

Red Cross seeks help

Monday, October 05, 2009

The Red Cross Pacific Tsunami Appeal for Samoa and Tonga has been launched and those with donations are encouraged to contact the Fiji office.

Fiji Red Cross donated \$10,000 to Samoa and \$3000 to their Tongan counterpart to assist with immediate relief efforts in the wake of the recent earthquake and tsunami this week.

Fiji Red Cross extended its sympathies and condolences to the families of those who lost their lives.

"We join all other nations in offering our sincere sympathy to the people of Samoa and Tonga for the devastation, death and heartbreaks caused by the tsunami of September 30," said Fiji's director general Alison Cupit.

"As a sister small nation which could easily have suffered from the same tsunami, we feel for the thousands of victims who have lost family members, homes, livelihoods and all the possessions that they own," she said.

She said they also saluted the efforts of Samoan Red Cross secretary general Tautala Mauala, Tonga Red Cross secretary general Sione Taumoefolau and their volunteers, who were out in the field hours of the aftermath.

Ms Cupit said their staff worked in appalling conditions to provide invaluable assistance to the vulnerable victims.

In keeping with the Red Cross mandate to assist those in need during such times, the Fiji branch has launched a public appeal for the people.

All monies raised will be sent to the Samoa Red Cross or Tonga Red Cross for rehabilitation purposes.

Donors can indicate which country they would like their donations to be directed to.

"The people of Fiji have been generous in the past with the Asian Tsunami Appeal (December 2004 - 2005) and it is in this spirit of assistance that we ask you to please give generously," Mrs Cupit said.

Members of the public who would like to make a contribution to this appeal can deposit their donations to following account:

Name of account: *Red Cross Pacific Tsunami Appeal*

Account no: 10440224,

ANZ Bank, Swift Code: ANZBFUX

Alternatively, members of the public can drop by the Fiji Red Cross National Office at 22 Gorrie Street, Suva where a receipt will be immediately made out.

All donations made to the Fiji Red Cross are 100 per cent tax deductible.

The contact staff is: *Vuli Gauna, Disaster Coordinator - 999 2481 and Lavinia Tivaknoa, resource development assistant - 999 2579*