

Summary of DAE Next Steps, after DAE visit to Albania (22-27 Jan 2020)

- Send 'thank you' emails to all the agencies and people met on Trip to Albania
- Prepare a Disaster Aid Europe Albania Earthquake Appeal statement, flyer; distribute to Rotary contacts worldwide, as well as throughout District 2240 and Zone 21
- Assist RC Durres and the Albanian Rotary Clubs (Rotary Disaster Relief Committee) with fund raising and gaining grants from RI and other Donors (agencies)
- Support Rotary Club Durres (and Rotary Disaster Relief Committee) to identify and finalize a Project Proposal
- Prepare a formal MOU agreement between RCPI and RC Durres; initially a general agreement then more specific one when a project has been specified
- Analyze data, once received, from Durres local authority regarding the current state of water & sanitation
- Provide a Train the Trainer course for DAE water filtration systems installations
- Disaster prevention and first aid training for Durres communities as per Albania Red Cross initiative
- Appoint a DAE Albanian Project Coordinator
- Plan the next country visit
- Maintain regular contact/follow up with Albania via President Ela (RC Durres), and through her with RC Durres and with Rotary Emergency Committee. Ela may visit Prague in March.

Report: Disaster Aid Europe Visit to Albania: 22 – 27 January, 2020

Trustee Stuart Amesbury and DAE member Alan Rasquinha travelled Prague Tirana via Vienna; collected at airport by Rotarian Vasili Martopullo (PP) and taken to Durres to 2 Guitar Hotel (owned by a RC Durres Rotarian)

Objective of trip: Reconnaissance/Fact Finding: to meet with RC Durres (President: Ela Gomeli and Rotary Disaster Relief Committee and ascertain present situation after 26 November 2019 earthquake, as well as help RC Durres with a Needs Assessment and work out how and where DAE can help RC Durres and the Disaster Relief Committee to help the victims of the earthquake

Agenda: President Ela prepared beforehand an agenda of visits.

Visit:

Wednesday 22/1: arrival then *dinner with President of RC Durres, Ela Golemi and Rotarian Vasili Martopullo (PP)*. Alan & Stuart were warmly welcomed with a lovely dinner, where both rotarians explained the fright of the local population from the 52second earthquake and the over 1000

aftershocks in the following days. Most everyone is traumatized and has trouble sleeping, worried about more tremors.

Stuart explained the connection between Zone 21 and DAE purpose to come and offer help to the residents of Durres working with RC Durres and Rotary Disaster Relief Committee. We clearly explained that we were asking the club and/or the authorities to provide us with a list of material and logistical needs for the community. Both rotarians told us that we would be meeting the Deputy Mayor (Florian Tahiri) and Durres Regional Prefect (Roland Nasto) in order to establish a such a request on behalf of their club.

Thursday 23/1: A&S visited the Deputy Mayor of Durres, Florian Tahiri, in the morning. He was very direct and said that he did not want/need any more survival equipment such as blankets, tents, mattresses, lights etc... he also made it very clear that many organizations such as Red Cross, World Vision, Caritas as well as several Middle Eastern Embassies had already contacted the City and offered substantial financial help for rebuilding efforts. He told us that right now they have a real demand/need for structural Engineers because of the sheer number of buildings which require inspections for either repairs or demolition. He said that several schools and kindergardens were badly damaged and told us that he would communicate via RC Durres the needs for these schools as well as sports gymnasiums should we choose to support in their reconstruction/re-equipping. A&S appreciated his candor and honesty about what he believes are the most effective ways of helping.

Then followed an extensive *tour of the City* to see the destruction in the aftermath of the earthquake. Photos taken. Many buildings were flattened and most of them had very bad fissures. Some of the lives lost were family friends of Rotarians of RC Durres. [President Ela is living elsewhere due to the damage to her home]

In the *evening*, Stuart presented DAE to RC Durres during their regular meeting. A&S were very well received by the club members who were all very engaged and participated actively in the following discussions and asked a lot of questions inspite of the language barrier.

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was decided by the Club that they would wait for the local government (Prefect and Deputy Mayor in charge of Recovery) to give them a list of needs for reconstruction and they would then immediately contact DAE with a project proposal so that RCPI can draft a specific MOU between the two clubs and start raising funds.

They organized a small reception for us after the meeting where we exchanged interesting and fun stories about ourselves and established true friendship bonds

Friday 24/1: a.m S&A and four members of RC Durres had a meeting with the Regional Prefect (Governor) of Durres Region (second largest region of Albania). The Prefect was very welcoming, he said that he was appointed by Central Government to lead the management of the recovery after the earthquake. He was very happy to meet us and assured us that his administration was looking forward to collaborating with RC Durres in rebuilding the community. He told us that there were over 5000 families without a home, 1200 of them are still living in hotels at least until the summer season starts.

He promised to clearly identify with RC Durres a realistic and implementable community project and expressed his gratitude to Rotary for being present and actively supporting the rebuilding efforts.

This meeting was a highlight of the trip since the Prefect is the highest authority representing the Albanian Government in the Region.

S&A then *visited a school in a village* that was destroyed, with prefabricated mobile homes setup in the school yard. We also met a family given a family tent to set up outside in their yard because their house and roof had been condemned.

In the *evening met with the Rotary's Disaster Relief Committee in Tirana*. The Committee is made up of a representative of each of the 11 Rotary clubs in Albania. Chair is Arben Haveri (from a RC in the North/*which club?*). It was an extremely productive meeting. **The Committee informed us that they had already raised approx. 25,000€ for Disaster relief from amongst the Albanian Clubs. They asked for our help to maximize the use of these funds and to ask for a possible grant from RI and/or donors. We asked them to identify a project with RC Durres which will be the recipient Club and to make a formal appeal for fundraising to us. All of our discussions pointed towards rebuilding/ equipping a destroyed Kindergarden. They have promised to make this appeal within the coming days.**

The following morning on *Saturday 25/01*, Stuart went to see the Secretary General and Country Coordinator of Red Cross Albania, in Tirana, here is his report:

Key points from Sat 25th meeting in Tirana with the Albanian Red Cross attended by SA, as Alan was indisposed.

Departed Durras 09 00 arrived Tirana 10.00; meeting held at the Albanian Red Cross Headquarters Tirana (building and Red Cross offices) affected by earthquake

Attendees:

ARC :Mr Artur Katuci Secretary General

:Mr Fatos Chief Coordinator

DAE : SA

Topics discussed:

- Current in-country situation, still at crisis management phase.
- Short term response programmes of delivering food and basic essentials for communities in all regions affected
- Donor Conference on Albania in Brussels regarding long term financial aid to be held 17th February 2020. Albanian Red Cross will attend
- Government planning and finance, initial response, is a rent rebate to households subject to status and condition of dwelling
- Priority community groups young people, kindergarten schools, sports gymnasiums and clinics
- Education for future disaster preparedness and first aid being conducted by ARC at their training centre in Tirana.

- Water, sanitation & hygiene: an urgent need for access to clean drinking water and reduce dependency on bottled water.
- Reconstruction, structural engineering surveys of all main structures to identify repair reconstruct or relocate and rebuild. Low cost housing a priority.
- Rotary Club Durras & DAE collaboration with the Albanian Rotary Clubs Disaster Relief committee and the Albanian Red Cross.

Conclusion from Red Cross meeting:

- **DAE / RC Durres to gather further data from local authorities in Durras and prepare an appeal for a specific project to focus on, which will be identified from central government and main aid agency priority program - to be confirmed by RC Durres/DAE and then made known to agencies like Red Cross.**
- **The final request from ARC was for DAE to provide a water filtration system demonstration in Durres for possible use as part of their water, hygiene and sanitation program**

Sunday 26/1: consolidation of notes/ potential next steps; further phone talks with President Ela and Vasil; walk round Durres seeing further damage

Monday 27/1: Vasil took S&A to airport

Tues 28/1: Stuart and Alan met to further discuss next steps; **at 21.15 there was another earthquake in Durres and Tirana (no-one died; buildings ok) point 5 Richter scale.** Durres contacts are ok though stressed by the earthquake and spending the night outside in the streets.

People met in Albania:

- **Ela Gomeli, President RC Durres; Vasil Martopullo PP RC Durres, Luan Toro VP RC Durres**
- **Rotary Emergency Committee: 1 representative from each of 11 Rotary Clubs in Albania: Serdar Erler (Turkish) rep. from RC Tirana International at DRC; Chair DRC is Arben Haveri (rep of one of the northern Albania clubs – which club?)**
- **Deputy Mayor, Durres: Florain Tahiri**
- **Regional Prefect of Durres Region: Roland Nasto**
- **Red Cross (based in Tirana): Secretary General: Artur Katuci; Chief Coordinator: Fatos Xhengo**

A big thank you to Ela and also to Vasil and Luan, as well as RC Durres and Rotary Emergency Committee

29th January, 2020

Stuart Amesbury & Alan Rasquinha