



Tirana, 11 January 2010

PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

Floods crisis EU Ambassadors at Mother Teresa airport for the arrival of aid from France and Austria

Aid for the flooded areas in north-western areas of Albania arrived tonight from Austria and France.

The Ambassadors of Austria, Mr Florian Raunig, and France, Mrs Maryse Daviet, were present at 19.30 at Mother Teresa airport for the scheduled arrival of this assistance, in the company of the Head of EU Delegation to Albania, Ambassador Helmuth Lohan.

Austria donated 8 power generators, 5 high capacity pumps and France 11 high capacity pumps.

“We extend our sympathies to the people that are suffering the effects of the floods that hit north-western areas of Albania in recent days. Member States of the European Union have once again demonstrated their solidarity with a country in a moment of crisis. Their quick reaction to Albania's call for help will undoubtedly contribute to combating the floods effectively and hopefully prevent further casualties. The European Civil Protection Mechanism stands ready to assist. EU coordination is important to bringing speedy and effective relief”, said Ambassador Lohan at the arrival of aid from Austria and France.

The team from the European Civil Protection Mechanism deployed last Friday to Albania further to a request from the Albanian government, will be the coordination body of the incoming aid and will also assist Albanian authorities with the reception of assistance by EU Member States.

Background information:

The **Monitoring and Information Centre (MIC)** is operated by the Environment Directorate General of the European Commission. It is the operational heart of the Community Mechanism for Civil Protection. It is accessible 24 hours a day, and provides countries access to the Community civil protection platform. Any country affected by a major disaster – inside or outside the EU – can launch a request for assistance through the MIC.

During emergencies the MIC plays three important roles: serving as a communications hub for the exchange of requests and offers of assistance; providing information on civil protection preparedness and response to participating states as well as a wider audience of interested stakeholders; supporting co-ordination of the provision of European assistance.

For further information, please contact:

Artes BUTKA

Press & Information Officer

Tel: + 355 4 2228 320, + 355 42 228 479

Fax: + 355 4 230 752

E-mail: artes.butka@ec.europa.eu

Delegation's website: www.delalb.ec.europa.eu