European Commission announces support to help Cape Verde recover from volcano eruptions of the Pico do Fogo

The European Commission will provide €3 million from the European Development Fund (EDF) to assist the Cape Verdean authorities in the recovery phase after the volcano eruptions on the island of Fogo: which started in late-November and have so far left more than a thousand people homeless and buildings destroyed.

EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica, said: “I am pleased to confirm the EU’s support to help the Cape Verdan authorities to address the recovery process from this tragic natural disaster, with €3 million in funding to the government. The eruptions have impacted on people’s livelihoods and the island’s infrastructure and our funding will contribute to the resettlement of the population, reconstruction and the rebuilding of social and economic activities on the island.”

Following the emergency response already provided by the European Commission for the immediate humanitarian needs on the Cape Verdean island of Fogo, the EU is now stepping up its efforts with three million euros of financial assistance. Since lava flows and eruptions continue, this development support will assist the island’s recovery in the longer term.

Despite difficulties in forecasting the extent of the ultimate damage, given the unpredictable nature of volcanic activity, plans for reconstruction have already started among local, national and international partners. The funds will therefore be used to help the government in the resettlement of the population (over 1,000 people are currently displaced because of the eruptions), supporting livelihoods and to help rebuild part of the damaged infrastructure, such as schools and houses, in the most affected areas.

The mid to long-term economic and social impacts of this eruption are expected to be severe, as revenues from agriculture and tourism, two of the Island’s primary sources of growth, might decrease substantially as a result of widespread damage. Thus the funds will also be used to help the affected communities to rebuild their lives and activities.

The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated upon the request of Cape Verde at the onset of the eruptions. Portugal offered a navy vessel with specialised telecommunications equipment, and a helicopter and relief items such as beds, blankets and disposable respiratory protection masks have been provided; and the European Commission supported the transport costs.

The EU's Copernicus Satellite Emergency Management System was also activated in order to provide a regular stream of images depicting the lava flow field to make accurate and timely situational assessments.
For further information, contact:

Sven Ruesch, Press and Media Officer: sven.ruesch@ec.europa.eu

Maria Sanchez Aponte, Press and Media Officer: maria.sanchez-aponte@ec.europa.eu