

WFP News Release

13 August 2008

WFP AIRLIFTS HIGH ENERGY BISCUITS TO GEORGIA FOR CONFLICT VICTIMS

BRINDISI – Two cargo aircraft chartered by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) set off this morning for Tbilisi, Georgia, with 34 metric tons of high energy biscuits to assist thousands of people in Georgia displaced by the recent conflict.

Two Antonov 12 aircraft departed in succession from the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Brindisi, Italy. The biscuits will augment in-country food stocks which WFP started distributing over the weekend to thousands of people.

Many of the displaced have no access to cooking facilities; High Energy Biscuits (HEB) require no preparation.

WFP will distribute 2,300 rations today, with more planned for the following days using the supplies in arrival. WFP has been providing 10-day food rations to more than 4,500 displaced people living in shelters in the capital, Tbilisi.

“The number of people in need of food assistance continues to escalate,” said WFP Georgia Country Director Lola Castro, adding that more than 10,000 people were now registered as displaced.

WFP has identified bakeries near areas where internally displaced people have concentrated, and the agency will supply wheat flour to make bread for distribution to the hungry displaced.

WFP is playing a leading role in coordinating food assistance and offering logistical support to other humanitarian organisations, drawing on capacity from its existing operation in the country. Before the crisis erupted, WFP was providing food to more than 212,000 people, mainly poor rural communities, as well as primary schoolchildren, tuberculosis patients and people living with HIV/AIDS.

WFP has been active in Georgia since 1993.

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Video footage available by contacting Jonathan Dumont at jonathan.dumont@wfp.org

WFP is the world's largest humanitarian agency and the UN's frontline agency for hunger solutions. This year, WFP plans to feed around 90 million people in 80 countries.

WFP now provides RSS feeds to help journalists keep up with the latest press releases, videos and photos as they are published on WFP.org. For more details see: <http://www.wfp.org/english/?n=999>.

WFP now has a dedicated ISDN line in Italy for quality two-way interviews with WFP officials.

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