

September 20, 2010



Urge Congress to redirect Pakistan assistance to help victims of flooding disaster

TAKE ACTION NOW! Contact your Representative today (<http://actioncenter.crs.org>) and thank him/her for passing the bipartisan House Resolution (H.Res. 1613), expressing solidarity with Pakistani Flood Victims, which overwhelmingly passed Sept. 16, 2010. **Urge him/her to pursue the resolution's call to use funds authorized under previously approved legislation for long-term recovery and rehabilitation of flood-affected areas and populations in Pakistan.**

WHY IS THIS ACTION IMPORTANT NOW? Our brothers and sisters in Pakistan are currently suffering through the aftermath of the worst disaster in living memory. Homes have been destroyed, livelihoods washed away. According to the government of Pakistan, more than 20 million people--comparable to the total population of Florida--have been affected by the floodwaters. The U.S. government estimates more than 1.8 million are homeless. The United States has demonstrated leadership in supporting the people of Pakistan with immediate humanitarian assistance as well as long-term reconstruction aid, but much more needs to be done. At least one fifth of Pakistan's land area has been devastated by the floods, and just before the winter planting season. This natural disaster could create further instability in this country which is critical to regional stability.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S POSITION? Passage of H.Res. 1613 signals Congress' willingness to provide more humanitarian assistance funding to help victims of the Pakistan flooding. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) support "a reexamination of priorities for spending of funds authorized by the Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009, with a view toward ensuring that the needs of the Pakistani people are appropriately addressed in the aftermath of the disaster," as called for in H.Res. 1613.

WHAT DOES THE FLOODING IN PAKISTAN HAVE TO DO WITH MY FAITH? Our faith calls on us to be in solidarity with people who live next door to us and those who live halfway around the world. We are called to uphold life and human dignity at all times. Catholic social teaching is clear that we must do everything we can to assist the poor and vulnerable, and victims of natural disasters such as our brothers and sisters in Pakistan.

HOW IS THE CHURCH RESPONDING TO THIS DISASTER? Catholic Relief Services (CRS), in collaboration with the Church and our partners in Pakistan, is assisting affected Pakistanis by providing shelter and hygiene kits containing plastic sheeting, bed mats, soap, kitchen supplies, water purification tablets, rehydration salts and covered buckets to store water. CRS is also hiring residents in cash-for-work programs to repair damaged infrastructure and to restore clean drinking water by rebuilding water supply systems.

At the same time, our Church leaders are urging assistance be provided to our brothers and sisters in Pakistan. Pope Benedict XVI recently stated: "May our solidarity and the concrete support of the international community not be lacking for these brothers and sisters of ours, who are so harshly tried." USCCB and CRS are advocating to ensure that funding needs are met to assist the people who are in such dire need.

For more information contact:

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