



IOCC RESPONDS AS SERBIA AND BOSNIA BRACE FOR MORE FLOODS

May 19, 2014 (*Baltimore, MD*) On the heels of epic floods that left at least 37 dead and thousands homeless in Serbia and Bosnia, a second surge of floodwaters continues to fill an already swollen Sava River and threatens thousands of lives as well as a nation's biggest power plant. In Serbia, The Nikola Tesla power plant, which provides roughly half of the country's electricity, is in the deadly path of a flood wave created by the heaviest rains to hit the region in 120 years. In Bosnia, evacuees are being placed in temporarily shelters like military barracks, but many more await help in areas that are not accessible yet.

From its offices in Bosnia and Serbia, International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC) is responding to the immediate needs of flood survivors in the region. IOCC, in cooperation with Philanthropy, the humanitarian arm of the Serbian Orthodox Church, and the Serbian Red Cross, is providing transportation support and quilts for evacuees being transferred to temporary shelters. As flood waters subside in rural areas around Kraljevo and Sabac, IOCC will mobilize its efforts to reach families living in remote towns and villages and respond to their most urgent needs.

In Bosnia, IOCC is working closely with the Serbian Orthodox Church, Circle of Serbian Sister and the Red Cross to assist survivors and coordinate the distribution of emergency relief items such as food, hygiene items, cleaning supplies to disinfect homes as families return, and tools for clearing debris in the municipalities of Gradiska or Derventa, and Bijeljina.

"IOCC has had a presence in the Balkans since 1992 when it opened its Belgrade office at the invitation of the Serbian Orthodox Church to respond to the humanitarian crises created by the break-up of the former Yugoslavia," said IOCC Executive Director, Constantine Triantafilou. "That spirit of cooperation continues two decades later as IOCC and Philanthropy work together to ease the suffering and hardship of the families impacted by the recent floods."

From emergency relief distributions to economic development and community support initiatives, IOCC has helped thousands of families to recover from war and to rebuild their lives and livelihoods in the new realities of the western Balkans. In Serbia, and throughout the former Yugoslav republics, IOCC continues to focus on long-term, self-sustaining activities aimed at addressing the diverse and changing needs of the society.

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HOW YOU CAN HELP

You can help the victims of disasters around the world, like the floods in Serbia and Bosnia, by making a financial gift to the Balkans Flood Relief Fund, which will provide immediate relief as well as long-term support through the provision of emergency aid, recovery assistance and other support to help those in need. To make a gift, please visit www.iocc.org, call toll free at 1-877-803-IOCC (4622), or mail a check or money order payable to IOCC, P.O. Box 17398, Baltimore, Md. 21297-0429.

ABOUT INTERNATIONAL ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHARITIES

IOCC is the official humanitarian aid agency of the Assembly of Canonical Orthodox Bishops of the United States of America. Since its inception in 1992, IOCC has delivered \$488 million in relief and development programs to families and communities in more than 50 countries. IOCC is a member of the ACT Alliance, a global coalition of more than 140 churches and agencies engaged in development, humanitarian assistance and advocacy, and a member of InterAction, the largest alliance of U.S.-based secular and faith-based organizations working to improve the lives of the world's most poor and vulnerable populations. To learn more about IOCC, visit www.iocc.org.

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