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**Commission announces first fast-track humanitarian funding for victims of tsunami in Pacific Islands**

Source: European Commission Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO)

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Brussels, 30 September 2009 - The European Commission's humanitarian department is providing 150,000 euros in fast-track emergency relief following the tsunami in the Pacific islands region.

This initial funding will be disbursed to the International Red Cross Federation through their Disaster Response Emergency Fund (DREF) to assist with primary emergency needs in Samoa depending upon the first 'on the ground' assessments by our humanitarian partner. In a first instance, there is expected to be a need for medical assistance, fresh water supplies and emergency shelter.

The European Commission continues to monitor the situation very closely in case additional emergency humanitarian funding is urgently needed across the affected states and communities of the region.

All funds are channelled through the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department (ECHO), under the responsibility of Commissioner Karel De Gucht. The Commission-funded projects are implemented by non-governmental relief organisations, specialised UN agencies and the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement.