New Apostolic Church International

Many dead in the wake of natural disasters in the South Pacific

Zerstörung auf Samoa (Foto: REUTERS)

Zurich. A week after the terrible natural disasters in the South Pacifica, the full extent of the damages remains unclear. One thing that is already certain is that many people have lost their lives in Samoa, the Philippines, and Indonesia. District Apostle Leonard Kolb, who is responsible for the eastern part of Samoa, informs us in a preliminary emergency report that a great deal of damage has been done in the region, and that the situation is critical.

A sister from one of our Samoan congregations begins her eyewitness account with the words: “I am writing these lines to all those who are praying for us. These are the most tragic moments we have ever experienced in our lives.” Although her own family has survived, the impressions she shares are horrendous: there are many dead and injured, many are desperately searching for family members and loved ones. She writes that this is the first time she has ever had to experience such a terrible catastrophe.

The New Apostolic Church USA has published the report from our sister in faith on their website. At the same time, District Apostle Kolb informs us that he is planning to make financial support available to the suffering population from the Church’s “World Relief Fund”.

The situation in the Philippines and in Sumatra is likewise still unclear. Here too there are reports of many dead, injured, and homeless people. In a letter addressed to the Chief Apostle, District Apostle Urs Hebeisen writes: “It does us good to know that you are praying for us!”

There are several thousand islands scattered in the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and Australia. Samoa and Tonga are among the larger island groups, and have been the territory of the USA since 1899. The western island groups gained their independence from New Zealand in 1962. The seaquake which occurred at the end of September registered a magnitude of 8.3 on the Richter scale, and unleashed a tsunami of tremendous force with metre-high flood waves. To date some 190 dead have been recovered.

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