disaster-related activities. In addition, they relied on only a small cadre of regular volunteers trained in disaster response.

Finally, the problem of a lack of clearly understood and precise operating procedures was compounded by an equivalent weakness within the response structures of the Government. According to a national Decree<sup>11</sup>, the authorities had overall control of the post-disaster rescue and relief operation. Whilst the TRCS was formally a part of this structure at all levels, coordination was often poor through a mutual lack of understood roles and functions, especially when the perceived failure of the tent issue caused TRCS representatives on the joint Crisis Management Centres to be perceived as lesser partners of the Governors and military.

### ***Communication Systems***

Communication and information flow will always be problematic in an earthquake of this size. In the August earthquake landlines and mobile systems were not properly functional for up to five days. The rapid mobilisation of local resources by the public and the Turkish business sector, as well as international assistance, hindered an already confused understanding of need and delivery mechanisms. Nevertheless, the TRCS was insufficiently resourced with a stand-alone communication system, and in particular lacked a radio network. This seriously hampered immediate localised needs

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<sup>11</sup> Source: Republic of Turkey Official Gazette 1999, Decision Number KHK/583.

assessment and coordination capabilities. A more detailed assessment of TRCS' communication needs were made by the joint Disaster Preparedness Assessment.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Preparedness Stock - Tents***

Despite having a large stock of these items as well as a tent-manufacturing capability, the TRCS' tent stock was predicated on a traditional canvas 'bell-shaped' model that had been largely unmodified for a century. Whilst perhaps acceptable for very short-term use in relatively dry conditions, the prevalent design proved inadequate for longer term mass deployment in very wet weather. Although other factors contributed to the poor performance of these tents (in particular some disastrous examples of site allocation and preparedness on the part of the authorities), the lack of fly sheets, sufficient headroom and flooring indicate basic inadequacies in the specifications and design of the preparedness stock.

### ***Ways Forward***

The organisational and systems-based weaknesses outlined above have been examined in some detail by the independent 'Pre-Evaluation Report'<sup>13</sup> commissioned by the TRCS and led by the Middle East Technical University (METU), as well as the joint Disaster Preparedness Assessment Team report. Many were also articulated to the consultant by senior TRCS HQ and field-based staff. As the Spring of 2000 has enabled a degree of self-assessment and reflection, the TRCS have stated with increasing clarity that its priority for the future must be disaster preparedness. A range of further initiatives are being started at Headquarters level, but even at branch level there is a recognition of the need to improve in "warehousing, stocks, equipment and training." This is an encouraging sign, as well as a tacit recognition of previous weaknesses.

The American Red Cross, together with the International Federation and some other NS, are currently engaged in various initiatives with the TRCS that aim to improve its disaster planning and preparedness. The scope of the areas addressed and the resources that are available bode well for this process: but possible disagreements over priorities seriously challenge it (especially the TRCS' emphasis on hardware and restocking, whilst the PNS tend to stress the need for organisational change). None of the initiatives were advanced enough at the time of writing to allow either evaluative comments or recommendations.

#### **Recommendation 1**

TRCS should maintain its current commitment to re-examining and acting upon the numerous areas of proposed change as outlined in the METU 'Pre-evaluation Report on the Restructuring of the TRCS'. TRCS should fully engage in discussion with the Federation and PNS regarding organisational change, disaster preparedness and planning, communications, liaison mechanisms and monitoring/reporting.

#### **Recommendation 2**

That the TRCS reviews and modernises the design and specifications of its standard tent stock.

<sup>12</sup> Turkey Disaster Preparedness Program Assessment Team Review, 5-11 December 1999

<sup>13</sup> 'Pre-Evaluation Report on the Restructuring of the Turkish Red Crescent Society, 23 February 2000

## **b) The International Federation Presence, 1991-1999**

### ***A Lack of Information and a Non-Strategic Approach***

Having had an in-country presence for so long<sup>14</sup>, the Federation could be reasonably expected to have been extremely well-placed to position its response. However, the August operation was established on the basis of a crucial lack of basic information and understanding of the TRCS and of likely disaster scenarios. The consultant was able to find no documented scenario planning, risk analysis, or detailed assessment of the TRCS' capacities, competencies and operating mechanisms beyond the very general level of that given in the global Emergency Appeals and Partnerships in Profile documents.

In the course of the Federation Ankara office's other work there are reported to have been attempts to assess TRCS stocks and warehousing, its internal procedures, and planning. There were reports detailing what little was ascertained, but these briefs were never used to form a consolidated, preparedness-oriented strategic analysis, nor did they alert the Secretariat to the huge gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the TRCS.

Sporadic attempts were also made by the successive Federation representatives to communicate to the TRCS the likely priorities and actions of the Federation in the event of an emergency, but there is no evidence of a coherent or sustained approach to such dissemination, nor a detailed framework agreement for Federation/TRCS co-operation in the event of an emergency.

Certainly it was not easy to access certain information: as a powerful and sophisticated NS with a respected reputation in emergency operations, the TRCS did not prioritise such discussions. However, there is evidently a failure on the part of the Secretariat to use this resource more strategically, particularly given the historical frequency of large earthquakes in Turkey. In particular, there seems to have been no expectation at any level that basic framework agreements for concrete actions in the event of an emergency be furthered, nor any adequate usage of the office for risk analysis or scenario planning. The claims of the Federation to be a learning organisation are severely undermined in this case.

Therefore, the overall relationship between the Federation office and the TRCS, at least for the previous three years, were certainly cordial, but lacked substance regarding information-sharing or programming.

### ***The Operational Effects***

The effects of this lack of knowledge and analysis were wide-ranging. Most immediately, the in-coming Head of Delegation made several reasonable assumptions based on the information available that subsequently distorted relations with the TRCS and the effectiveness of the Federation's operation. These include:

a) An assumption that the Istanbul Directorate of the TRCS would have a significant role, as a regional office, in managing or coordinating the TRCS' response in the nearby affected areas. This contributed to the initial sense that a delegation in

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<sup>14</sup> 8 years – see Chapter 1a) above.

Istanbul would be close to the TRCS' operation, and hindered a realisation that the real locus of TRCS decision-making would inevitably be Ankara. In fact, the Directorate's main function was, and remains, as a fundraising centre.

b) That the TRCS would establish a logistics and relief operation into which the Movement's resources could be channelled, monitored and reported on with minimal field presence by the Federation. In fact, for the first few months almost all incoming goods were initially received and deployed by the authorities and military, as is clearly stated in Turkey's national disaster legislation.

c) That operational liaison and the provision of TRCS counterparts would be a priority for TRCS (whereas the TRCS' resources were largely absorbed by the need to integrate with Government structures and respond to very high national expectations).

Meanwhile the TRCS also made reasonable but equally hindering assumptions about the Federation (and PNS), based on the limited knowledge gained from eight years of Federation presence. Broadly, there was an underestimation of Federation and donor expectations and agendas, particularly concerning levels of monitoring, reporting, visibility and operationality. The Federation's need for communicated plans and information had also not been made clear to the TRCS, or had not been sufficiently emphasised and internalised.

The issue of Red Crescent/Red Cross control over its support became key in September and October, and the delegation's relief operation was increasingly reliant upon the prevailing Government-managed response system. However, the Deputy Governor of the State's response had "no information" about the Federation or its role in the early stages of the crisis.<sup>15</sup> This inevitably exacerbated coordination problems.

Difficulties in co-ordination, communication and relationship-building between the TRCS, Federation and authorities would have still been dictated to some extent by the scale of the disaster. But the point here is that a substantial mitigation of the problems arising from a basic lack of knowledge and understanding would have been possible through much more advanced preparedness, and this would have significantly benefited the efficiency of the operation.

### **Recommendation 3**

a) The Secretariat should revise its approach to the utilisation of its field offices and delegations in the field of disaster planning. This includes ensuring that Country Assistance Strategies exist for all countries with high vulnerability to disasters, and that they contain properly detailed scenario mapping and analyses of the respective roles of the Government and the National Society, and their strengths and weaknesses in disaster preparedness and response.

b) The Secretariat should expect framework agreements with the host National Society to be furthered by its delegations and offices in every country that is at significant risk of a major disaster. These should detail operational contingencies in the event of a disaster.

<sup>15</sup> From discussions with the consultant, May 2000

c) In highly disaster-prone countries where no International Federation presence exists, it should consider creating offices, of however minimal a presence, or sharing ICRC offices. Alternatively, the Federation Secretariat should make specific and regular efforts to detail its disaster planning and preparedness with the National Society through missions from Geneva or through its regional delegations.

### **c) The Closure of the International Federation Office, March 1999**

#### ***Background and Reasons***

In March 1999 the Federation closed its office in Ankara. The representation had received little PNS support, and was running a deficit of 150,000 Chf by the end of 1998. Despite the lack of substantial output of the office in previous years, and despite Geneva's low expectation of the office's output, the Europe Department at the Secretariat obviously valued it in general terms as an interface with an increasingly important NS. Several direct appeals for funding were made to PNS by the then Head of Europe Department, amongst others. In addition, both the TRCS and the ICRC (who lack a status agreement in Turkey) made significant efforts to keep it open. TRCS offered a flat, a driver and an office, and ICRC offered to help fund the presence. Apart from the deficit, it seems that the only major cost would have been the salary of the Representative. But such were the over-riding cost-cutting imperatives imposed by the Federation's governance upon Secretariat operational departments at the time, the small deficit was seen as unacceptable, and with no PNS support forthcoming the decision was made to close the office.

#### ***Effect of the Closure on the Office on the Subsequent Operation***

The extent to which this soured diplomatic relations between the Federation and the TRCS is unclear. Whatever their initial reaction, the TRCS now seem sanguine about this event, whilst Federation staff at all levels feel that relations were significantly damaged. There can be no doubt, however, that opportunities of closer dialogue were greatly reduced, and that relations were at best more distant in the subsequent months.

But the closure of the office also had a direct operational effect upon the Federation's readiness at the time of the August earthquake. It lost, by 18 weeks and at the cost of 150,000 Chf, the chance to have a pre-existing office near TRCS headquarters in Ankara from which to establish a large operational presence. Proximity to the TRCS HQ, from which all major operational decisions were to be made, would have improved coordination, and would have minimalised the effects of having the Federation's main presence in Istanbul (see Chapter 4c. below).

Both the chronic under-utilisation of the Federation office in Ankara for disaster planning over an eight year period, and the subsequent closure of the office for the sake of 150,000 Chf, suggest a serious lack of corporate commitment to strategic analysis and disaster planning in a highly disaster-prone country. It may be no coincidence that throughout the period of the office's existence, DROC's attention in the region was mostly concentrated upon the Balkan crises. Nevertheless, the negative impacts on the Federation's Turkey Earthquakes operation described above suggest the need for financial empowerment of such field presences, and conscious and formal planning mechanisms in the Secretariat and the field for all high-risk countries.

It should be noted that the various 'PNS' who were made aware of the need for funds for the Turkey office also displayed a lack of commitment to such a presence, and displayed no more strategic awareness of the importance of the office for disaster preparedness than the Secretariat. There are as many lessons and causes for concern for PNS here as there are for Geneva.

**Recommendation 4**

The Federation Secretariat and donor NS should indicate their commitment to the Federation's disaster planning by making resources available to maintain the presence of strategic representations in countries highly prone to disasters.

**d) Federation Material Preparedness**

**Specifications**

The Federation has recently made progress on the development of minimum standards and standardised specifications for a number of relief items - particularly in the fields of nutrition, health and hygiene.<sup>16</sup> However, these are predicated on non-urban, less-developed contexts common in Africa and Asia. The Turkish earthquakes revealed a lack of preparedness regarding specifications required for a natural disaster in a highly developed, predominantly urban arena. There is also a lack of familiarity with suppliers concerning these items. This was most noticeable in the problematic procurement of urgently-needed winterised tents. The Federation's Logistics, Health and Wat/San Departments in Geneva and the field were also faced with time-consuming challenges over the correct specifications for gas stoves, medical items and winterised toilet and shower containers. It is unacceptable that the Federation has inadequate technical preparedness for such items in winter conditions.

A vast range of these items were also being supplied by PNS and other donors, leading, for example, to the overall provision of some 40 different types of tent. There is an urgent need for a multi-agency consensus on standardised specifications for use in this type of emergency. If required, specifically-commissioned specifications should be drawn up if off-the-shelf products are not entirely suitable for deployment in a humanitarian context.

It is a salutary thought that a similar winter shelter crisis was averted in Albania in 1999 by the sudden return of refugees to Kosovo in the early summer. Turkey was perhaps a final reminder that this issue cannot be ignored for much longer.

**Recommendation 5**

The Secretariat should consider initiating a working group, involving National Societies and other major agencies, to review and standardise existing specifications for relief items required in a cold-weather, urban natural disaster environment, and to identify areas requiring improvement in this field.

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<sup>16</sup> Most notably evidenced by the SPHERE Project.

### ***Stocking/Guaranteed Stock Availability***

The Federation's lack of emergency stocks, and the lack of framework agreements with suppliers, caused inefficiency, additional workload pressures and a needlessly slow mobilisation of goods. The lack of clear procurement procedures for emergency situations significantly added to delays in the delivery of goods. Whilst the mechanisms for rapid but coordinated PNS mobilisation improve, and were effective in this case, the Secretariat's own capabilities remain relatively static, despite increasing demands. If the Secretariat wishes to retain an effective emergency response capability, these issues must be addressed urgently.

### **Recommendation 6**

The Secretariat should make a policy decision as to whether it wishes to improve its own deployment of relief goods, or whether it wishes to move towards out-placing this function to PNS and adopt a stronger coordinating role. Recent recommendations of the Solution Teams should be pursued. Options include: centrally and/or regionally positioned stocks; framework agreements with suppliers; and more precise consolidation and coordination of available PNS stocks.

## **e) Other Issues**

### ***Financial Preparedness of the Federation***

Although 250,000 Chf was quickly made available to the Turkey operation from DREF, such was the level of cash response from the Federation's donors that the allocation was never used. Throughout the Turkey operation there has never been a significant problem of funding being too little or too slow – in fact, the opposite is true.

### ***Preparedness of National Societies***

Unfortunately this area is too varied to be able to be explored in detail here. However, whilst only a few National Societies maintained more than merely diplomatic relations with the TRCS, several were able to respond with Emergency Response Units, Search and Rescue Teams and operational presences with remarkable speed after both earthquakes. It is not clear whether this is a result of preparedness specifically for a Turkish disaster, or whether it is indicative of a standard emergency response by the PNS.

It may be useful for the Federation Secretariat Europe Dept to investigate whether other National Societies had any contingency planning for a possible Turkish earthquake, and whether future PNS planning should be coordinated or at least communicated through the Secretariat. This assumes, however, an adequate level of PNS strategic planning, and a willingness of the PNS to share these plans and to engage with the Secretariat on such an exercise.



## Chapter 4. The Response

- 4a. *The Government's Response*
- 4b. *The TRCS' Response*
- 4c. *The International Federation's Response*
- 4d. *The Donor National Societies' Response*

### **4a) The Government's Response**

It is explicitly stated in Turkey's national legislature that the Government has complete control over the coordination and deployment of international or national resources in the event of a national disaster. This is quite a common arrangement (although some NS, as donors, found this very frustrating and even unacceptable, despite similar laws in their own countries). The predominant planning, logistics and delivery mechanisms were therefore through the Governmental structure created for this disaster – the Crisis Management Centres (CMCs), supported by the LDKMs (Logistical Supply Coordination Centres). Until early October almost all incoming Red Cross/Red Crescent donations were channelled through this system.

Anecdotal evidence points to a slow, confused response by the authorities to the August earthquake in the first two days. Members of the Government initially made statements indicating that no external assistance was required, although access was given to international search and rescue teams from over 30 countries by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Those who were on the ground<sup>17</sup> at a very early stage report confusion in coordination, indecision, a lack of leadership and of initiative from the regional authorities (or 'Governorships'), which lasted for some weeks. This indicates both a lack of preparedness planning and training, but also indicates the scale, complexity and collective trauma that was current in the affected areas at that time.

Direct responsibility for the operation, initially delegated to the Governor of Istanbul, reverted to Ankara around the 21<sup>st</sup> August<sup>18</sup>, whilst a huge and committed mobilisation of resources, led by Ankara, delivered large amounts of assistance but which was also hampered by bureaucracy, delays and a lack of clarity. Before the August emergency there was no pre-existing national coordinating body which was ready to centralise a national disaster response. In addition, detailed disaster planning fell to individual ministries, the TRCS, the army, the Civil Defence, regional authorities and local districts, who all created their own plans. It is not clear whether there had been simulations or exercises based on an integration of these various bodies. In any event, despite a high degree of centralisation, the coordination of various components of the national response structure would prove to be problematic.

The immediate response of the Turkish military – one of the largest armies in the world – also seems to have been variable. Some Search and Rescue teams praised the level of assistance offered by the army, and their logistics function at Istanbul airport was also generally welcomed. The devastation of the naval base in Golchuk had a

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<sup>17</sup> Including international SAR team members, national and international Red Crescent/Red Cross staff, and national UNDP staff)

<sup>18</sup> Source: Mission Report; Assist. Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director, OCHA Geneva, 26.8.99

major effect on their capacity to respond to civilian needs within the first 48 hours, and elsewhere there seems to have been a brief period of incoherence before the considerable resources of the military were effectively mobilised for the rescue and then the relief efforts<sup>19</sup>. It is beyond the remit of this evaluation to examine whether this is as a result of the clarity of the military's role within the national disaster planning mechanisms, or whether their own preparedness for a natural disaster of this scale was inadequate.

Whatever their initial response, by the end of the first week of the August earthquake the military's full engagement with the rescue and subsequent relief operation brought rapid improvements in coordination (especially regarding logistics, transport and communications) and in the availability of resources for the aid effort. In particular, they were to play a key role in the emergency logistics network (LDKMs), which underpinned the overall management and needs-collation functions of the Government's CMCs. The LDKMs and the airport logistics facility introduced standardised warehousing, dispatch and receipt documentation, and developed these into a computer-linked network for the control and delivery of goods. With a central warehouse in Izmit (the 'Intertex' facility) of 30,000 sq metres, regional LDKM warehouses provided a steadily-improving logistics network for the CMCs.

The authorities' overall relief and logistics system was complicated (see Appendix 2). But it must be stressed that the system did deliver a considerable amount of assistance in a short period of time, with no allegations or suspicions of significant wastage or corruption. It seems to have worked reasonably effectively from September and was instrumental in a largely satisfactory overall response to the November earthquake. In terms of service delivery to the vulnerable, it is not the CMC and LDKM system itself that presented major problems for the Red Crescent/Red Cross Movement, but the position of the TRCS within this mechanism, and donor expectations of monitoring and reporting for which the system was not designed.

The LDKM mechanism, as of end April 2000, remains in place, but is operating at around 50% capacity whilst it seeks exit arrangements (ie an order from the military or Prime Minister's office). A transfer of remaining stock to the TRCS is planned, but it was unclear to the consultant whether any expertise-based transfers to the TRCS were being discussed – or whether any lesson-learning exercises were underway or planned.

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<sup>19</sup> The Federation Assessment team in late August reported that the military and civil defence services "seem frozen with indecision" due to the sheer size of the affected area.

## **4b. The Turkish Red Crescent's Response**

### **Overall Assistance**

As per its legal role, the TRCS immediately focused upon the key areas of shelter and food, as well as acting in an auxiliary role to overstretched health facilities. In August the TRCS had large stocks, and deployed them relatively swiftly. Despite confusion as to the coordination role of the authorities and the role of the Turkish military, the Government's lead role was becoming stronger by Day 4, and the TRCS were expected to play an auxiliary role within it. As a part of the state's response mechanism, the TRCS was largely guided by Governmental decisions, and was an implicit and dependent part of the CMC structure.

Many of the frustrations of other parts of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement over the TRCS' apparent failure to 'control' supplies do not take into account this relatively common arrangement between a National Society and the State during a national emergency. What was unusual in this case, perhaps, was the problematic relationship between the Government and the TRCS at various points of the crisis, and the extent to which the Government sought to control some aspects of TRCS' activities and internal arrangements.

### **Branches and Volunteers**

Despite being as much the victims of the earthquakes as the population they were serving, several branches displayed examples of great courage and compassion in the immediate rescue efforts. This reflects the overwhelmingly committed and generous public response to the needs of the vulnerable by the people of Turkey.

However, due to a lack of sufficient preparedness for a major natural disaster in this region, the branches' actions were often taking place in a context of limited training, little delegated authority, a lack of standard operating procedures, few resources and an unclear role in reporting and coordination within state structures. This may be partly why, despite the huge resources of the TRCS, the Federation Assessment team reported that the National Society has "limited capacity" in the immediate aftermath of the August earthquake.<sup>20</sup>

The role and function of Red Crescent branches and volunteers in Turkey differs widely from that common in many other National Societies. Branches are more similar to local foundations that focus on raising funds through the provision of health services and equipment. Whilst first aid programmes existed, discussions with the Government in 1997 and 1998 to create a large national First Aid training programme indicates the lack of one at that point. The branches rely on few regular or trained volunteers: in times of crisis, the branches drew upon the local population for voluntary services, mostly, it must be assumed, unskilled. In 1999 the volunteers' role in service delivery was "minimal, the response operation has largely been [conducted] by national society staff, often from headquarters, and locally recruited temporary staff".<sup>21</sup> It was reported by the Disaster Preparedness Assessment Team that in terms

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<sup>20</sup> Int Federation Assessment Team: 'Assessment Questions for the Appeal Document – Draft 3', August 1999.

<sup>21</sup> Int Federation Disaster Preparedness Program Assessment Team Review, p. 11

of disaster response TRCS branches were responsible for acquiring the funds for local disasters, and “it appeared that it was the decision of the local branch as to whether to respond or not.”<sup>22</sup>

This may partly explain why several interlocutors remember a strange paralysis displayed by some branches, whilst others were greatly impressed by TRCS branch pro-activity. The Federation Assessment Team section on Logistics makes interesting reading: whilst TRCS organisation in Yalova is praised, the team had to search very hard to even find the TRCS presence in Golchuk.<sup>23</sup> But the definition of a local, as opposed to a national, disaster was not clear, and became the crucial point of departure for TRCS’ response in this case. In order for more effective management through a shorter chain of command to National HQ in Ankara, local branches were quickly replaced by operational TRCS cells (also called ‘branches’) led by managers redeployed from other regions. Whilst usually experienced in person and resource management, these leaders also had little or no previous disaster response training, and had to rapidly adapt and expand their existing skills.<sup>24</sup> As the emergency phases ended, their return to their ordinary functions elsewhere in Turkey led to a rapid turnover of field staff, whilst local resources remained under-utilised. As of April 2000, there was little evidence of contact or integration between the ‘operational’ branches and the pre-existing local branches.

### **Material Assistance Delivery**

From the perspective of logistics preparedness, the TRCS seemed unprepared to respond to this type of disaster. The Federation’s Assessment Team Notes provide a snapshot of the state of the TRCS’ logistics capability within the first week of the August earthquake. The central warehouse of the region, for example, was “generally full” with goods for the TRCS’ commercial programmes or generalised relief goods, and “High stock levels of (mainly) shelter items [which] seem curious given current field needs for the same items”.<sup>25</sup> Profiles of other logistics facilities in the region give an overall impression of a lack of preparedness or pre-existing, standardised systems and procedures.

Nevertheless, through an increasing centralisation of the logistics effort in Ankara, by day 6 the TRCS had distributed 19,000 tents (the majority being effectively ‘summer’ tents), 45,000 blankets, 23 mobile kitchens 14 MT of food, 4 mobile clinics and had established a large field hospital with almost 300 staff and blood collection centres. Overall, TRCS activity seems to have peaked in mid-late October, when it was feeding around 100,000 people with daily hot meals, managing 18 tent cities for some 40,000 people, and was providing services and goods to another 69 tent cities. It reported a deployment of around 450 TRCS staff and over 250 volunteers at this time.

Despite the huge strain that this operation placed upon the National Society, the TRCS response to the November earthquake was also large. Again, local branches seemed initially to be overwhelmed, but the TRCS’ Ankara-based response system distributed over 8,000 tents, 70,000 blankets, 10,000 beds, 5 ambulances and 78 MT

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<sup>22</sup> Source: Int Federation Disaster Preparedness Program Assessment Team Review, p. 10

<sup>23</sup> Source: Operation Logistic Assessment, 25<sup>th</sup> August 1999

<sup>24</sup> Source: ‘Operational’ Branch Directors and Assistant Directors in discussion with the consultant.

<sup>25</sup> Source: *ibid.*

of food within 48 hours. It had broadly doubled these amounts by early December, and had also distributed plastic sheeting, portable kitchens, generators, stoves and 855 units of blood.

Therefore, despite apparently poor regional preparedness and awareness of operational procedures, the TRCS mobilised and delivered large amounts of relief items, albeit with a heavy reliance upon CMC and LDKM mechanisms. It is the efficiency and procedural transparency with which this was accomplished that remain open questions.

## **Conclusions**

Apart from the problems with the specifications and siting of the standard TRCS tents, the Society could justifiably claim to have performed well in terms of the provision of its prioritised material items to a very large number of vulnerable people. The estimated figure for the number of hot meals provided by the TRCS – over 20 million – indicated the size of its overall operation. Nevertheless, it received high levels of criticism for its response, including:

- A fairly vicious media campaign focusing on the quality of the tents, previous allegations of corruption and nepotism, and a generalised feeling of lethargy and unreliability. This campaign was generated by many factors, including political expediency.
- International donors, for whom monitoring and reporting were as a set of big priorities as the actual delivery of items. The TRCS was seen to have ‘lost control’ to the CMC/LDKM system over resource allocation and tracking. In reality, it never had it or, under national law, expected to have it to any great degree.
- Operational partners, including the Federation, other NS and the authorities, whose expectation of the capacities of the TRCS exceeded the reality of the situation. With huge donor pressure upon the Federation and operational NS to spend funds rapidly, and with a lack of deep mutual knowledge and understanding, opportunities for frustration multiplied.

The accumulation of these generalised negative attitudes should not be allowed to obscure what was a massive response to an impossible challenge by a National Society under almost intolerable external pressure. But nor should they obscure the real weaknesses in the TRCS’ preparedness and implementation, as outlined above.

The weaknesses evident in the TRCS’ performance are being discussed either internally (using the METU independent review of the TRCS’ structure and activities as a starting point) or with their partners, including various Turkish institutes as well as the delegation and other NS. They rightly centre around systems of planning, strategic resource deployment, personnel training, management and coordination. The scope of these discussions certainly indicate a comprehensive and detailed identification of the key problem areas. But it is too early in the process of dialogue and implementation to assess the depth of corporate commitment within the TRCS to follow these initiatives through, or to evaluate the success of the progress thus far.

## **4c. The International Federation Response**

### **i) Assessment of the Needs**

#### ***The First Informal Assessments***

The speed of the Federation's arrival into Istanbul after the August earthquake was impressive: the future Head of Delegation, an Information delegate and a photographer arrived within 12 hours from nearby Macedonia. Informal assessments began soon after, as the latter two delegates began to report back from the field, but it is unclear how their findings were used, or how useful they were apart from their obvious media value. Another reporting/information delegate arrived on the second day. An interesting point emerges here: information delegates are often rapidly deployed into the affected area, and are having to informally assess the situation and the needs. It is possible that simple formal training in needs assessment, which would merely formalise their findings without distracting from their primary role, could feed into operational planning systems, and would maximise an important resource.

#### **Recommendation 7**

The Secretariat should consider some brief needs assessment training for Information Delegates and members of the Media Service.

#### ***The Formal Federation Assessment***

A very brief but adequate 'Federation Assessment Team for the Turkish Earthquake' Terms of Reference were drafted on the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> day after the earthquake. It contained the normal requisites of a needs assessment, a plan of action and a budget, and the recommended profile of a delegation

#### ***The Assessment is Conducted***

The Assessment Team Leader – an experience Federation delegate and recent Head of the Relief Department in Geneva – arrived in Turkey on Day 4, and began initial assessments whilst the other five members were assembled. The full team began work on Day 6 (22<sup>nd</sup> August), and pulled in representatives from all the National Societies present where possible. Some 18 people were involved, splitting into four multi-sectoral teams for field trips. A meeting with all concerned was held on the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup> August (Day 9), and a set of report was apparently finalised thereafter.

What happened to the final, consolidated Assessment Report is unclear. Documents outlining TRCS capacities and plans, issues around the establishment and acceptance of a delegation, the various sectoral priority needs and the activities of other NS seem to have been sent to Geneva on the 29<sup>th</sup> August (Day 13), according to a e-mail of that date. However, the full report, due on the 30<sup>th</sup> after a delay due to software problems, was not seen by anyone in Geneva or by the Head of Delegation. The Team Leader was surprised at this when interviewed in April 2000, and soon after provided the full report to the consultant.

Even when putting all the disparate documents and the final report together, it is difficult to get an immediately clear and concise picture: a standardised format would have helped, as would a more thorough exploration of the strategy and overall objectives. Nevertheless, the reports and verbal briefings available to Geneva were sufficient for it to proceed with a full Emergency Appeal.

### **Recommendation 8**

The International Federation should consider creating standard formats for all Assessment Reports (whether in an ‘ad hoc’ or a FACT context), and should ensure that a final Report is disseminated to all concerned.

#### *Timeliness:*

The formal initial assessment process was completed (albeit without a final report being circulated in Geneva) within 14 days of the earthquake.

There is a feeling in some quarters – particularly NS and some Secretariat service departments – that this is too slow, that certain sectoral findings weren’t integrated properly, that the results of the assessment were never made clear, and that the Federation lost an opportunity to establish a stronger lead role. The Assessment Team itself found that the TRCS’ level of engagement in the exercise was limited to one liaison counterpart for one day, and delays were caused by the difficulties of fostering the TRCS’ ownership of the process. In addition, delays by the TRCS in the signing of a Relief Agreement (providing some assurances re monitoring and reporting) also affected the timing of the Team’s final conclusions.

On the other hand, the Team Leader, the Head of Delegation, the Desk Officer and others were happy with the speed of the Assessment process. The HoD was rightly concerned about having such a Team too early, when the priority was clearly life-saving search and rescue, and the Desk queried whether a team arriving much earlier would have been able to get as clear an overall picture. The resulting Appeal was released a week later (the 23<sup>rd</sup> day after the earthquake), and this is an average timing for most Int Federation Appeals.<sup>26</sup>

Without a dedicated rapid assessment capability within the Federation (which is now being furthered through FACT), it is unreasonable to expect a much swifter assessment process. Whilst this may be faint praise for a mechanism that is capable of improvement, it is interesting to note that some of the factors causing delay might just as well impact on a FACT team as an ad hoc team. Even with a pre-agreement in place between the TRCS and the Federation, the host NS’ ownership of the assessment process would not necessarily be swiftly won, given the domestic pressures that consumed the TRCS in the first few weeks. Nor would a Relief Agreement have been necessarily more forthcoming. And the topography and demography of this widely-spread, predominantly urban disaster meant that even a 20-strong UNDAC team could not get a clear picture of needs until the end of the first week. It would be an interesting exercise to apply a hypothetical FACT team to the Turkey context: not least in order to explore and better quantify the added value it would have made to the speed of an assessment.

#### *Accuracy:*

The Assessment Team’s recommendations were *generally* appropriate to the needs in the first few months. The main weaknesses of the TRCS were expressed (volunteers, lack of clarity re TRCS’ formal role, centralisation of decision-making in Ankara and the branches). The basic shelter, health and food needs of the vulnerable were

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<sup>26</sup> Source: Operational Finances and Reports Department, Federation Secretariat

identified. The suggested beneficiary caseload (around 100,000 people) was feasible but conservative, and was increased to 250,000 by the time of the Appeal. Whilst accurate, the majority of the recommended relief inputs were relatively predictable and standard: a pre-existing response package would have been equally as useful here, and would have improved the Federation's response time considerably .

The recommended relief inputs were also predicated upon an intervention in a much less developed context: the importation of hygiene parcels, for example, was quickly inappropriate when shops selling hygiene items were re-opened within days of both earthquakes. There is also little in the assessment documentation about local procurement possibilities, whilst the final Appeal document mentions that "All items are going to be procured locally". In the event local procurement didn't start until mid-October, and even then ran into huge problems on account of the unwieldy Federation procurement procedures. There is a lack of clarity on this issue from the outset, and an institutional inexperience of working within a sophisticated, urban context (see also Chapter 6, below).

*Unresolved Issues:*

There seems to have been little guidance or analysis of the delegation's coordination role, particularly with regard to PNS operability. This is perhaps indicative of the disjunction between emergency assessment and emergency coordination that currently exists within the approach of both the Secretariat and PNS. UNDAC teams within the UN system, and the developing FACT teams within the Federation, both focus on the importance on a dual assessment and coordination function. The Assessment Team report did indeed respond to a request in the TOR for recommendations on possibilities for delegated projects. However, this was not explored further within the delegation and Geneva - to the possible detriment of later Federation/PNS coordination.

**Recommendation 9**

Whether through FACT or existing ad hoc mechanisms, the Federation should not continue to prioritise its material response, but should also give equal prioritisation to its emergency coordination role in the field. The coordination of PNS operability is of particular importance here, and should be given much more consideration at the assessment stage. Options for delegated projects and other forms of coordinated PNS operability should be thoroughly explored at the assessment stage.

There was also a strong recommendation that the Federation be allowed to monitor, report on and in some cases implement the relief operation due to the TRCS' perceived lack of capacity. A delegation of 25 delegates was therefore recommended. The decision-making process between this recommendation and the actual delegation figure of around 14 is unclear, but the lack of delegates, especially in the field to assist in requisitioning, monitoring and reporting, became one of the key problems in the ensuing months.

Whatever the final judgement on FACT's hypothetical impact on the speed of an assessment (see above), there was a consensus by those who were aware of the initiative that a FACT team, if available in 1999, may well have benefited the operation in several ways: a clearer definition of the overall shape and direction of the operation; a clearer definition of the delegation's co-ordination function; possible



identification of sectors or specific projects to match PNS interests and agendas; and a recognition of the fundamental disjunctions between the TRCS' relief capacities, the role of the CMC and LDKMs, the size of possible Federation appeal, and the lack of Federation capacity in Geneva and the field.

### *Gender*

It would also be hoped that a more formal and pre-planned assessment mechanism would have included a section that analysed gender issues in relation to vulnerability. It was omitted in the Assessment Report<sup>27</sup>, and whilst this issue did not cause significant problems in terms of access and service provision, the role of women in terms of local capacities and vulnerabilities, and the appropriateness of certain forms of assistance (particularly regarding hygienic, psycho-social and child-based interventions) were not examined from the beginning of the operation. The consequences of yet another absence of gender analysis in the Federation's operations assessment and design could have been much more serious had the earthquake occurred in other less 'Westernised' parts of Turkey.

### *Ongoing Assessments*

After the Appeal was issued on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 1999, there were no further formal assessments or revisions to the original assessment for the relief programme. Federation delegates in the field were informally re-assessing needs continuously, but there was a lack of integration of these findings. With so few delegates, and in the absence of a standard Federation field monitoring system, changing relief needs and priorities became unclear, and the overall relief programme became essentially reactive rather than strategic and planned. This is particularly true as the winter tents saga obscured other aspects of the relief issue, and as the second earthquake created a whole new set of needs. A formal Federation re-assessment at least at this point would have consolidated its activities and may well have helped to clarify the way forward. An internally-disseminated review of the relief operation<sup>28</sup> was made in February, and whilst it contains some important information and recommendations, came largely too late to benefit the relief operation itself.

### **Recommendation 10**

Federation delegations should ensure that ongoing needs assessments are brought formally into the planning and response of the operation, and that a formal re-assessment or review is initiated after major developments may have significantly altered needs in the field.

However, a strategic approach is evident in the Federation's thinking on the transition from the post-emergency to the rehabilitation phases. The assessments conducted in December (Health, Disaster Preparedness and Reconstruction) attempted to consolidate an approach in three key areas, and the resulting reports do at least form some sort of landmarks that demarcate the broad future direction of the operation.

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<sup>27</sup> The only mention of women as a specific group being to: "Assist the local authorities and local active women's groups to set up schooling facilities for children in a one off gesture."

<sup>28</sup> R. Thompson Turkey Earthquake Operation, Relief Review (February 2000).

## **ii) The Appeals & Subsequent Operational Planning**

### *Timeliness*

The Federation's Preliminary Appeal for the August earthquake was released on the same day – an unusual and impressive reaction (the average Preliminary Appeal is launched 4 days after the event). There was enormous donor pressure upon the Federation to release an early Emergency Appeal. The Preliminary was soon totally covered, with many more funds becoming available. In fact, the 65 million Chf Emergency Appeal total was 90% covered within 9 days.

There is a consensus in Geneva and the field that the timing of the Emergency Appeal (Day 23) was appropriate, whilst many PNS felt it was too late. Any meaningful picture on the needs and means to address them was not thought to have been possible much before the arrival of the Assessment Team, and independent sources broadly agree with this analysis.<sup>29</sup> There was a week's gap, however, between the end of the Assessment and the release of the Appeal. The transformation of the Assessment notes into the Federation's biggest unilateral appeal for 1999 is unclear, and presumably relied upon much verbal supplementation.

Timeliness is also connected with the question of TRCS' ownership of the Appeal. The Federation, in attempting to establish better relations with the TRCS regarding the Appeal planning process, inevitably lost some time – again to the frustration of some of the less understanding PNS. But it could not wait for as long as full participation of the TRCS would have taken – the opportunity for a Federation Appeal may well have disappeared altogether. The balance between acting fast but having the host National Society fully integrated into the Appeal planning is not an easy one, but was broadly achieved in this case.

The proposal from OFR in the Secretariat as of late April 2000 is to introduce a 90-day Appeal system. This would involve the release of a standard appeal immediately after the event, with a response consisting of pre-positioned emergency stocks according to a basic response package, depending upon the type and location of emergency. A delegation or Federation office would have more time to work with the host NS and other bodies to create an accurate, more strategic appeal that has had time to accrue widespread ownership and participation. In the Turkish context, such a model would have been beneficial on many levels. The problems around such a detailed and quickly outdated relief table would have been avoided (see below), as would the pressurised processes of planning and TRCS buy-in.

### **Recommendation 11**

The Federation further the recommendations for a revised Appeal process, with a standard response and appeal followed by a full Appeal within 90 days.

### *Accuracy of the Appeal*

At first sight, the Appeal seems to have been accurate. It was never formally revised (unlike 80% of Federation Appeals), the overall planning figure of 250,000 beneficiaries, whilst more than twice as many proposed by the Assessment Team,

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<sup>29</sup> UNDP, ECHO and Turkish Government in (separate) conversations with the consultant.

agreed with the estimated figures of vulnerable given by other major actors at that time, and was proved to be an appropriate estimation for the ensuing few months.

Donor PNS have been very active in Turkey – some on a bilateral basis with the TRCS and/or the authorities. Nevertheless, much of what has been done fulfils the broad aims as set out in the Appeal, even though NS planning did not always consciously take the Federation objectives into account. In this respect, the Appeal has proved to have accurately outlined the **main** areas of intervention for the Movement and its components operating either within or outside it.

At a more detailed level, however, any successes in the Appeal's accuracy can be attributed to luck as much as to judgement. For example, the second earthquake should have completely skewed the Appeal, necessitating its revision or extension. But there were still huge amounts of funds available, the Federation's warehouse was over-flowing with relief items thanks to a distribution log-jam in October, and there was anyway a surplus of Federation goods given the large in-kind response from other parties to the August earthquake.

The Relief Table (a detailed list of items that supplemented the Appeal) was quickly out of date, such was the rapidly-changing pattern of needs, the lack of anticipation of how local coping mechanisms quickly mobilise in a developed context, and the huge, unregulated in-kind response from the Turkish people. Formal on-going needs assessments, or a review in October, would have helped to make the relief table less redundant. But such was the level of flexibility afforded by the resources available to the Federation, the operation could accommodate a less and less accurate formal list with no adverse effects on the ground.

Perhaps more fundamentally, the role of the TRCS and its capacities should have been more closely examined. The Federation's previous eight-year presence in Ankara should have yielded some idea of this (but did not). The Assessment Team's report and notes also clearly state that the TRCS did not have the capacity to implement a relief operation according to standards expected by donors. Nevertheless, the Appeal places high expectations upon the TRCS, whilst the delegation's capacity was never allowed to be above a minimal level. The effects of this combination are most evident in the relief operation's shortcomings.

#### *Post-Appeal Planning*

It is interesting to note that even in the earliest Assessment documentation, thoughts were already beginning to turn to issues of rehabilitation. It is a positive aspect of this operation that, whatever the problems of the relief phase, there was an awareness of the needs of the longer term. According to the Appeal, the rehabilitation phase was to start in November, and initial plans for some kind of joint assessments were beginning to evolve in October. Despite the November earthquake, the operation maintained its grip on the rehabilitation issue, and by early December the three joint assessment teams were being deployed. A part of this rigour came from PNS – especially those with large amounts of unspent funds, who bulldozed the Federation into the December timeframe when Spring 2000 would have been more appropriate. Nevertheless, the overall phasing of the operation had been kept clear and had been approached in a relatively strategic manner until that point.

But the overall operational plan for the delegation for 2000 was late in coming: the draft was still being finalised in late April 2000. A word that was constantly mentioned during this evaluation both within the delegation and the PNS field staff was the ‘indecision’ of the Federation. The delegation could have usefully defined its strategies and key objectives much earlier in the year, in particular helping to clarify its coordination role for PNS and the TRCS, and the positioning of its delegation.

There was a major TRCS/Federation/PNS planning meeting in Ankara in mid-February. The TRCS used this opportunity to reveal the findings of the independent structural review that it had commissioned, which pointed to TRCS priorities and actions for the future. The Federation used the Joint Assessment Teams’ findings as a base from which to plan for 2000, but this was too reliant on PNS agendas and was too easily dominated by donor pressure – both the delegation and the TRCS have since separately expressed regret that their own planning and directions were not more clearly articulated at that meeting.<sup>30</sup> It has to be said that the PNS, whilst making their *agendas* quite clear, did not make explicit their own *plans* (these are different things). This overall planning vacuum needs to be remedied as soon as possible, and the PNS should take as active a part in this joint process as the Secretariat and its delegations.

**Recommendation 12**

The Federation delegation should consolidate its planning for 2000, and begin to enter the Regional/Country Assistance Strategy timeframe this year. The Federation should request from active PNS brief details of their objectives, strategies and planned activities and budgets – according to a simple standard questionnaire. The TRCS should be encouraged to explain whatever planning discussions or documents they have (eg the restructuring timetable).

*Federation Scenario Planning*

There will be another major earthquake in Turkey. Despite having had nine years to prepare for such disasters, despite having responded to 2 major earthquakes in the last 10 months, and despite continuing aftershocks and seismic activity, the Federation does not have an operational response plan in place. This would rightly be seen as an indefensible lack of preparedness in the event of another earthquake. But again, it is also not clear what the operational PNS’ planning scenarios are, and they would hardly be in any position to criticise the delegation’s preparedness until they have also developed their own planning more precisely.

**Recommendation 13**

The delegation and the PNS active in Turkey should develop scenario planning alongside their overall programme planning for 2000 and beyond. These should be reviewed every 6 months. They should include broad strategies – including possibly sectoral lead roles or interests - for immediate response and resource deployment for major disasters in the main seismically-active areas. These should be shared with other agencies active in Turkey, and most importantly should be discussed with the TRCS for integration with TRCS’ evolving disaster planning.

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<sup>30</sup> TRCS reservations as to their acceptance of the full list of proposed projects in the Construction Assessment Report, for example, were discussed with the Federation HoD, who in turn felt that the delegation’s priorities could have been more robust in relation to PNS agendas.

### **iii. Achievement of Appeal Targets**

It is possible, to an approximate degree, to quantify the attainment of the goals set by the Appeal. This section only looks at the achievement of the goals as set down in the Appeal document - the appropriateness or timeliness of the specific actions are looked at in more detail in subsequent sections. These rough figures indicate that, despite the many problems and complexities surrounding this operation, on their own terms the Appeal targets were broadly achieved. What follows is a summary of the Appeal's Objectives and Plan of Action, with the quantities of relief items delivered to the field (but not necessarily distributed) by the Federation and TRCS.

#### **Objectives:**

##### ***1) Shelter, Relief, Health/Wat-San***

*Provide essential shelter, relief and health/wat-san support to 250,000 people living in camps or collective centres through the coming winter*

(Note: almost all relief inputs arrived later than planned or desired – but no timeframes were stipulated in the Appeal)

##### *a) Shelter*

68,000 people provided with 17,000 winter tents by Federation/PNS

16,000 people provided with 4,000 winter tents by TRCS

84,000 people in total

##### *b) Relief*

100,000 people receiving 2 hot meals daily at the peak period (TRCS)

240,000 people able to be supplied by Federation/Italian RC Hygiene Parcels

58,000 people able to be supplied with beds, mattresses and linen (average figure)

180,000 people able to benefit from 45,000 stoves

200,000 people able to benefit from 2 blankets each (mostly TRCS).

##### *c) Health/Wat-San*

100,000 people potentially able to use 93 toilet containers and 109 shower containers each day (average and estimated figures)

Plus unknown number of beneficiaries of medical facilities of the TRCS, German, Norwegian, Japanese, Spanish, Greek, Belgian RCS

Plus unknown number of beneficiaries of water and sanitation improvements to camp and municipal systems (mostly Austrian RC and Federation).

##### *Plan of Action – Shelter*

- ✓ Succeeded in providing basic needs for 50,000 in tented camps
- ✓ Medical care facilities in camps were strengthened
- ✓ All basic items listed were provided and useful
- ✓ Wat/san systems were improved.
- ✓ Winterisation: family tents provided, heating provided, wat/san was winterised
- ✓ Wat/san systems (in some camps) maintained
- ✓ Planned 2 mobile health units ended up as 8, although 4 arrived in April 2000
- ✓ Maintaining the Gercross health facilities for winter (the Norcross ERU was handed over by winter).

- X Improvement of camp sites, grading, drainage etc.
- X Cold-weather clothing – relatively small amounts, by Dutch and TRCS.
- X Winterisation of tents - limited
- X Winterisation of health facilities – only German RC and TRCS.
- X Expanding wat/san systems
- X 2 winterised auxiliary hospitals

## 2) **Rehabilitation**

### *Implement Social Welfare Programmes and Refurbishment of Community-Based Facilities*

- ✓ *To assist with the rehabilitation of communal services (eg schools and hospitals):*

This has been achieved. As of the end of April 2000, through Federation and donor NS efforts over 15 schools and hospitals had been, were being or would be rehabilitated. The full rehabilitation portfolio has not yet been approved by the TRCS, however.

- X *Establish and implement a social welfare programme for the most vulnerable living in TRCS camps or other temporary accommodation*

This has not been achieved within the timeframe, but progress has been made. A psycho-social programme was ready to be piloted by end April 2000, and the Federation delegation had made plans for a welfare services programme in camps, which at the time of writing is awaiting TRCS approval.

## 3) **Disaster Preparedness (from September 1999)**

- ✓ Whilst this Objective did not begin until December 1999, and almost entirely through the American Red Cross' lead, all eight projected components have been acknowledged, with work underway in all of them.

## 4) **Budget and Patterns of Income and Expenditure**

The overall budget for the Appeal was 65 million Chf. As of the end March 2000 (1 month before the Appeal timeframe ends) total income was 56.682 million. However, expenditure was very low, as this actual/budget table shows<sup>31</sup>.

<b>Appeal Income and Expenditure, Aug 1999 – end March 2000</b>			
<i>(in millions of Chf)</i>			
	<b>Budgeted</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>Income</b>	65 million	56.7 million	12.7%
<b>Expenditure</b>	65 million	25.5 million	60.7%

<sup>31</sup> Source: Project Summary Financial Statement, Int Federation Operations Accounting Service

Whilst income was budgeted accurately, there were obviously spending problems. Whilst many of the objectives in the Appeal were, according to the Appeal's own frame of reference, met to some degree, the significant underspend is as a result of:

- a) High levels of bilateral donor NS funding and TRCS provision for goods and activities that address the Federation Appeal objectives.
- b) Problems with the procurement of tents and other items
- c) Delays in Federation/TRCS agreement on some expenditure plans
- d) Objectives not being fully met.
- e) 50% of unspent funds (31 million Chf) consists of a large, late of income in March 2000.

If the predicted and actual expenditures are broken down, some interesting patterns emerge:

<b>Appeal Budgeted/Actual Expenditures Aug 1999 – end March 2000</b> <i>(in millions of Chf, operational support costs not included)</i>			
	<b>Budgeted Expenditure</b>	<b>Actual Expenditure</b>	<b>% Variance</b>
<b>Supplies</b>	56.678	20.964	63% underspent
<b>Capital</b>	1.630	0.562	65.5% underspent
<b>Transport</b>	1.805	1.597	11.5% underspent
<b>Personnel</b>	2.613	1.702	35% underspent
<b>Other</b>	0.578	0.662	12% overspent
<b>Total</b>	<b>63.304</b>	<b>25.487</b>	<b>60% underspent</b>

Firstly, the underspend on supplies testifies to the general over-provision of the aid response in Turkey, and more specifically the large amounts of PNS bilateral assistance. It also reflects the problems that the delegation had in timely distribution of the items that had got to the field in September and October (see Section XI below). It is also interesting that despite a large underspend on supplies, transport costs are only slightly under the original budget figure. This may be due in part to much less local procurement taking place than originally envisaged.

The overall pattern of operational income and expenditure is shown in Figure 2, over. There are two very obvious features: one is the huge amount of income from August through November compared to a low level of expenditure. This illustrates the donor pressure on the Federation at that time to spend, which in turn is linked to the Federation's problematic relief programme, which led several donors (particularly the American RC) to revise their strategies for support to the operation.

The large increase in delegation expenditure from December represents the payment of invoices for local procurements, including those performed by the TRCS. In part, this can be seen as a response to the relative under-spending of the previous months, as well as the urgency of tents issue, which led to the TRCS procuring tents worth 3 million Chf and stoves for 1 million Chf, which the Federation then paid for.

The other main feature of the graph is the huge amount of income in March 2000, the result of funding cycles and perhaps of a clarifying picture on rehabilitation inputs.

#### **iv. Relationship with the TRCS**

##### ***The Fundamental Approach to Working With the TRCS***

At a very early stage in the operation, the Federation committed itself to a textbook approach of supporting the work of the host National Society, by working through it rather than by-passing it, and by trying to integrate with the NS's priorities and decision-making. This is explicitly stated in an aide memoire produced in Geneva for the Dept Head of Europe dated the 23<sup>rd</sup> September, although it was already clear that this approach was problematic in terms of the effectiveness of its programmes.

The operational constraints of this approach are explored in the following sections. But the Federation never fundamentally wavered from its original approach, and despite having been criticised by the TRCS, PNS and itself for certain aspects of the operation, it has earned a degree of respect and trust of the TRCS for supporting it when governmental and public pressure was at its height.

##### ***The History of the Relationship***

The effect of the closure of the Federation's office in March 1999 on the relationship between the TRCS and the Federation Secretariat has been discussed (see Chapter 3c, above). Although opinions vary considerably here, it is probably fair to judge the TRCS' view in Ankara of the Federation as it set up operations in August 1999 as anywhere from cool to negative - certainly they were distant. It was not clear to the TRCS what the Federation could do to help, except to give it either cash or resources on demand, according to the needs of the Turkish national relief effort led by the Government. Meanwhile the Federation, with little real knowledge of the organisation, and despite some very clear messages from the Assessment Team's report, had very high expectations that the TRCS would be able to implement, monitor, and report on the Movement's inputs. It also assumed that the TRCS would want and need to coordinate and liaise with the Federation.

The history of the ensuing relationship can be divided into four phases.

August 1999: The TRCS were presented very quickly with problems which the Federation could not help them with. These centred around the media and Government's public criticisms of the TRCS. In addition, the TRCS were very directly guided or even instructed by the Government as to their role in the relief operation. Therefore the TRCS were wholly consumed with their relationship to these Turkish bodies - the Federation and most PNS were largely ephemeral to these priorities. Meanwhile the Federation, whilst trying through the Liaison Delegate in Ankara to establish some sort of working dialogue, concentrated upon the establishment of the delegation in Istanbul and defining their role and working methods.

September-November: As the TRCS were savaged in the media, the Government thrust more responsibility for shelter upon them. The TRCS' credibility increasingly rested upon being able to deliver enough winterised tents to temporarily 'solve' the shelter crisis whilst the Government's prefabricated building programme gathered speed. The TRCS could now see a clear role and purpose for the Federation: to provide it with winter tents and help it regain credibility in the eyes of the Turkish authorities and public. Such was the pressure upon the TRCS that the Federation's



entire credibility was in turn dependent upon delivering tents. When the Federation's major order fell through due to problems with the supplier, relations reached a very low point, with the TRCS and Federation operations as far apart as ever.

In addition, the TRCS were rightly dismayed at the Federation's lengthy and protracted procurement procedures, which certainly damaged the delegation's credibility and its relations with the TRCS. Moreover, the Federation's liaison function in Ankara was discontinued due to the TRCS' perceived lack of willingness to discuss any mutual operational concerns beyond the tent issue. Meanwhile, the TRCS' only dedicated liaison staff member for the Federation, who was based in the Federation's delegation in Istanbul, was increasingly found by the Federation to be unsatisfactory and even counter-productive to the improvement of relations. This person left in early December, and was not replaced. Both operationally and in terms of coordination or even basic contact, this was an extremely difficult period.

November-February: Largely through some rapid shipments of winterised tents by a number of National Societies, the tent crisis was addressed just before the worst of the weather set in. As the TRCS worked through some internal problems, with the pressure of the emergency relief operation easing, and with more stability within its leadership, dialogue and coordination with the Federation slowly improved. The Head of Delegation moved permanently to Ankara for the first time. The joint information meeting in Ankara on February 18<sup>th</sup> was an opportunity to present respective priorities and plans for the future.

March-April: Whilst the overall relationship continued to improve, tensions also arose around the need to integrate Federation and PNS priorities with the TRCS'. Whilst the latter were concentrating very heavily on restocking and seeking funds for a huge new warehouse near Adapazari, the Federation and most of the PNS were more interested in packages of material and expertise-based assistance designed to help the TRCS' organisational restructuring plans. At the time of writing this remains unresolved.

The Federation delegation was created in the context of little in-depth understanding of the TRCS, and a cooling Secretariat relationship with Ankara. Further pressures arose as the operation started, and there were many opportunities for the relationship to have worsened. One of the successes of the Federation's leadership in the field is to have steered a course by which it was always seen to be supportive of the TRCS, in the eyes of the media and the Government. The Federation had committed itself to supporting the host NS at an early stage, and never veered from its approach, despite the lack of recognition it received and the constraints this placed on its own operational effectiveness. For example, it never undermined the TRCS operationally by implementing its relief programme through the more effective CMC system.

The Federation is now in a position where it can still hope to have a meaningful part in the future of the TRCS; and given the constraints of its position, this is no small achievement. The leadership of the TRCS in early May 2000 expressed overall satisfaction with the support and positive effect of the Federation (whilst viewing its performance in the field as problematic).<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> The TRCS President and Secretary General in conversation with the consultant, May 2000

v) *The Location of the Delegation*

However, there were several decisions taken by the Federation which made the delegation's ultimately workable relations with the TRCS much more difficult to achieve, and caused avoidable tensions with all parties.

The Federation's initial decision to locate its delegation in Istanbul, and to effectively keep it there throughout the first 8 months of operations, has caused much debate. The original decision was taken on the basis that Istanbul was the closest unaffected regional centre to the August earthquake zone. National and international logistics were focused in Istanbul, and it provided the most logical base for operations to the chaotic affected areas to the south. All other operational NS obviously agreed with this reasoning, as they also established bases in Istanbul. The Federation expected the TRCS to regionalise its own operational centre to the Istanbul Directorate (not knowing that this was essentially a fundraising office, not a regional TRCS operational centre).

For the first weeks of the response it certainly made sense to have operations being implemented from Istanbul. But after the immediate response, the need to re-assess this situation became crucial, and the failure to do so decisively led to various ongoing problems within the operation as a whole.

Due to the Head of Delegation's heavy operational concerns in Istanbul, a Senior Representative was deployed from Geneva to the TRCS' HQ a few days after the August earthquake. He was replaced temporarily in early September and departed soon after. It was clearly difficult to access TRCS' senior management, and many hours were spent waiting for meetings and trying to make contact. One of the Senior Representatives recommended that no further Federation presence should be maintained in Ankara, viewing it as an inefficient and unproductive use of resources. The other Representative did recommend that a senior presence should be maintained, based upon the need to at least keep open the window of opportunity.

Meanwhile, the Delegation in Istanbul relied solely upon a single TRCS counterpart, based in the delegation, for all its daily and operational communication with the TRCS. This was accepted by the Federation for around three months. With the Head of Delegation being based in Istanbul, the Senior Representatives in Ankara being temporary, and the delegation relying on just one TRCS liaison contact, it is obvious that the Federation would not be able to substantially improve relations with the TRCS, and therefore its own operation. The Head of Delegation finally moved permanently to Ankara when in his view the overall relationship had improved sufficiently to allow working discussions and initiatives to take place. This was a rather reactive solution to a long-burning and fundamental problem that was not tackled by anyone within the Federation structure. Despite the huge pressures and prevailing confusion of the time, the lack of alternative strategies for developing meaningful coordination with the TRCS – even if these would have no immediate benefits – must be questioned.

All participants in this evaluation agreed that a more permanent Federation presence in Ankara should have been established much earlier, but - interestingly - for various reasons. Firstly, because however difficult it was in September and October for the

Federation to get itself on the TRCS' priority agenda, without a regular and increasingly trusted senior contact close to the TRCS HQ on a daily basis, the chance of improving the relationship was almost zero. The TRCS management were confused as to the Federation's decision to remain for so long and so completely in Istanbul. Even in early May 2000 the TRCS leadership was under the impression that the temporary Senior Liaison Delegates in Ankara had represented the Secretariat, not the delegation; and this perceived managerial split was held as a reason why, from the TRCS side, a relationship was hard to establish. A closer working relationship was never likely under these conditions.

Another view on the need to have had a permanent basis in Ankara is less to do with the apparent impossibility to progress meaningful relations with the TRCS. Some feel that there were real opportunities to establish the Federation's role and visibility in the eyes of other players: the Government, the UN, embassies and other organisations. Given the relative lack of profile enjoyed by the Federation in-country, but the virtual monopoly of the humanitarian portfolio enjoyed by the Red Crescent/Red Cross, this would seem to be correct.

The key lesson from this aspect of the Federation's operation is that a continuous presence at or near the host NS' headquarters is essential from the start of an operation, whatever the level of meaningful contact initially. The key recommendation is, however, implicit in Recommendation 3: the Federation should have better relationships and preparedness plans with NS in countries with a high risk of natural disasters.

**vi) The Federation's Presence in the Field**

Of all the perceptions of the Federation's effectiveness that were gathered from PNS, TRCS and external participants in this evaluation, this topic comes through as its key weakness. There are two issues: the number of Federation field delegates, and the lack of a permanent presence in the field.

For the Federation's largest single Appeal in 1999, a delegation averaging 15 delegates operating in an area twice the size of Switzerland and with no field office seems strangely under-resourced. The Federation Assessment Team obviously thought so – they recommended a delegation of around 25 people, including 6 relief delegates.

However, the assumption was that the TRCS, as a sophisticated, well-resourced and experienced operational NS, would be in a position to implement the vast majority of the Federation's inputs, requiring only a coordination and monitoring function from the delegation. In addition, Turkey's infrastructure, developed logistics systems and high-quality national staff seemed to demand less international delegates in comparison with the size of the region. And finally, there were distinct messages coming from Ankara that formally no more than 5, and tacitly no more than 15 delegates would be acceptable to the TRCS, despite a huge PNS delegate presence of over 60 at one point. This perhaps illuminates the role which the TRCS envisaged for the Federation: essentially as coordinating shipping handlers for assistance that could be passed over to the TRCS, who in turn would make it available either to the CMCs or to their own programmes.

In the first three months Federation delegates made daily field trips, but established no permanent base outside of Istanbul. According to some managers, the security implications of delegates living in a still active earthquake zone seemed to place undue risk and stress upon their missions. From November until February or March one relief delegate was permanently based between Bolu and Duzce. As of the end of April, this position is residing 2-3 days per week in the field: the rest of the delegates continue to make daily field trips.

The Federation was essentially trying to implement a high-value, multi-sectoral operation over an area with complex and concentrated needs through a unengaged local counterpart, incoherent alternative structures and with insufficient delegate resources of its own. At the early stages the major centres within the affected area were up 2-3 hours away from Istanbul, which resulted long hours being spent travelling each day. With a lack of TRCS counterparts at all operational levels, and with the main relief coordination and implementation role being with the Government and the military, the Federation's grip on its own inputs was, unsurprisingly, not as strong as it should have been.

A more robust operational presence, involving a delegation in Ankara, a logistics base near Istanbul, and a sub-delegation or field office in Izmit, would have increased the Federation's *opportunities* of better coordination and influence at all levels of the national system. It would have also improved to some degree its credibility regarding its own coordination role with PNS, who had collectively many more delegates living permanently in affected areas and whose knowledge of localised needs and

counterparts were more advanced than the Federation's. Basically, the Federation was perceived to be distant from the focal point of the crisis.

### ***Working Through the National Society vs Operational Effectiveness***

It would certainly have been more *operationally* effective for the Federation to have liaised directly with the authorities and military, as they were in direct charge of the overall relief and logistics operation through which most Red Cross/Red Crescent inputs were deployed. The TRCS had a variable grip on the situation, depending on the area, and had varying levels of centrality to the CMC's decision-making and activities, but ultimately were dependent upon the authorities (as many other NS would be in their own countries).

Should the Federation have co-operated more directly and deeply with the authorities' logistics and relief structure? Such were the sensitivities of the central relationship with the TRCS, especially around the time of the tent crisis, that the Federation's management felt this would endanger the overall working relationship. Aside from good practice and maintaining the integrity of the Movement, millions of Swiss Francs of donor money sitting in Geneva meant that a serious deterioration could simply not be allowed to happen. The management predicted that through by-passing the TRCS, the delegation would be effectively undermining an already heavily-criticised organisation, which would damage whatever working relationship existed. The same fears applied to the idea of setting up a more independent operation, relying more on delegate assessment of needs, on direct distributions, and a more controlled logistics pipeline.

Whilst these were real dangers responsibly considered, the delegation was generally too averse to confronting the TRCS on some of the constraints the Federation was asked to work within. Formally Ankara was clear in its position over some issues of Federation capacity and operational conduct, but there seems to have been room for manoeuvre - and where the Federation took a strong line on certain issues, gains were made.

For example, at the end of September the lack of progress on an agreement over the leasing of the new Federation warehouse at Samandira caused the Federation to suspend the entire logistics pipeline. An agreement was signed and the pipeline resumed within three days. In the immediate aftermath of the second earthquake the Federation delegation took direct action (with the full knowledge of the TRCS, whom it kept fully informed), delivering 17 trucks of aid within 24 hours and taking temporary charge of a warehouse in Kaynasli. A more direct working relationship with local TRCS, CMC and military counterparts was noticeable, whilst relying less on TRCS HQ for approval and direction. A system whereby the Federation warehouse received requisitions direct from the CMCs was begun in November, and this was effective in getting stock into the field in an accountable way. There were no negative repercussions from TRCS Headquarters in Ankara - and indeed there was some informal appreciation of the Federation in its direct response to the November earthquake.

As the Federation was generally reluctant to 'push the envelope' of its relationship with the TRCS in regard to operational effectiveness, it did not explore ways to act more directly whilst profiling its actions as TRCS-led. In many respects the local

TRCS were indeed happy to be led, if visible and direct results in the field would follow. This has been the experience of several PNS, who whilst more free to act in this way, sensed that a lack of full TRCS engagement or approval for a proposed action did not necessarily imply a condemnation of that action. For example, the Spanish Red Cross reported a degree of disinterest on the part of the TRCS in Bolu regarding the Spanish RC's plans for a 1,000-tent camp after the November earthquake. However, once the tents began to arrive, the branch became extremely proactive and supportive, and the TRCS subsequently based its operational centre within the camp itself.

### *Conclusions*

The Federation seems to have made a tough but fundamental decision. Except for brief periods after both earthquakes, the basic short-term needs of the vulnerable were largely being covered through the existing mechanisms. As long as this situation persisted, the Federation could afford to place its greatest priority on trying to maintain and improve its relationship with the TRCS. In this, it has largely succeeded. However, a more bold and direct approach, with an early delegation presence in Ankara, a more robust and permanent field presence in Izmit, and a willingness to push the envelope of its relations with the TRCS, would have allowed the Federation to improve its influence over the implementation of its own resources, and to win confidence within the minds of the donor National Societies, without destroying its relationship with the host NS.

## **vii) Management Issues**

### ***Geneva***

Many Federation participants in this evaluation expressed satisfaction with the way that the Secretariat's Desk role functioned. There are a number of reasons for this.

Firstly, whilst the centrality of the Federation Desk in an emergency creates intolerable workload pressures, inefficiencies and highly idiosyncratic operations, the Turkish Earthquakes response was significantly strengthened by the fact that a Desk Officer was assigned specifically for that emergency, and had no other geographic responsibilities. Whilst this came about more through circumstance than design, it allowed a singular focus and an engagement with detail by the Desk, and the benefits of this were acknowledged at all levels. For example, the Employment Relations Service reported valuable inputs from the Desk which aided the recruitment process. Senior Management in the delegation also felt that access to, and support from, the Desk Officer was crucially undiluted by other responsibilities.

#### **Recommendation 14**

The Secretariat should consider the creation of a cadre of trained or previously experienced 'on-call' Desk Officers from within existing Secretariat staff for short-term secondment to emergency operations, either as dedicated Desk Officers for specific emergencies, or to take on other regional duties in caretaker roles, allowing existing Desk Officers to concentrate more completely on emergency responses.

Secondly, the Desk Officers' perception of the role was clear: support but not superiority to the Head of Delegation; a secondary interface with the TRCS (augmenting the HoD's authority when necessary); but the primary interface with PNS. Relations with other Secretariat Departments were also good, with the Desk's usual centrality being loosened to allow more efficient ways of working – for example the Logistics Department's ability to mobilise goods directly with PNS.

Thirdly, it seems that the Desk was open and transparent with PNS regarding the various problems and difficulties encountered. As one PNS interlocutor said: "There was no feeling that we were being 'kept in the dark' when times got rough. We were always kept informed, and our ideas were sought. This is not often the case." It is likely that despite the potential for difficulties in Secretariat relations with some PNS, conflicts were avoided or mollified through this approach (see Chapter 4d below).

The support of senior management in the Secretariat to the operation has been perceived to be generally adequate. Relations with the TRCS during the difficult months of October and November were prioritised sufficiently, with time around the margins of the International Conference in Geneva being devoted to discussing key issues. Visits were made to the region by the Under Secretary DROC and the Secretary General. However, there was felt to be a lack of senior management support in sometimes allowing high-level PNS agendas to unduly influence the direction of the operation, and in not taking responsibility for engaging in the issue of approvals for non-standard local procurements.

### ***The Delegation***

The working life of the Federation delegation in Istanbul was frequently frustrating and constrained. Delegation management in such circumstances was not a simple matter, but generally a constructive and creative dynamic was maintained, helped by very high levels of professionalism which gave rise to no significant disciplinary or grievance issues. The highly-qualified national staff expressed a strong commitment to the work of the delegation, and mostly felt appreciated, valued and well-rewarded both in terms of motivation, job satisfaction and pay. Interestingly, personality clashes and communication breakdowns that did arise between delegates had a strong effect on local staff, who felt disappointment and disillusionment at these times.

However, there are issues which were less satisfactory, and from which lessons can be learned. Firstly, the Head of Delegation was under pressure to try to establish a working relationship with the TRCS, to coordinate a number of PNS with very strong agendas, and simultaneously to manage a high-value operation. The lack of an early decision regarding the positioning of the delegation, or at least of the Head of Delegation in Ankara or Istanbul created a situation where the Head of Delegation was shuttling between the two cities frequently. Over-riding 'political' issues such as the tents also led to the HoD being inevitably and unwillingly removed from a closer management of his staff.

The decision to supplement the overworked management function with two Deputies (one focusing on operations, the other more on liaison and PNS coordination) was understandable, but had two unforeseen effects. The Head of Delegation, now able to concentrate more fully on senior level diplomacy with the TRCS, was seen as more elusive - neither completely absent nor always present - and staff clearly felt confused as to who now had the personnel management function and who had the overview of the operation's overall direction. The division of the daily management function into two, and the frequent absence of the Head of Delegation, also created opportunities for a polarisation of staff issues to either manager that depended on personal empathy, rather than formal lines or reporting and responsibility.

#### **Recommendation 15**

The Federation should consider carefully the advantages and disadvantages of deploying two (or more) Deputy Heads of Delegation – with particular attention on the importance of maintaining the central role for the Head of Delegation regarding personnel management.

A word that was repeated often in this context was 'indecision'. Although it was recognised that the major source of indecision came from the complicated overall relationship with the TRCS, it seems that there was also a perception of equivocation within the delegation – particularly regarding the move to Ankara. Whilst affecting some delegates greatly, it had a fundamental impact upon the national staff, whose lives would be more affected by it. There was a feeling of a lack of involvement or information for several months on this issue, and a 'stay-or-leave' attitude by the Federation when national staff were informed about the latest stage of the decision-making process.



National staff salaries in Istanbul were originally set at a high level, and with tax free status become very attractive, especially for the higher pay levels. Despite all national contracts making plain that the wage scale applied solely to Istanbul, and would be reviewed in the event of redeployment, the drop in salary associated with the relocation to Ankara seems to have been a demotivating issue. Whatever the forewarning given, it is the perception that counts. The delegation would have had more room for manoeuvre if wage levels in Istanbul had been lower, thus narrowing the differential with Ankara salaries.

**Recommendation 16**

The Federation delegation should come to a swift decision as to the relocation of some or all of the delegates and staff to Ankara. It should fully consult on relocation arrangements, and should make clear to national staff its position concerning relocation issues.

Whilst national staff feelings of integration and value are high (aside from the relocation issue), improvements could be made to maximise the resources that they represent. Many commented that as they often had to represent the policies, agendas and decisions of the Federation directly with Turkish interlocutors – and sometimes at a high level – a general induction to the principles and basic working practices of the International Federation would be invaluable. This would also help them to understand the operational constraints that both they and their delegate counterparts had to face. As of the end of April 2000, a German RC initiative for an induction course for its 100+ national staff was being possibly widened to include the delegation's national staff also.

Linked to this is the need for all delegates to debrief fully and formally to their national staff colleagues after the weekly delegate meetings, so that decision-making and discussions on programming issues are disseminated throughout the delegation structure.

**Recommendation 17**

The Federation should look at a standard induction package for all national staff working in its delegations and offices. This should be kept distinct from issues surrounding regionally recruited delegates and regional Basic Training Courses.

**Recommendation 18**

The Turkey Delegation should further plans to provide induction to its national staff, and ensure that all delegation staff are briefed on the issues and discussions that may affect their work.

### **viii) The Deployment and Quality of Federation Human Resources**

Generally the performance of the International Federation in the area of human resources has been very successful in Turkey, and marks one of the strengths of the overall performance.

#### ***Quality of Delegates***

This has been, with a very few exceptions, high. It has been an experienced delegation: the 29 delegates had an average of almost 20 months of prior missions with the Federation, with many having had previous experience with other agencies and NGOs. The three senior management delegates had an average of 39 months mission experience with the Federation. Only six of the 29 delegates were on their first mission, and several of these had previous overseas experience with their NS.

There can be no doubt that these statistics indicate a depth and general maturity of the delegates which, combined with high-quality national staff, helped make the delegation more resistant to the various pressures and threats that the frustrating operational issues posed.

#### ***Speed of Deployment***

This was generally good – a big improvement on the speed of recruitment for recent rapid deployments such as the Kosovo crisis. In the first week of the operation, aside from temporary Geneva staff (such as from the Media Service), there were ten delegates deployed to Turkey, including the Head of Delegation, two logisticians, two temporary relief, one health, one finance and three info and reporting delegates. Figure 3 (below) shows that the total number of delegates for the Turkey operation remained remarkably regular. The high proportion of information delegates is noticeable, and whilst this ensured good media coverage, does seem large in comparison to relief and logistics. It is not clear whether this was a conscious strategy.

This success is partly due to PNS having more of their delegates available to the Federation, whereas in the Balkans crisis many were ‘reserving’ delegates for large bilateral operations.<sup>33</sup> Re-assignments (especially from the nearby Balkans operation) also helped in a rapid deployment of the Head of Delegation, the finance delegate, logistics, relief and reporting. And lastly, it is possible that a recent revision of the way in which delegates are recruited and managed within the Employment Relations Service may have led to improvements, but an internal departmental review would be necessary to ascertain the truth of this.

#### **Recommendation 19**

The Federation Employment Relations Service conduct an internal, departmental review to ascertain the reasons for its relatively good performance in the Turkish Earthquakes response (both its speed and provision of quality delegates), in particular the effect of the recent changes in staff responsibilities and functions. This should be analysed together with recent performances in other operations, so that strengths can be consolidated.

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<sup>33</sup> Source: Federation ERS

### ***Weaknesses***

Management support for the Head of Delegation seems to have been slow in arriving: the two Deputies arriving in the seventh and ninth weeks. However, these roles are notoriously hard to recruit for, if experienced delegates are sought.

More perplexing is the long delay in deploying the permanent relief team. Two redeployed delegates served from weeks 1-6, when they were replaced by a single Relief Coordinator. He then acted alone until the arrival in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> weeks of the two permanent relief delegates. In an operation of this size, and with the delegation in desperate need of basic information from the field, this seems extraordinary. Whilst some people remembered problems with locating suitable delegates, records show that there was no actual request for a relief coordinator from the Europe Department to the Employment Relations Service until the 6<sup>th</sup> week (22<sup>nd</sup> September), and no requests for the two relief delegates until the day after!

The full story behind the relief team's recruitment is not clear – whether it was a lack of agreement by the TRCS to a field delegate role, or a perceived lack of necessity by the delegation, or a misunderstanding at Secretariat level. But the relative weakness of the relief team's presence in the delegation, especially in the first few weeks, had long term negative effects on the way the relief operation was run, and this is explored in more detail in Section XI, below.

## **ix) Logistics**

### ***Geneva - Successes***

Federation Logistics delegates and the Logistics Department in Geneva consider the Turkey operation to be one of their best performances for the past decade. This general satisfaction stems from a feeling that it was possible to operate within clear and comprehensive logistics procedures. There was a strong sense of cohesion, interconnectedness and shared professional standards between the Logistics Departments in the Secretariat and the field. In the words of one operative: “We did our job - we followed the procedures, we received, we stored, we recorded, we dispatched.”

In Geneva there were various good initiatives. The experience of working (with ICRC) as a logistics ‘cell’ during the Balkans crisis, talking directly with donor NS in the mobilisation of goods, was repeated here, and to good effect. Goods required in the field were matched with pledges from NS, and specific items were also requested directly. Daily pipeline updates of items provided and still required were produced, and separate files on each donor and each consignment were kept for reporting purposes. Commodity tracking numbers were used to the level that field conditions permitted.

### **Recommendation 20**

The Federation should continue to develop the system of direct mobilisation of goods between the Logistics Department and donor NS.

Unusually for this type of operation, the reported levels of unsolicited and inappropriate in-kind donations was relatively low, with only a few useless consignments of, for example, marmalade. It is possible that donors, especially PNS, have learned something from the mistakes made during the Balkans crisis – certainly the ‘logistics cell’ approach offers the opportunity to better direct donor inputs.

### ***Geneva – Lessons Learned***

There were, however, several frustrations and lessons learned. Firstly, there was an institutional lack of knowledge and preparedness concerning the specifications for certain items – particularly tents, beds, and shower and toilet containers (see Chapter 3d above)

The Logistics Department was involved in, though not responsible for, the most obvious single debacle of the operation – the 10,000 winter tents which failed to meet basic standards due to a design fault (thus jeopardising the Federation’s relationship with the TRCS, and the TRCS’ relationship with the Turkish public). Whilst it is difficult to reasonably apportion blame here, the Department nevertheless feels that if more work had been done on tent specifications and suppliers beforehand, it may have been possible to have avoided such a large consignment being requested of one supplier.

Despite the strength of the Federation’s Logistics Department, it is clear that they have serious workload problems, which led to some delays in international procurement in the Turkey operation.

**Recommendation 21**

The Federation Secretariat should take measures to ensure that excessive workload within the Logistics Department does not detract from its current strengths.

***The Field - Successes***

In the field there is general satisfaction with the rapid deployment of three experienced delegates – one of whom had previously served in Turkey as a logistics delegate, and all of whom had worked together previously. In the first week, the logistics team concentrated on simply trying to track all the Red Cross and Red Crescent goods arriving at the airport in Istanbul before it was dispatched by the military and the authorities. Good contact was established with the UNDAC facility there, and attempts were made to assist the TRCS reception unit. By the 25<sup>th</sup> August, despite the chaos and random, un-notified arrivals from donor NS, a list of Red Cross/Red Crescent goods received and dispatched was able to be compiled. From late August until mid-September the Logistics delegates concentrated on setting up a full tracking and recording system at the airport and within the TRCS. Mid-Late September also saw the Logistics team working on the establishment of a Federation warehouse some 45 minutes from Istanbul, on the road to the affected area.

The need for this warehouse at Samandira has been debated as being too costly, and as adding an additional cross-loading leg onto the logistics pipeline, whilst possibilities existed to place logisticians inside the authorities warehouses to track Red Crescent/Red Cross goods.<sup>34</sup> The emerging LDKM structure did generally keep adequate records and followed a military logistics system, but regular access to records by delegates was difficult and time-consuming, and an acceptance of Federation delegates in what were essentially military facilities proved problematic. In addition, the military kept no donor codes on the waybills to the final destination, whilst in the future Federation facility there was some control over the timing, destination and commodity tracking of the goods. Certainly as the ECHO hygiene parcels arrived, a separate Federation warehousing facility was required: reporting would have otherwise been extremely problematic. As far as Federation control and monitoring was concerned, Samandira warehouse marked a huge improvement to what had been possible before.

***The Field - Problems***

The problems encountered in the field of Logistics are mostly concerned with the relative strength of the Logistics Department's procedures and staffing in contrast to weaknesses elsewhere – particularly in the Federation's relief capacity.

Some have commented that the Turkey operation was logistics-driven for the first few months.<sup>35</sup> This is largely true, but not surprising. There was a definite lack of interface between Logistics and the Federation's relief delegates, which mirrors the global problems of an integrated Federation relief and logistics function. The delegation's logistics unit was a tight-knit team which had established a strong presence early in the operation, and was reinforced by a number of guidelines and visits from the Logistics Department in Geneva. The relief team was late in arriving, was too weak in its capacity, was compromised by its reliance on the TRCS, and in Geneva the Acting

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<sup>34</sup> See R. Thompson, Turkey Earthquake operation, Internal Review, February 2000

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Under Secretary DROC was temporarily heading up an otherwise depleted Relief Department.

**Recommendation 22**

The Secretariat should urgently address the poor interface between its logistics and relief functions: particularly with regard to their respective departmental capacities, cultures and operating procedures.

Although the Samandira warehouse was receiving goods given in response to the Appeal, Logistics were not getting requisitions from the relief teams in the field. The complex process by which the Federation had to raise requisitions and deploy goods in the warehouse worked something like this: Logistics would tell the local TRCS coordinators what stock they had, the TRCS would inform the regional Governor's office, who would return the stock list with requests for certain items. The TRCS would then pass this to Ankara for approval, then to the Federation Deputy Head of Delegation (Operations) for approval, who would pass it to the Relief Coordinator, who would write a requisition form and pass it to Logistics, who would finally dispatch the goods. This tortuous process would take at least a week.

As a result, Samandira became dangerously full of goods in October, and only the November earthquake saved the Federation from a large surplus stock – potentially too large even for resupplying basic TRCS stocks. This would have rightly displeased donors immensely.

There was, in November, an idea to unblock Samandira by transferring all of its contents to the main LDKM Intertex warehouse in Izmit, where a Federation logistician would simply record the dispatched stock as it left that warehouse for the field. The cost of trans-shipment would have been high, however, and Logistics argued instead for the requisitions to come directly from the regional CMCs, which had TRCS representatives at every level. Whilst perhaps the most pragmatic way for dispatching goods and ignoring the many layers of bureaucracy, this idea reveals just how much the entire relief system depended upon the authorities. In fact, this system worked for a while – with locally procured goods being dispatched directly from the factory or supplier to the LDKM warehouses, with Logistics informing the relief delegates of the details of the consignment for monitoring purposes. However, this procedure was soon altered again to take into account the particular reporting needs of the incoming ECHO hygiene parcels.

Whilst the issue of a lack of procurements caused tensions between Relief and Logistics, the lack of institutional clarity around local and international procurement procedures caused tensions between Logistics and the entire delegation. Logistics insisted upon detailed specifications for all items, particularly specialised equipment such as sanitation containers, from the relevant departments. Under pressure to spend, but lacking standard specifications, Logistics were seen as delaying the swift processing of funds, whilst they saw the responsibility for providing specifications lying with the technical departments (Heath, Wat/San etc). The health team increasingly took over the local procurement of health items, with advice from Logistics, and this was thought to have worked well. But the general impression was that the Logistics in the Samandira warehouse were bureaucratic obstacles to rapid local procurement.

## **x) Local and International Procurement**

There were perhaps two unquestionable weaknesses of the Federation's performance in Turkey that did not depend on any other party but which fundamentally affected the operation. One is the lack of pre-positioning and preparedness for such a disaster. The other is the bureaucratic, unclear and disastrously slow procurement procedures in an emergency context. In this context a particular phrase was often heard by the consultant at all levels of the organisation: "The Federation is not an emergency response organisation". The negative operational effects of the procurement system were widely and deeply felt: from local TRCS and Turkish authorities to the Federation's own delegates, national staff, Secretariat departments and senior management.

One characteristic of the Federation's performance in Turkey was the slow speed with which it responded to urgent requests for certain items. Frustration certainly grew within the delegation: after the November earthquake the Head of Delegation asked Logistics for an estimated delivery schedule for heaters, as families were facing snowfall without heating in the coming days. Due to the Federation's local procurement procedures and despite the plethora of suppliers with such heaters within 100 km of Bolu, the answer was two weeks – which is a long time for a family living under a plastic sheet in a heavy snowfall. In most cases very urgent specialised needs were supplied by other agencies, or the Government, or were eventually sourced by the beneficiaries themselves.

A typical example of how the procurement process caused inefficiencies in workload and service delivery is the identification by the delegation's wat/san delegate of the need for toilet and shower containers. In mid-October he identified local suppliers, but as they were all at full capacity they would only make offers that were good for a week. Logistics said that there were insufficiently detailed specifications, and by the time the wat/san delegate had obtained more information, new bids had to be sought. The Comparative Bid Analysis then took place, a local supplier was chosen, and the Head of Delegation formally approved of the choice and sought authorisation from Geneva. However, the local supplier wanted 50% cash in advance. The Federation delegation were not happy with this, and lowered it to 30%. Whilst acceptable to the field and to the supplier, Geneva debated this downpayment, but a reply was finally received authorising the 30%. The containers arrived just before Christmas, around 2.5 months after the initial bids.

The slow speed of delivery of urgently requested items was pronounced enough to have been mentioned independently by the TRCS, UNDP and every PNS. Comparative Bid Analyses are not workable in such a context, and anyway are not effective guarantees against irregular tendering processes. The consultant met no one in the delegation or the service departments of Geneva who claimed to have confidence in the Federation's emergency procurement procedures, or even a clear idea of what the approved procedures are. Logistics were aware of four different guidelines: those in the Handbook for Delegates<sup>36</sup>, a document called "Procurement in the Secretariat", a draft of revised procedures for emergency situations, and the Head

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<sup>36</sup> Handbook for Delegates, pp. 901-909, 1997

of Logistics' own attempt to simplify all known procedures, which were distributed to the Logistics delegates in the Turkey.

In an internal note of the 5<sup>th</sup> November 1999, the Procurement Delegate reports that "Procurement procedural limitations as opposed to Turkey Delegation internal pressure resulted in a one week visit of... the Senior Procurement Officer from Geneva Logistics Service to provide support to ... control the procedural processes." This is not only a good example of the type of support a Geneva Department can offer to their technical counterparts in the field, but also a measure of how serious and confusing the local procurement procedures issue had become.

The Head of Delegation, with a 10,000 Chf spending authority (but the manager of a budget of 65 million Chf) felt particularly compromised by the lack of flexibility, speed and assurance that he could display to both the vulnerable, and to the TRCS, whose view of the Federation's credibility was one of growing disappointment. As local procurement opportunities grew, and as pressure from some PNS upon the delegation to spend money became almost frantic, the TRCS insisted that they could procure extremely quickly and provide invoices, Goods Received Notes and allow Federation monitoring of the procurement. The Head of Delegation requested approvals to effectively suspend normal Federation procedures and to be allowed to pay invoices presented by the TRCS. After some delay, approvals were given, but with a repeated proviso stating that "...the TRCS provide documents consistent with Federation emergency procedures"!

This neat Catch-22 and side-stepping of financial responsibility by senior management in Geneva placed a great deal of pressure upon the Head of Delegation and others. Interestingly, a senior manager in the Secretariat insisted upon the right of the Head of Delegation to interpret the procedures freely, and felt that even one bid would be sufficient as long as the Head of Delegation is content. But an expectation upon Heads of Delegation to act with this sort of confidence in the absence of clear written procedures is surely unrealistic.

### **Recommendation 23**

The Federation cannot respond to emergency needs effectively with the current procurement regulations. The Revised Procedures for Emergency Procurement proposed by the Solution Teams is a recognition of this, and should be fully expanded to cover all possible variables and contingencies. OFR's suggestion of a 90-day suspension of standard normal Federation procedures should be pursued, as should raising the spending authority of Heads of Delegation during emergencies.

A marked feature of this operation is the level of host National Society purchases on behalf of the Federation. As of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2000, 42.6% of the total delegation expenditure (9.8 million Chf) consisted of TRCS purchases. These were made up of procurements of two items, winter tents and heating stoves. Whilst this is not standard Federation practice, all paperwork exists for these payments. It seems, however, that the goods and services were rarely or never independently checked and monitored by the Federation in the field, and the scale of this arrangement requires more investigation to ensure full integration and accountability within the Federation's financial standards.



**Recommendation 24**

The Delegation should ensure that it has a full audit trail for locally-procured items, and should further satisfy itself that Federation of accounting and accountability were followed. A clarification of Federation procedure regarding host National Societies procuring on behalf of Federation delegations is required.

Finally, there was much confusion evident within the delegation as to whose responsibility it is to generate specifications for items to be procured. Whilst Logistics and Health Departments worked jointly on specifications, other Departments made very general requests which Logistics felt itself unqualified to specify. When some suppliers were giving bids which were only good for one week, fast decisions had to be made, but Logistics insisted on full specifications. Logistics could perhaps have been more flexible and accommodating on this issue – but the lack of clarity is the prime cause of the inter-departmental tensions that arose.

**Recommendation 25**

Federation delegates should be made aware of their responsibilities in the tendering process, including the roles of programme managers and logistics regarding the generation of specifications. The Federation should adopt a more business-like approach to procurement, whereby specialised procurement officers are made available to programme managers in situations where complex or unusual goods are required.

## xi) Relief<sup>37</sup>

As has already been discussed, various factors combined to seriously disempower the relief function within the Federation's operation in Turkey. They included:

- Misconceptions by the Federation as to the strength and role of the TRCS in relief during a major emergency.
- A complete reliance upon the TRCS for needs identification and relief planning. The inadequacies of the TRCS in this respect, as well as the lack of local counterparts, the over-dependence on one TRCS counterpart in Istanbul, the lack of clarity regarding TRCS and CMC stocks.
- A lack of acceptance by the TRCS of the need to have an adequate Federation field presence for monitoring, reporting and follow-up of Red Cross/Red Crescent inputs.
- The need for a more robust challenge by the Federation to some of the restrictions or obstructions placed upon it regarding its presence in the field.
- The long delays in receiving procured goods
- A weak relief capacity both in the delegation and in Geneva
- Lack of interface and integration of relief and logistics systems

These problems were exacerbated by the late arrival of the permanent relief delegates. Whilst the Logistics capability within the delegation was strong, and had been reinforced by the establishment of the Samandira warehouse, there was practically no equivalent relief capacity. There was just one person covering the entire relief programme from late September-mid October, and the 'full' team of three was only achieved in late October. Indeed, it was not until the 12<sup>th</sup> November (ironically the day of the second earthquake) that the Federation Sitrep could report that the "field liaison [relief] delegates are now fully operational in the affected area" – some 88 days after the event!

### **Recommendation 26**

The Federation should ensure in any operation that if large amounts of goods are requested and consigned to a country, that there is a sufficiently strong relief capacity, either through the NS or the delegation, to adequately requisition and monitor.

### ***Patterns of Relief Activity***

The effect of this disparity between relief and logistics was a Federation warehouse becoming dangerously full of items, but with almost no field relief presence which could raise requisitions and move the goods into the field. For the month of October, 5,225 MT of goods were received by the Samandira warehouse, whilst only 456 MT (8.7%) were distributed. Figure 4 (over) shows the ratio of goods received and distributed by the Federation per item in the month of October. This disfunctionality was noticed by a number of donors, and was a factor in the decision of the major donor (the American Red Cross) to withdraw a 16 million Chf pledge for relief items.

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<sup>37</sup> This section does not aim to replicate much useful analysis and discussion on the technical aspects of the Federation's relief programme – in particular tent specifications - that are included in the Secretariat's Internal Relief Review (R Thompson, Feb 2000).

A complete blockage of the International Federation's pipeline was averted by a rapid increase in distributions in the first week of November (over 60% of the entire figure for October) and by a new event which again created a demand for immediate relief assistance – the earthquake of November 12<sup>th</sup>. Only in November, with the impetus of the second emergency, were Federation goods distributed into the field through a more direct system (direct requisitioning from the CMCs, not from the TRCS) which it understood and could monitor to some degree.

Figure 5 (over) shows to some extent the pattern of activity regarding the pipeline.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately monthly figures for the distribution of items were not available except for October<sup>39</sup> – with only running totals being made for other months. Nevertheless, a huge leap in activity is noticeable from November, with a peak in December in the amount of goods received into Samandira (and being distributed). Whilst it could be claimed that winter needs demanded such a response, most people on the ground would dispute this: the ideal time for the largest incoming and outgoing stock flows was September, October and November, when needs were most critical. By December most basic needs were covered, including shelter. Therefore the graph basically shows a late, rather than a strategic, response by the Federation. As Figure 6 shows, a large proportion of the December rise was due to incoming hygiene parcels: these are the delayed ECHO parcels, and their usefulness at that point in the operation and beyond is debatable (see Section viii, below). The provision of beds post-December is also seen by many as evidence of a late response to an earlier need, and complicated by mixed messages from the TRCS on this issue. For a discussion on the appropriateness of some of the relief goods supplied, see Chapter 6.

### ***The Federation's Performance: Material Assistance***

The Federation's overall performance in the delivery of relief items was therefore too slow when the crises were at their peaks, but fairly impressive when it was too late, or almost too late.

The impact on the beneficiaries is impossible to measure. Anecdotally there were none of the usual signs of a significant failure in the overall aid provision - it is probable that the Turkish Government could simply not allow this to happen, and certainly there were the national and international resources to cope with many basic needs once the political will was in place. The Federation played a significant role in winterised tent provision, but its main impact came right at the end of that particular crisis. The hygiene inputs (especially the shower and toilet containers) certainly eased conditions in camps, as did the stoves. But overall the impact of the Federation's relief assistance has been appraised by many as low or very low for the first critical few months, but much improved (as needs decreased) thereafter.

As has been discussed above (Chapter 4.iv) the impact and added value of the Federation – in association with the PNS – regarding the strengthening and preparedness of the TRCS for the benefit of future disaster victims may well outweigh the short term weaknesses of its immediate response.

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<sup>38</sup> Source: Delegation Consolidated Stock Reports

<sup>39</sup> October figures are given in the Federation Sitrep No 24, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1999

## **xii) Tents**

The impact of the tent saga was unfortunately significant enough to warrant its own brief section here.

### ***Background:***

- The failure of the TRCS standard tent stock for winter/wet weather use, late August 1999. A growing temporary shelter crisis – some 50,000-70,000 winter tents needed to bridge the time until the Government prefabricated construction programme could take effect (late November).
- Increasing Governmental and media/public expectation upon the TRCS.
- A corresponding pressure upon the Federation to deliver tents – it became a test of its credibility, especially in September and October 1999.
- The lack of pre-prepared specifications and preparatory work with suppliers for winter tents on the part of the Federation and PNS.
- The failure of the large single order for 10,000 winter tents placed with a trusted and experienced German supplier, early November.
- A second failure: an American supplier chosen by the TRCS against the advice of the American RC delivered substandard tents in mid-late November.
- A large response by PNS resulted in a total of over 16,000 tents being delivered by the end of the year.

### ***The Importance of the Tent Issue***

The centrality of the tent issue to the relationship between the TRCS and the Federation cannot be understated: tents were, according to most Federation delegates, the only thing that the TRCS really wanted from the Federation for three critical months. Through a combination of bad luck and a possibly material lack of technical preparedness the Federation could not deliver. The fact that the relationship could improve within months after such an event is a mark of the efforts on both sides to overcome this affair.

### ***Could It Have Been Avoided?***

The extent to which preparedness of specifications and suppliers would have averted the failure of the 10,000-tent order is debatable. The supplier was a large, experienced and trusted producer, and had previously provided such items for the Federation (though never in that bulk, or at that speed). The global winter tent stock was seriously diminished by the Balkan crisis, and options were few: the provision of much smaller numbers from separately-sourcing PNS was always possible, but it was reasonable to assume at the time that a single supplier could deliver the full amount.

### ***The Second Failed Order***

In a way the second supplier-failure is less forgivable and worrying, despite more bad luck. Desperate for tents after the failure of the first order, the TRCS accepted an approach by an American company which the American RC advised against, and the Federation felt pressurised into agreeing the order tents from Pakistan. The first consignment revealed the substandard quality of the tents, and the Federation had pre-paid 90% of the cost for an order that could not be used in those conditions. This is in many ways a measure of the Federation's own desperation to maintain some

credibility with the TRCS and to address a clear priority need: but such pressure should not cause a rushed procurement procedure such as this.

### ***Other Options?***

Several people mentioned a lack of investigation into options for local procurement of the required tents by the Federation. Several PNS, and the TRCS, procured smaller amounts locally: the American RC obtained 1,499; the Spanish adapted a standard military design very successfully and procured 1,000; the Turkish RC obtained several thousand. But it seems unlikely that the large numbers sought by the Federation would be easily obtainable in-country in the given timeframe, and anyway the Logistics delegates were never requested to source the 10,000 because it was normal for the Federation to try to procure internationally. Hindsight in this case offers much fuel for criticism.

A more interesting charge is laid by the Internal Relief Review that price was the leading determinant in the Federation's decision to procure from the German supplier in the first place.<sup>40</sup> According to the Federation's procurement procedures, this is almost bound to be true, as the Competitive Bid Analysis system is predicated on cost. Logistics Geneva pointed out that it may have been possible to buy \$5,000 tents instead of \$500 tents, but this would not necessarily guarantee quality, speed or a welcome reception from donors regarding cost efficiency. But in the field, it was not cost as much as availability that became the priority concern: any tents, of adequate quality and a reasonable price, were welcomed.

### ***Conclusions***

The tent issue is one that attracts the wisdom of hindsight: ordinarily such a contract would not have failed, and the Federation's successful provision of tents would have greatly improved its relationship with the TRCS, and would have passed un-noticed by everyone else. Bad luck was certainly a factor in the failure of the Federation to perform here – but better preparedness in the whole issue of winter shelter specifications and supplier relations would have reduced the chances of two such errors. The panic induced by the failure of the first order led to over-hasty and lack of professionalism in the placing of the second order, despite prior indications that suggested this was a risky move.

The collective efforts of the PNS to produce the required amount just before the year end should be noted and celebrated – it is a good example, in extremis, of the PNS working as a 'Federation'.

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<sup>40</sup> R. Thompson - Turkey Earthquake operation Relief Review (February 2000), p11.

### **xiii) ECHO**

#### ***Background***

The ECHO-funded Hygiene Parcel Programme is the other single programme that requires some specific comment. The facts are that in the first few days of the August earthquake ECHO called the Federation and offered 1.8 MECU towards the Movement's response. A proposal was made for 50,000 families to be provided with a family hygiene parcel each month for 5 months. This was due to begin in October, and finish by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2000.

From early in timeframe of the programme, there seems to have been little awareness of this initiative in the field, and little mention of it by Geneva. Parcels were being procured and delivered to Turkey, but no preparations for their distribution. According to the Federation's two field 'liaison' (relief) delegates, they were not told of this programme until December – over a month after they joined the delegation. On December the 21<sup>st</sup> an interim report was submitted to ECHO, which included in its seven pages one line that read "To date no distribution of the ECHO-funded hygiene parcels has taken place".<sup>41</sup> This occasioned an understandably stiff response, and the Desk Officer and EU Officer from the Europe Department visited Brussels to explain the situation and renegotiate the contract. A revised timeframe was agreed, and the programme is due to end in July 2000 (4 months after the original end-date).

#### ***Impact of the Delay in the ECHO Programme***

There is no evidence or concern that the late starting of this programme had a negative impact on the beneficiaries: sufficient Italian and British Red Cross parcels were in the pipeline until the ECHO programme started (in late January) to cover whatever needs there were. Nor does it seem to have permanently damaged the Federation's relationship with ECHO: their representative in Istanbul, whilst disappointed at the lack of warning about the progress in October and November, is now happy with the rollout of the revised programme. As there is no formal agency evaluation process in Brussels, any negative fallout will have depended upon the personality of the individual Desk concerned.

The real issues are why, despite the plentiful supply of hygiene parcels from the British RC and Italian RCs, did the Federation proceed with the ECHO contract (which was still delivering hygiene parcels in May 2000, some 9 months after the first crisis)? And how, in a delegation of experienced delegates supported by a fully engaged Desk in Geneva, did a large ECHO contract disappear for two months from the Federation's collective radar screen? It certainly points to a lapse, and to an unhealthy and detrimental tendency or a pressure within the Secretariat to accept ECHO funding in the early stages of an emergency.

#### **Recommendation 27**

Given the demands of an ECHO contract, and the global importance to the Federation of managing its relationship with Brussels, Desks in Geneva must assess carefully whether, despite the pressures of the immediate post-emergency phase, ECHO funding should always be accepted.

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<sup>41</sup> Narrative Quarterly Report Federation to ECHO, 21st December 1999

#### **xiv) The Reconstruction Programme**

##### ***Background***

The present reconstruction programme has its roots in the Emergency Appeal, which lays out under 'Component 2' the Federation's intention to consider reconstruction programmes in the light of emerging Governmental plans. In December a joint assessment was carried out, consisting of a Federation Team Leader, consultant architect, construction co-ordinator and Assistant Health Coordinator, together with two representatives from the Japanese Red Cross. The resulting document<sup>42</sup> provided an overall framework for the programme, including a list of almost 40 possible reconstruction projects, concentrating on schools and hospitals. In addition, a water supply project was proposed, and work on the Izmit State Hospital project was furthered.

The list of potential projects was created through discussions with the Governments and the sites themselves. There was an awareness that this exercise could raise expectations, and sensible efforts were made to downplay these. At the information and planning meeting in mid-February, the projects – totalling some \$32 million - were outlined, and several PNS, including the Japanese, Kuwaiti, British and Swiss RCs expressed interest in funding 13 of the projects, with the Federation committing to another 2. As of the end of April 2000, 11 projects have received confirmed pledges, and agreements with the TRCS and the authorities have been signed for eight of these. Another 11 projects have received indications of interest.

Meanwhile two major construction projects were already underway. The Japanese RC funded a 140-bed prefabricated extension to the Kocaeli University hospital at a cost of \$1.8 million. Work began on the 15<sup>th</sup> November, and the extension was completed in around three months. The American RC was on the point of signing a contract for an equally large prefabricated facility at Izmit's State Hospital. Discussions with doctors at the hospital resulted, however, in a plan to use winterised field hospital tents whilst a permanent construction could be erected. The American RC accepted this change of plan, but soon after pulled their funding due to a wider shift of policy towards its support to Federation operations in Turkey. The Singapore RC stepped in, and agreed to the budget of around \$600,000. Work began on the 1<sup>st</sup> February, and is due to be completed in June.

##### ***Construction/Reconstruction: An Absence of Policy***

The International Federation has an absence of policy regarding construction and reconstruction. There is also an absence in the Secretariat of any technical capacity to guide the actions of Federation delegations. This is surprising, given the scale of some of the budgets that have been created for rehabilitation, construction and reconstruction in previous operations (such as Hurricane Mitch, Bosnia, Bangladesh, North Korea, PNG, Vietnam), and the importance of the subject to thinking on both rehabilitation and preparedness.

Firstly, in terms of vulnerability, reconstruction would seem to be a central activity. In the aftermath of a major disaster (including conflict), people's education, health and long-term shelter needs may well be directly affected by a lack of proper buildings.

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<sup>42</sup> Azmat Ulla: 'Mission Report 2', January 2000

Governments and bodies such as the World Bank take time to rebuild, and meanwhile vulnerabilities may worsen. In many ways reconstruction can directly address the needs of the most vulnerable. But is this the Movement's role? Does engagement with this sector imply an assumption of what is generally regarded as a responsibility of the state? And given that such an activity can rarely involve the host National Society in any meaningful way, does Federation activity in this sector undermine support to the NS' own priorities?

There seems to be no clear view, despite the increasingly amounts of funding that is channelled through such activities. In Turkey, the programme is donor-driven: reconstruction is an excellent way of swiftly absorbing large amounts of funding in a way that is good for visibility. Donor pressure usually accompanies the decisions around reconstruction in any given context. Without a clear policy on this difficult subject, there is the likelihood of confusion, drift, and a donor-led agenda.

Turkey exemplifies this well. A proportion of schoolchildren throughout the affected areas are being taught in tents, with limited facilities. Hospitals continue to be constrained by the destruction of essential structures. The Turkish Government, with hundreds of schools and health facilities to rebuild, are happy for the Red Cross/Red Crescent to take a share of the workload.

But the TRCS, having agreed to several reconstruction projects proposed by the Federation in February 2000, have recently been much less supportive of the construction programme. Their own priorities have clarified and crystallised in the post-emergency period of early 2000, and they would understandably rather see considerable PNS funds being directed towards restocking, preparedness, blood, first aid and other programmes.

Meanwhile several donor NS have funds remaining for the Turkish earthquake that are increasingly hard to allocate to other projects: with the American RC taking 90% of the original Disaster Preparedness budget, and with the relief operation now almost completed, options for a rapid disbursement are limited.

The delegation's approach to reconstruction is funding-led rather than methodologically-based, and stems from a large residual budget in Geneva and in many of the major PNS. The wording in the Federation's draft Turkey Delegation Plan of Action 2000 is interesting: "...it was agreed that, given the large response to the Federation Appeal, a portion of funds should be devoted to a reconstruction phase." This runs the risk of contradicting the Code of Conduct to which the Movement subscribes ("assistance should not be driven by the need to dispose of donor commodity surpluses" – if commodity can mean cash).<sup>43</sup>

The drawbacks of an incoherent approach can easily be witnessed at a programming level. The German RC have funded a number of structural rehabilitation/reconstruction projects in Turkey. Their clear policy is that they will only provide prefabricated buildings, on the basis that the German RC could not tolerate the possibility of a building rehabilitated with its funds causing further death and injury in

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<sup>43</sup> Code of Conduct for the International RC/RC Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief, Principle 4, p6



the event of another earthquake. The Federation on the other hand are quite clear in their preference for permanent reconstruction, citing cost effectiveness, a construction time that compares favourably to that of prefab erection, and end-user preference. It is obvious that a reconciliation of global practices and methodologies is required if the Movement is to have any consistency in this important sector.

The Federation's reconstruction delegate requires the support of a clear Federation policy on its approach towards, and thinking behind, its engagement in the reconstruction field in Turkey. Meanwhile, there is the possibility of confusion and misunderstanding between the various shareholders over this issue.

**Recommendation 28**

The Federation should urgently develop global policies on its conceptual and methodological approach to post-disaster reconstruction in order that the agendas of the vulnerable, host National Societies, governments and donors can be better reconciled.

**Recommendation 29**

The Federation Delegation should draft a brief but clear policy specifically on reconstruction in the context of this operation, after seeking inputs from the other major stakeholders (the TRCS, end-user representatives, the authorities and the donors). It should include preferred methodologies and approaches to construction that mitigate earthquake effects, encourage best practice and increase cost effectiveness.

***Reconstruction as Disaster Mitigation***

Buildings kill people. Almost all of the fatalities and injuries that occurred after the Turkish earthquakes were caused by buildings. The quality of the design and construction of many of the structures in the affected areas had a direct bearing on mortality and injury levels. Therefore, steps taken to either improve existing structures (through relatively simple retro-fitting techniques) or to improve the quality of new and rebuilt structures are certainly helping to minimise the effects of future disasters.

Disaster mitigation is clearly a Red Crescent/Red Cross role – but is *this* type of mitigation to be included in the Movement's portfolio of concerns? In Turkey the Federation has already had productive talks with ministries who are looking for models of how to better bridge the gulf between Turkey's rigorous Seismic Code for construction, the Universities/research institutes, and the construction industry. There seems to be some signs of encouragement for the Federation to act as an external source of expertise, as a facilitator in developing best practice and an implementer of pilot projects. But again, it is unclear how far the delegation should commit itself to that in the absence of either a policy or a technical capacity in Geneva.

**Recommendation 30**

The Federation needs to consider what role construction and reconstruction issues have in its global portfolio of disaster mitigation and disaster preparedness activities, and most immediately in its current operation in Turkey.

## **xv) Reporting/Monitoring**

The Federation was open and transparent at an early stage as to the problems it faced in its ability to monitor and report on goods donated to the response in Turkey.<sup>44</sup> These stemmed from the near-total control that the authorities had on in-coming goods, the problems concerning the Federation's presence in the field, and the difficulties in communicating the need for monitoring and reporting to the TRCS. It is interesting to note that an early OCHA mission report also flags the likelihood of problems in this field regarding the Turkish authorities.<sup>45</sup>

### ***Warehousing and Tracking:***

Until the warehouse at Samandira became operational in October, the Federation had very little control over goods that were immediately allocated upon arrival to either LDKM or TRCS warehouses. In the LDKM warehouses, a profession military logistics system usually prevailed: all records such as stock movement, waybills, good received notes, bin cards were kept – but Federation access to these was problematic. Until December there were few records of final distributions, and no donor coding.

The creation of the Federation's own warehouse at Samandira improved the situation. Separate files for each PNS consignment were kept, which were logged against an updated pipeline report, and records of goods received and dispatched were also kept. But overall, it was possible to trace consignments from their receipt in-country to the final warehouse stage. In addition, in November and December Federation logisticians received consignment addresses for specific tent cities, and would get the Goods Received Note from the camp - particularly if there was a direct distribution from a local supplier.

There is clear evidence that the delegation fully understood the importance of monitoring and reporting on donated goods, and efforts were made to improve this service within the constraints that the Federation had to operate. When specific requests for reporting were received from donors, concerted (but time-inefficient) efforts to track items yielded fair results.<sup>46</sup>

### ***Impact Analysis and Field Monitoring***

Again, given the operational limitations, it was impossible for the delegation to have assessed the impact of donated goods. Not only was the distribution system complex and the Federation's field presence weak, but local coping mechanisms were very fluid, the pattern of needs extremely localised, and the range of donors and donated items made assessments of the impact of specific goods or services a complex issue. The lack of a global field monitoring mechanism has been noted in the Balkans Evaluation<sup>47</sup>, and whilst it is tempting to make a similar recommendation, it is very hard to see how such a system could have been applied in this case. However, the Turkish Earthquakes operation may well prove to be useful as a worst-case scenario against which to test any model monitoring mechanism.

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<sup>44</sup> For example, Sitreps 3 (20<sup>th</sup> August) and 9 (30<sup>th</sup> August)

<sup>45</sup> 'Mission to Turkey, 22-25<sup>th</sup> August', Ross Mountain, Assist Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director, OCHA Geneva, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1999

<sup>46</sup> For example, 'A Reconciliation of Japanese RC Relief Commodities', January 2000.

<sup>47</sup> The Balkans Evaluation (Mach 2000), Recommendations, viii

## **xvi) Finance Issues**

The Turkey operation is characterised by the high level of local procurements made through the payment of invoices presented by the host National Society. Some 42.6% (4.177 million Chf) of all delegation expenditure was made in this way.<sup>48</sup> The issue of senior level approval for these payments have been discussed (see Section X, above), as have the lack of physical monitoring of the procured goods by the delegation (who did, however, receive Goods Received Notes).

A further points to note here are: budgeting was made almost impossible due to the size of these local procurements. The information flow between the Procurement Delegate and the Finance Delegate was not always smooth, and it became difficult for the Finance Delegate to predict cashflow and budgetary forecasts.

### **Recommendation 31**

If the Federation are to further the use of NS as procurement agents in emergency situations, it should ensure that the procurement process is compatible with the budgeting and cash-flow requirements of the delegation's financial systems.

## **xvii) Media Issues**

As with the logistics and personnel functions, the Federation's performance regarding the media emerges as a strength. There was an exceptionally fast deployment (faster than much of the international media) and a large presence of information delegates during the very first phase of the crisis. In addition, the Head of Delegation fully understood the need for a proactive approach to the media, and crucially there was very little competition - the Red Crescent/Red Cross operation was and remains by far the largest of all the international agencies. A few branches, the Search and Rescue, Emergency Response Units and other rapid response teams gave high visibility, mostly in the first few days of both emergencies.

An important success was the early decision to maintain a low Federation profile within the Turkish national media. As the media's criticism of the TRCS grew, it was felt that the international Red Cross/Red Crescent effort should not be seen as undermining the National Society's efforts. The constant media message was of emphasising the role and achievements of the TRCS, with support from the Federation. This was reportedly much appreciated by the TRCS leadership, and helped to maintain the relationship through this period of strain.

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<sup>48</sup> Source: International Federation Delegation

## **4.d The Donor National Societies' Response**

Details of the main programmes and activities of each PNS are given in Chapter 1. Issues concerning co-ordination are also explored in Chapter 5, below.

### ***Scale of the PNS Response***

The overall PNS response to the Turkish earthquakes was very large. Over 40 PNS responded to the crisis, and some 19 PNS in total have been operational in some way during the operation. At one stage in the first few weeks of the August earthquake there were over 100 PNS staff in Istanbul.

Much of the Emergency Appeal income (56.7 million Chf) came from PNS, with other sizeable donations that lay outside of the Appeal budget. The value of the various PNS bilateral budgets spent or as yet unspent would appear to be - at the very least - \$40 million.

The three largest PNS donors all have particular domestic reasons for the size of their response: the Japanese RC and the American RC have programmes designed to cope with earthquakes at home, and were the media for great public sympathy, whilst the German RC received contributions from the country's huge Turkish population. All experienced pressures to spend the income they received within short timeframes, and this affected their programming.

It should be noted that the PNS were instrumental in enabling the Federation to eventually provide a large number of urgently needed winterised tents – which possibly saved the Federation's relationship with the TRCS from further deterioration. In addition, the levels of commitment to the future of the TRCS are high. This is partly driven by the need to spend unused funds, but mostly due to a real sense that the Movement cannot afford to let this opportunity for preparedness and the strengthening of a major National Society slip away.

### ***Scope of the PNS Response***

The range of projects and initiatives implemented by PNS is also wide. It included: search and rescue, rapid deployment health teams, ERUs, structural rehabilitation and construction, schools, camp construction, family linking, disaster response and general relief distributions. None of the activities are antithetical to the general areas of intervention outlined in the Federation's Emergency Appeal, but it should not be assumed that PNS based their programme planning and design around the Appeal.

### ***Types of PNS Response***

a) *Support to the Emergency Appeal in cash, kind and/or personnel. No operational presence sought.*

The British Red Cross typifies this approach. It sought to strengthen the delegation through the deployment of calibre delegates, respond to requests by either the Desk or the Logistics Department for relief items, and provided cash.

*b) Short-term specialised inputs during the immediate response.*

Several NS deployed Search and Rescue or other teams in the first few days of the emergency, and then took no further operational part in the longer term. The Norwegian RC and Hellenic RC are examples.

*c) Specific, short-term single location project*

The Netherlands RC implemented a brief but reportedly successful clothing programme for 4,000 people, plus the provision of tents. The Kuwait Red Crescent implemented its programmes in a similar way.

*d) Operationality in the immediate response, followed by closely earmarked contributions within the Federation appeal, and pro-active monitoring of the use of these funds.*

The Japanese RC, having utilised their specialist medical teams, decided to support the Federation Appeal with cash, but followed closely its utilisation for reporting purposes. On a smaller scale the Singapore RC, through its funding of a single construction project, acted in a similar way.

*e) Operationality in the immediate response, expanding into medium-term relief projects, within the Federation's Appeal objectives or outside.*

The Spanish, French and Italian RCs all have worked in this way. Essentially they are identifying their own projects but using Federation delegation services.

*f) Operationality through taking responsibility for a whole sector of the Federation Appeal*

The American RC initially attempted to spend significant sums through the close earmarking of items within the Federation Appeal. However, the problems with the logistics and relief pipelines dissuaded them from continuing this. Instead they have funded over 90% of the disaster preparedness programme, and now essentially leading and developing this on behalf of the delegation.

*g) Complete bilateralism – minimal operational involvement with the Federation's plans or delegation.*

The German RC is the archetypal exponent of this approach. It has very large, multi-sectoral programmes in many locations, and operates on the basis of a bilateral agreement with the TRCS.

### ***Quality of the PNS Response***

With such a large range and scale of activity, a full analysis of each PNS's programming is beyond the scope of this report. The success of the Search and Rescue Teams, the ERUs, and the rapid deployment health teams is very hard to judge eight months later: but whilst each deployment had its own lessons to learn, it seems that the overall intervention was rapid and appropriate. There was little programming co-ordination by the delegation either expected or given: the teams' specialist functions and self-determined roles make all but the lightest of co-ordination functions superfluous.

For the ensuing PNS activities, the standard of service delivery seems to have been generally sound. The performance of those PNS involved in localised relief

distribution projects, despite some specific problems, was broadly satisfactory, and these were able to be flexible and precisely targeted according to the local context. The Spanish Red Cross' establishment of a 1,000 tent camp in Bolu, for example, was timely, appropriate to the most critical needs of the population, and provided a high standard of provision – particularly in their adaptation of a standard Turkish military tent design. The Italian RC hygiene parcel distribution was able to overcome temporary problems concerning beneficiary over-lap with the delegation's ECHO programme. The range of items provided by the French RC programme was able to expand according to changes in the needs at a localised level.

It is the coordination of the PNS' activities, rather than the quality of the PNS' service delivery that emerge as the main issue, and this is explored in the next chapter. There are, however, some specific PNS programmes that require more detailed comment.

### *The American RC*

The initial approach of the American Red Cross was to heavily resource the Federation's relief needs. However, its (correct) impression of systemic problems with the implementation of the Federation relief programme led the American Red Cross to revise this strategy. At the same time, the global relationship between Washington and Geneva was deteriorating to the point where a review of all American RC support to Federation programmes worldwide was requested. Both factors were at play in causing a pledge for around 16 million Chf towards the Federation's operation to be withdrawn.

This was naturally of major concern to both the Secretariat and the delegation: for example, American promises of funding for the construction of an additional wing at the Izmit State hospital were basically reneged, and an alternative donor had to be rapidly found (eventually in the form of the Singapore RC). However, both the American Red Cross and the Federation then proceeded to act with much maturity and creativity in order to find an accommodation. This essentially led to the American RC taking a more complete lead in the Disaster Preparedness programme, with a constructive and facilitating role played by the Federation in Ankara. The potential for a serious and damaging rupture in relations was overcome, to the credit of all concerned.

The disaster preparedness programme is the closest initiative to a delegated project that has existed within the Turkey operation. The American RC decided to fund just over 90% of the entire Federation Appeal figure for this sector, and with its domestic expertise in earthquake planning and response, is a natural leader for the Movement in Turkey. Crucially, Amcross operatives have encouraged coordinated engagement by other PNS.

It is interesting to note that despite the appearances of a successful de facto delegated project, it does not indicate that the Federation is breaking new strategic ground on the delegated project or 'co-ordinated bilateralism' issues. The formal status of the American RC in relation to its evolving 'co-ordination' role in the field of disaster preparedness is not clear. It has been called the 'lead agency' for DP in Turkey. Given the lack of a coherent approach to coordination within the delegation (or, in this field, anywhere in the Federation), it is hard to know what this means. Given that it is probable that the American RC would do almost exactly the same programme on a

bilateral basis anyway, having the resources, expertise and imperative to act independently of the Federation, it is more of a commonsensical arrangement, largely dependent on individuals but accruing the status of a strategic move towards 'co-ordinated bilateralism' on the part of the Federation. Given the possibility of interference from higher corporate levels, the American RC's role within the Appeal and Federation operation should be formalised in order to safeguard what has been achieved.

### ***The Japanese RC***

This National Society decided at an early stage to use its considerable funds to support the work of the Federation. Given the immense domestic pressure for a rapid disbursement, and despite similar obstacles to the Federation's ability to do this, another potentially damaging situation was averted through a willingness by both sides to find creative solutions. In the event, the critical need for winter tents gave one such opportunity for the needs to be covered whilst satisfying a strong PNS agenda.

### ***The German RC***

This National Society, with a large Turkish constituency and a long-standing relationship with the TRCS, had a strongly bilateral approach from the beginning. The sheer size of its presence, the range of its programmes, the extent of its resources and its direct access to senior state authorities led to a situation where co-ordination and integration with the Federation's operation became very problematic. In addition, the strong pressures that the field operatives received from the Lander and Bonn for rapid implementation of a large number of initiatives led to co-ordination problems within its own operation, particularly in the ability of the operational manager in the field to co-ordinate – or even know about – who and what was arriving from Bonn at any given time.

The German RC field hospital near Golchuk has generated much criticism: its siting (in a small village some distance from concentrations of beneficiaries), its apparent over-resourcing of staff and facilities, creating competition with state services and the level of its utilisation have all been questioned. However, in terms of service delivery to beneficiaries, the hospital (transferred from an ERU tented centre to a prefabricated, semi-permanent site) is undeniably good. Since the 25<sup>th</sup> September 1999 until early May it had treated some 26,807 patients, and was still delivering around 6 babies per week in late April. The transfer of the facility to the TRCS in the Spring of 2000 has been one solution to the problem of the future of such a well-resourced but badly situated hospital: the TRCS plans to re-utilise it elsewhere in Turkey, and much of its capacity is increasingly being turned over to create a flagship training centre for TRCS health and psycho-social initiatives.

However, the cost efficiency of the hospital – its cost (some 8 million Dm) in comparison to the service – is still an open question. It has come, rightly or wrongly, to represent the worst of PNS over-resourcing, despite the evident beneficiary satisfaction with the service it provides.

### ***Co-ordination vs the Domestic Agenda***

The wide variety of PNS approaches makes it clear that, if the Federation was to co-ordinate effectively, it would have needed to expend much concentrated effort and

significant resources to integrate the various PNS agendas and actions. The imperatives of its own operationality, as well as an uncertain corporate identity regarding its operational coordination in high-profile emergencies, led the delegation to under-resource itself in this regard.

On the other hand, it is debatable to what extent the most active PNS would have empowered the Federation to coordinate them in a truly strategic, directional way. Most operational PNS did wish to *co-operate* with the delegation. And at the initial stage of the response there was a general willingness to be *co-ordinated* also. However, most PNS seemed to understand co-ordination to mean the provision of services from the Federation, rather than the integration of PNS resources into a coherent and strategic operational package. And even if there had been a mutual understanding of this issue, the domestic agendas and corporate approaches to the Federation Secretariat by some PNS would simply would not allow full co-ordination to happen. The Secretariat's coordination function in an emergency environment is therefore confused and lacking in buy-in from many PNS. This is one of the most important issues facing the International Federation, and the following chapter explores how it was manifested in the context of the Turkey operation.



## Chapter 5. Co-ordination

### a) With National Bodies

Many of the major problems in co-ordination that had direct operational impact on the Turkey operation stemmed from a lack of mechanisms within the Governmental response system. In the first few days of the August earthquake, a Provincial Crisis Coordination Centre was created in Istanbul, but the central co-ordination point soon moved to Ankara, under the Prime Minister's office. This came to be known as the Prime Minister Crisis Management Centre (PMCMC), with regional CMCs reporting to it. Regional CMCs consisted of the local governmental authorities, the military and the TRCS. This was predominantly an information-gathering and resource deployment mechanism. It interfaced with the many Governmental Ministries, who set up their own crisis committees, to varying levels of success. There was no clearly defined overall mechanism for the definition of strategy, or coordination of international agencies and their resources.

UNDAC, who established a 20-person OSOCC (On-Site Operations Coordination Centre) in the same location as the Government's Istanbul Provincial Crisis Coordination Centre, experienced collaboration with governmental mechanisms that were "not as productive as anticipated".<sup>49</sup> The search and rescue phase, at least from UNDAC's point of view, was also marked by "the inability of national INSARAG partners to spare the necessary time and personnel".<sup>50</sup>

The relief phase in August saw efforts by the Turkish Government to establish organisational structures that could cope with the scale of the crisis. UNDP and OCHA provided staffing, computer and communications support to the Prime Minister's office. As the Turkish military became more involved in the CMCs (especially in logistics and warehousing), regional coordination improved. Coordination was generally much improved during the immediate response to the November earthquake. Nevertheless, as the CMC system was inevitably led by the Government, decision-making remained to some extent a political process, and was subject to public opinion, the media, and international promises of assistance.

The TRCS were a formal part of the CMC system. Naturally, they were hugely effected by Governmental policy shifts and the strengths and weaknesses of the Government's coordination. When, for various reasons, the TRCS' performance regarding the shelter issue became highly criticised by the Government, the TRCS were increasingly 'demoted' as equal partners in what became essentially a Government and military axis.

The International Federation's relationship to this system, which effectively controlled the relief effort, was through the TRCS. But the centralisation of the TRCS operation, and the simultaneous lack of Federation access to the senior management of the TRCS in Ankara effectively meant that the Federation delegation was excluded from the national co-ordination mechanism.

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<sup>49</sup> Ross Mountain: OCHA Mission to Turkey (August 1999), p. 1

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p.2

## **b) The International Federation's Coordination Role**

### **The Secretariat**

The Secretariat's coordination function was generally sound. Contact with the main UN agencies active in Turkey was maintained in Geneva, particularly in August and September. Many PNS headquarters reported regular informal contact by the Secretariat Europe Department, and the mobilisation effort against items requested in the Appeal was satisfactory.

However, the Secretariat's overall role and identity in coordination of the Movement's response was (and is still) not clear, and relates to a much wider issue that now faces the entire Federation. With the increasing operationality of PNS, should the Secretariat's added value lie less in its own operationality, and more in an OCHA-type coordination function? It depends, of course, upon the PNS' willingness to empower the Secretariat to take a strong lead in coordination that may, occasionally, conflict with the PNS' agendas. The current absence of a clear Movement-wide agreement on this issue directly affected the performance of the delegation's performance in coordination during the Turkey operation.

For example, OCHA/UNDAC's role in the immediate period after the August earthquake was clearly that of coordination, information gathering and support to national coordination mechanisms. The Federation delegation's role, whilst including such functions for the Movement, also involved (and indeed prioritised) the establishment of a large multi-sectoral operation of its own, as well as facilitating on a service level the work of some 19 incoming PNS. It tried to do this variety of tasks with less people than UNDAC had available for coordination alone.

Complaints on this level by the PNS as to the Federation's performance are disingenuous: National Societies globally have not agreed to let it have a fully coordinating role, and such were the strength of the agendas of certain PNS in Turkey, it is very unlikely that they would have allowed the delegation to coordinate in any meaningful sense even if it had tried.

### **Recommendation 32**

The Federation should debate, at its highest levels, a clarification of the Secretariat's essential role: is it to have a predominantly empowered co-ordination function, along the lines of OCHA, with the agreed authority to delegate operational activities where possible? Or is it to have a predominantly operational function, with a subsidiary co-ordination function in the field?

### **Recommendation 33**

The Secretariat should work towards a global minimum service-level agreement to be agreed by PNS at the highest levels, which would act as a template for the provision of services to PNS wishing to become operational in a given context. The details of a more detailed service-level agreement per operation should be created in the first two weeks of any given operation, and should be reviewed monthly by the delegation and PNS representatives.

## **The Delegation**

### **Federation Attempts to Increase Co-ordination**

- There were several laudable attempts to co-ordinate PNS and Secretariat resources in the three major sectoral directions of the operation's rehabilitation phase: disaster response, health and reconstruction. The participation of PNS on the assessment teams was problematic for various reasons, in part connected with strong PNS agendas behind the ownership of the initiatives. Nevertheless, in the case of reconstruction, the resulting portfolio of projects has given PNS the opportunity to input into a coherent programme managed by the delegation (although it lacks a wider Federation policy framework to support it). The disaster preparedness programme was effectively led by the American Red Cross, with the Federation constructively supporting this. A consortium of interested PNS was created, and a meeting was scheduled in May to outline the programme and to try to co-ordinate participation.
- A major information and planning meeting in Ankara on the 18<sup>th</sup> February 2000 attempted to set out direction for the joint TRCS/Federation/PNS operations for the forthcoming year.
- There are several examples of a strong Federation coordination role within specific programmes. This is most noticeable in health, where the Federation has been a significant player, particularly in helping the various Governmental ministries and bodies concerned with health to integrate more effectively. In this sense it is playing a role performed in the early stages by UNDAC.

### **Federation Weaknesses in Coordination**

#### ***Lack of an Agreed Coordination Role, Empowered by the PNS***

In the immediate few days after the August earthquake, there seemed to be a general willingness for coordination, except on the part of one PNS whose strongly bilateral approach led to the development of a very problematic relationship with the delegation on this issue. Some of the PNS with small and medium-sized presences felt they profited from the information and basic services provided: "Without this, we would not have been able to operate so quickly", reported one. Another commented that it appreciated the access to information and start-up assistance, whilst another felt that the Federation had "tried to help where it could".

However, as imperatives grew for both the delegation and PNS to establish programmes through which to deploy their own resources, essentially parallel Federation and PNS programmes began to evolve. The imperative for the delegation to work through the problematic TRCS central structure, the absence of an agreed coordination function (empowered by the PNS), plus its relative lack of human resources compared to those of the PNS, led to the delegation to seem, in operational terms, to be just another small PNS. Its relative lack of permanent presence in the field also weakened its credibility as a co-ordinator in the eyes of most operational National Societies.

The situation has been worsened by the strongly bilateral positions on behalf of a few PNS, whose direct relationships with either the TRCS or the authorities have undermined the Federation's coordination role. The PNS will always be more able to come to localised or bilateral relationships with various parts of the national administration, and may do in order to strengthen their own programmes. But it is their obligation to reconcile these relationships and benefits with the attempts of the delegation to provide a more universal co-ordination mechanism.

**Recommendation 34**

The Turkey Federation Delegation and those PNS with strong bilateral agendas should make special arrangements to reconcile their separate working arrangements with the TRCS and the authorities for the good of improved overall coordination

➤ *Delegated Projects*

Whilst the overall objective and scope of the Federation's response was clearly (and generally appropriately) outlined in the Emergency Appeal, it lacked a clear strategy for the incorporation of operational PNS within it. Again, it is likely that some PNS would have resisted such incorporation, but opportunities were not explored. In August 1999 the assessment team was asked through its Terms of Reference to propose measures "to allow for project delegations under the co-ordination of the Federation delegation." It recommended six project delegations, one for each of the affected areas plus one for monitoring/reporting and one for logistics. Whatever the feasibility of this idea, neither it nor any other proposal was advanced with any purpose in the delegation or in Geneva. Most PNS participating in this evaluation indicated that they would have seriously considered an early proposal for some kind of coordinated delegated project.

**Recommendation 35**

The Federation Secretariat should ensure that the possibilities for delegated project or some other form of coordinated PNS operationality are fully explored during the establishment of every major operation.

➤ *Provision of Assessments for PNS Programme Design*

According to the Federation's Turkey Earthquake Operation Relief Review<sup>51</sup> all the PNS interviewed said that they expected the Federation to provide early assessments from which they could design specific programmes and projects. As PNS HQs came under increasing pressures (externally generated or self-generated), this willingness to be guided operationally became problematic. The delegation was using all of resources to design the programmes to utilise Appeal resources.

➤ *Mechanisms to Agree and Discuss Cooperation*

Whilst a PNS Coordinator was deployed to the delegation within two weeks, the mission was not a success and lasted only a month. There was then a gap of three weeks before this function was taken by one of the Deputy Heads of Delegation. And whilst the issue of the delegation's coordination role was frequently raised during regular Federation/PNS meetings, it was not until the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2000, some 8 months after the first earthquake, that a formal meeting specifically for establishing the delegation's role in co-ordination was held. Whatever the operational pressures that

<sup>51</sup> R. Thompson, February 1999. P.13

delayed such a meeting, it is hardly surprising that the delegation's coordination function was not agreed or clearly understood.

➤ ***Quality of the Debate***

The discussions and the minutes from that meeting<sup>52</sup> (and a follow-up meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> April) reveal the relative conceptual weakness on both the delegation and the PNS' part. Essentially the issue of Federation co-ordination seemed to have devolved to a discussion on the level of the delegation's *service provision* to the PNS. This reflected the true level of coordination that PNS wanted, and the level which delegation felt able to provide. Overall PNS needs and expectations are widely varied and often incoherently expressed, but are individually very narrowly (sometimes obsessively) focused. Expectations range from the provision of telephone lines to national tax-free status and policy leads on sectoral issues. The Federation's approach is essentially unstructured and reactive, and too focused on service provision rather than strategic and programmatic coordination. There is also a lack of involvement or consideration of the TRCS in these discussions.

➤ ***The Extent and Consistency of Federation Services***

It is perhaps a mark of the split identity evident in the delegation as a whole that one of the services offered to the PNS is "technical assistance in the areas which the delegation has expertise on an ad hoc basis. However, regular technical support for any PNS project will have to be negotiated and will involve a service charge".<sup>53</sup> This has been done with success and mutual agreement in at least one instance, but clearly shows that the delegation is there essentially to run its own programmes – programme advice is a secondary (and costed) function.

The delegation maintains that it is not possible to include PNS under its status agreement, and therefore cannot employ national staff for the PNS. This has, however, been provided to two PNS. This inconsistency runs the risk of causing great dissatisfaction amongst operational PNS.

**Recommendation 36**

The Turkey delegation must more thoroughly address the core issue of its coordination role in the field with those PNS present. This discussion should be kept distinct from a debate on the delegation's level of service provision. It should take the role of the TRCS more fully into account. The PNS must empower the delegation to perform such a role if they wish it to coordinate better.

**Recommendation 37**

The Turkey delegation and the PNS should agree on a formal Service Level Agreement, which includes the standardisation of current inconsistencies in the delegation's arrangements with individual PNS.

<sup>52</sup> Which the consultant attended.

<sup>53</sup> In a delegation document circulated to PNS entitled "What can the Federation offer to PNS", April 2000.

## Chapter 6. Approaches to the Context

There have been various criticisms of the Federation and PNS' approach to the Turkish earthquakes, centring on the lack of competence or experience of the Movement in dealing with a natural disaster in an urban, and a European context. The internal Relief Review, for example, states that "The Federation in common with many agencies is 'Africa-oriented' and also has little understanding of urban beneficiaries who [...] are not refugees or IDPs. This is a fundamental failure of [...] the Secretariat and indeed the entire Federation."<sup>54</sup>

### **a) Unpacking the Question**

This issue needs to be carefully analysed. In the context of the Turkey operation the question seems to be: does the International Federation (the Secretariat, its delegations and the National Societies) have competence to address humanitarian needs arising from:

- a) Earthquakes?
- b) Natural disasters in an urban context?
- c) Natural disasters in an urban AND European (or other so-called 'highly developed') contexts?

### ***Earthquakes***

On the evidence of the Movement's response to the Turkish earthquakes, it can be said that there is some competence to deal with the main effects of earthquakes, in that it can provide search, rescue, health and basic relief services. The more specialised, earthquake-specific skills and knowledge in search and rescue, and specialised rapid-deployment units (such as Emergency Response Units) currently rests with the PNS. The Secretariat and its delegations have some competence in the provision of generalised relief and health services through host NS, which were partially applicable in the post-earthquake environment in Turkey, but which are essentially designed for mass population displacement.

However, the Movement – and especially the Secretariat – generally lacks competence in earthquakes regarding scenario planning, seismological analysis, hazard mapping, research, contacts with specialist bodies, framework operating agreements with NS in earthquake-prone countries. Some PNS have done some work in these some of these areas, but this needs to be pulled together.

The Movement is collectively very weak in the area of winterised emergency shelter. It urgently needs an overall policy regarding its role in longer term rehabilitation and reconstruction in addressing the needs of the most vulnerable, and in disaster mitigation and preparedness.

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<sup>54</sup> R. Thompson: Turkey Earthquake operation, Relief Review. February 2000.

The Movement's competency regarding addressing the psycho-social effects of earthquakes are unproven: it is not clear from the Turkey operation as to what existing body of institutionalised knowledge and experience the programme is drawing upon.

Unfortunately it was not possible within the scope of this evaluation to make a comparative exercise with reports and evaluations of the Movement's response to earthquakes in similar, or sharply contrasting contexts. However, these materials are available,<sup>55</sup> and a short analysis may outline basic areas of commonality and difference which could provide a basis for a more thorough piece of work on earthquakes and earthquake response by the Federation Secretariat.

**Recommendation 38**

The Federation Secretariat should co-ordinate an initiative to collate the Movement's knowledge and capacities regarding earthquake response, to make a study of existing research and the practices of other agencies, and to coordinate improvements and the integration of preparedness and response mechanisms.

*Natural Disasters in an Urban Context*

The urban context had important effects upon the types of need and the methods of response. They include:

- High population densities, leading to the possibility of concentrated areas of mortality and injury, with substantial numbers of both.
- A heavy reliance on complex but suddenly ruptured support infrastructures, systems and services, leading to high levels of confusion in the very short term.
- Access and communications presenting huge problems, despite relatively short distances, but again only in the short term.
- The possibilities for a rapid mobilisation of high levels of local resources, particularly material and expertise.
- The likelihood of large international media interest, and of high donor interest.
- The possibility of relatively good levels of local emergency health care.
- Mass shelter problems given the lack of open spaces for tented camps.
- A concentration of hygiene problems through ruptured water and sanitation systems, and a lack of alternative coping mechanisms in this field.

There was no evidence available to the consultant that the benefits of any previous analysis of such factors were applied to programme design or planning by the Federation Secretariat, the delegation or the TRCS. Some PNS were guided by previous analyses of responding within an urban natural disaster context, usually based on their own recent responses at home (ie the Japanese RC), but this was rare. Many responses were learned 'on the hoof': for example, the success of containerised toilet and shower units (especially in winter, and where the latrine-pits were not possible in the given space) nevertheless revealed a lack of standard specifications for

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<sup>55</sup> See, for example, The Great Hanshin Awaji (Kobe) Earthquake Report, Japanese RC, April 1995; An Evaluation of RC/RC Response to the Armenian Earthquake (May 1992); 'Two Quakes Hit the Hindu Kush', World Disasters Report 1996.

these items within the Movement. On the other hand, there were some disparate attempts to think through the urban issues: the early deployment of the Austrian Water/Sanitation ERU shows a recognition of the likely water supply problems associated with disasters in an urban setting.

The Federation has not been slow, at a policy level and through fora such as the World Disasters report, to point out the humanitarian implications of a global shift towards increased urbanisation. But on the evidence of the Turkey operation there seems to be little translation of this macro-policy work into practical and usable guidelines and strategies for operational managers.

### *Natural disasters in a European or a 'highly developed' context*

The main features of this context include all of those above, plus:

- Unusually high perceptions by the affected population of its own vulnerability
- Very high beneficiary expectations regarding the quality, quantity and range of material assistance.
- Even greater possibilities for a rapid mobilisation of local resources, requiring an early response of basic items.
- The certainty of large international media interest, and of high donor interest.
- Increased possibility of relatively good levels of local emergency health care.
- The probability that patterns of vulnerability will be very localised and complex; that people may have access to income, cash or possessions despite sustaining injuries, losing their homes, etc.

Much of the value of such analysis would lie in the ability of the Movement to **predict** the patterns of need and the likely responses by authorities and donors, plus heightened perceptions of vulnerability and beneficiary expectations.

For example, high international media profiling of the August earthquake and a large diaspora of Turkish communities would suggest the likelihood of a large amount of donated income, as well as a desire for PNS operability and thus the need for strong co-ordination by the Federation's Secretariat and delegation. But the rapid re-establishment of considerable local and national resources, as well as donor support to other agencies or the host government, would indicate problems with expending those funds, whilst strong PNS agendas would insist upon an outlet. This may lead to a dependence upon cost-intensive reconstruction programmes, but there would be no Federation or Movement-wide policies to guide programme planning in this area. Mapping such likely scenarios would outline future threats to the operation, and programme design and planning by the Federation and the NS could be adapted accordingly. Again, there was little evidence of such analysis from either the Federation or the PNS.

To some extent the quality of responses in Turkey depended on the experience of individual operatives. For example, the International Federation's health programme assessed the extent of local health service provision due to the essentially developed urban environment, and correctly located its added value in the coordination of national health structures in Turkey. But several PNS with less-experienced delegates



under-estimated the speed of national health resource mobilisation, and ran the danger of duplicating local services.

To conclude, whilst the macro-operational planning from the Federation's Secretariat seems to be fairly strong (for example a clear and implemented commitment to a phased approach), there seems to be no sense that this was taking place in the context of a previous body of knowledge. Much effort was expended in reinventing various wheels. It is interesting to note that the situations outlined above are frequently met by ICRC when operating in urban conflict areas: there may well be opportunities for the sharing of expertise and methodologies here.

**Recommendation 39:**

The Secretariat should commission a study to collate existing research, experiences and National Society preparedness plans for emergency response methodologies in urban and 'highly developed' contexts. A brief, practical guide to programme planning and implementation within such contexts should be prepared, and disseminated to operational managers, NS and through FACT and ERU channels.

**b) Vulnerability and Needs in a 'Developed' context**

In a developed, sophisticated urban environment that supports a generally high standard of living, a disaster can cause a massive and sudden drop in living standards. Therefore, the perception and experience by those affected of their suffering can be acute, and their own view of their vulnerability is based not only on absolute terms but also through a comparison with what they had before. This may lead to a perception of absolute need when, in biological or comparative terms (say, with a Sub-Saharan context) this is not strictly true. As the National Society is inevitably and rightly a reflection of those societal expectations, it will design its programmes around the needs as the society sees them. The provision of 2 hot meals per day by the TRCS to almost 100,000 people was seen as a basic and essential food programme, whilst many other parts of the world this would be seen as a luxury. But few would argue that the TRCS were wrong to conduct this important activity.

However, the International Federation's relief items are predicated upon its many years of operability in less developed countries, and are essentially geared to the needs of displaced populations. Many of its standard specifications dictate a basic but functional quality, which were seen as unacceptably poor by the beneficiaries in Turkey. There was also an under-estimation of the extent to which people would rescue belongings from the houses, or gain access to basic, but often superior, items through other means. There is a danger that the perceived lack of quality or appropriate quantities of the Federation's standard aid package may damage its credibility (and by implication, the National Society's) within the beneficiary population. Given the lack of a comprehensive survey of beneficiaries, it is not possible to state whether beneficiary satisfaction with Federation items was low enough to cause this to happen in Turkey. However, given the anecdotal evidence of local TRCS and PNS operatives, it is certainly a possibility.

It is interesting to note that in the only Red Cross/Red Crescent beneficiary survey that the consultant came across (by the Spanish RC), there was greater dissatisfaction with the less costly standard items (eg blankets, mattresses).<sup>56</sup> The survey concludes that “we didn’t pay enough attention to the quality of the cheaper items.” This would appear to be true of the imported Red Cross/Red Crescent material assistance overall – and again indicates that the Movement’s international assistance is designed around much lower expectations.

The Federation and the Movement needs to decide whether it wishes to provide a global minimum standard of care to preserve health and well-being (as defined variously by SPHERE and others), or whether it wishes to provide items and services that are culturally adapted to address the *perceived* minima of any given population. Should it address the needs of the vulnerable according to a standardised aid package, or in the way the vulnerable themselves see those needs? This is an issue which the Federation, despite similar experiences in the Balkans and elsewhere, has not yet addressed at a policy level. But it informs almost every question as to whether the Federation’s relief assistance was ‘successful’ or ‘appropriate’ in response to the Turkish earthquakes.

#### **Recommendations 40**

The Federation Secretariat and donor NS should study their standard specifications and range of material aid in relation to their use in contexts where beneficiary expectations may be higher than those common in its usual areas of intervention. They should aim towards a policy decision on whether the International Federation wishes to provide a global minimum standard of care or whether it wishes to provide items and services that are culturally adapted to address the *perceived* minima of any given population.

### **c) Quality and Cultural Appropriateness of (Federation) Relief Items**

Only the key issues arising from the Federation’s relief portfolio are touched on here. Tents have been dealt with in a separate section. For further technical detail on various items, including pallet flooring and grading/drainage materials, see Robbie Thompson’s Relief Review of the Turkey Operation (February 2000).

#### ***Hygiene Parcels***

The importation of large quantities of very basic hygiene items some eight months after the first earthquake seems barely justifiable on the basis of any measurement of need. Beneficiaries questioned said they were thankful, but were hardly dependent upon them. As with many other such items, the period in which such parcels were of maximum use was very short.

The contents of the ECHO-funded hygiene parcels have been heavily criticised by beneficiaries, local TRCS staff, PNS field operatives and local Federation staff. The delegation road-tested the contents, which were deemed to be acceptable. But whilst the toilet paper, soap, razors and detergent all performed the functions expected of

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<sup>56</sup> Spanish RC: Evaluation of Project ECHO/TUR/210/1999/03003, February 2000.

them (ie they wiped, they cleaned, they shaved), the lack of satisfaction by the beneficiaries clearly illustrates the issue of expectations and perceptions of vulnerability in a developed urban context. There is some debate as to the cultural appropriateness of toilet paper in Turkey – but in this region it was acceptable. What is of more concern is the volume that the paper took up when it is very cheap and available in the affected areas.

### ***Kerosene***

A large quantity of kerosene for heating was originally requested. It is not clear whether this is based on a knee-jerk ‘African’ response or on incorrect information from the field. Either way, kerosene would have been inappropriate, as gas bottles are used throughout Turkey. This was recognised and corrected before orders were placed.

### ***Clothes***

Whilst a small, precisely-targeted and reputedly successful programme was implemented by the Netherlands Red Cross, the Federation’s planned clothes distributions never happened. There was certainly a need after the initial few weeks, particularly after the November earthquake, when high altitudes and oncoming winter saw rapidly dropping temperatures. But clothing distributions were common from national sources, needs declined, and the logistics regarding sizing (given the obscure beneficiary identification system that prevailed) dissuaded the Federation from proceeding, and rightly. Any unsolicited clothing that was perceived to be in any way second-hand aroused strong feelings of a loss of dignity amongst the local people.

### ***Blankets***

A huge amount were distributed by TRCS from their own stock, and were well received. However, there were reports of the quality of some imported blankets (certainly not designed for a European winter context) being so poor that they were used as floor rugs. This may indicate an over-supply of this item as well as the provision of inferior quality blankets.

### ***Sleeping Bags***

These were not generally appreciated by beneficiaries, who were more comfortable with quilts and/or high quality blankets. The widely-fluctuating quality of donated sleeping bags also reportedly caused discontent.

### ***Beds and Mattresses***

Whilst small numbers of beds were certainly required during the first few weeks of both earthquakes, the mass provision of beds some three to four weeks after the event was unnecessary. Many people salvaged beds from buildings, or received them faster from other sources.

## **d) Sphere and the Code of Conduct**

Whilst this report was not designed to make a detailed technical evaluation of the Movement’s inputs, it is possible to say that in general the minimum standards as outlined in the various chapters of ‘The Sphere Project’ were attained – or that efforts were made to attain them. The most consistent query as to the Movement’s

achievement of the standards would be regarding the monitoring and reporting on relief items.

For example, under ‘Minimum Standards in Food Aid’, section 6 refers to the Resource Management Standard being: “Food aid commodities and programme funds are managed, tracked, and accounted for using a transparent and auditable system”. Clearly, given the problematic but legally-enforceable relief distribution system of the Turkish authorities, this standard would be hard to comply with in full, but the Federation delegation displayed an awareness of the need to manage and track food and other items, and made significant efforts to improve this situation (such as opening the Samandira warehouse).

In this respect, the Federation operation also complied with Section 9 of the Code of Conduct (“We recognise the need to report on our activities...[and]...the obligation to ensure appropriate monitoring of aid distributions”).

It should be noted, however, that if the delegation was acting within the minimum standards, they were doing so instinctively. International Federation staff did not appear to be aware of Sphere in February 2000.<sup>57</sup> It would be interesting to investigate whether the Turkish Government’s involvement in the Sphere process informed their own assistance design and implementation.

#### **e) Cultural Sensitivity of International Federation Personnel**

It was unfortunately not possible to analyse this formally, nor to look at the way in which attitudes of PNS staff were received by their interlocutors. However, in terms of the perceptions of Federation National staff and TRCS staff (and the beneficiaries questioned), the Federation’s delegates were basically culturally sensitive, and were accepted by their Turkish colleagues. There were only very few and slight examples of derogatory or erroneous delegate perceptions of the Turkish context, or of situations where local people felt they were treated inappropriately.

Given that there were many such charges made by local people of aid agencies during other such operations in highly developed areas (such as the Balkan conflicts, especially in its early stages), this would seem to be a strength of the Federation’s operation in Turkey.

#### **e) Conclusions**

Neither the Federation nor the PNS approached the Turkish operation wearing ‘an African hat’. But there is certainly a lack of lesson-learning and operationally-applicable analysis of the characteristics of vulnerability within an urban, ‘developed’ context. Federation relief items (and those of most PNS), whilst serviceable to an extent in Turkey, are designed around typical needs encountered in the southern hemisphere. The Federation has almost no specific capability regarding earthquakes in the same way that it does in situations involving, for example, refugees.

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<sup>57</sup> See R. Thompson: Turkey Earthquake Operation Relief Review, Feb 2000. Page 14.

The Federation's response portfolio is generally acceptable for basic large scale and medium term material needs in such situations, but runs the risk of seeming inappropriately crude. Some key areas of the assistance portfolio urgently require designing or redesigning, such as shelter and sanitation, and there needs to be much faster delivery performances for basic items immediately after such an event in this type of context.

The PNS collectively have much more expertise around specialised emergency response requirements, particularly in the context of an earthquake, and have more flexibility to respond to localised needs. However there is also an absence of institutionalised lesson-learning and methodological preparedness as a result of past experiences in many PNS, whilst earthquake preparedness and response is advanced only in a few. The capacities of both the Federation and the PNS are not mutually exclusive, and are potentially great in a collective sense. However, both need harmonising and improving.

There is also an urgent need for a similar initiative in order to better prepare the Federation Secretariat and the PNS for the next major disaster in an urban, European or 'developed' context. Extensive national response plans exist for many NS in these areas, but from the evidence of the Turkish operation, these cannot be over-estimated and need to be fully shared and understood. It would be unforgivable if lessons are not learned from this and other operations.

There is no significant evidence of a generalised under-estimation of the abilities or competencies of the Turkish people, or of a lack of adaptation to the Turkish context either culturally or professionally.

