

## **esPRESSo: Commission earmarks €2M in humanitarian aid for victims of hurricane Gustav in the Caribbean**

01/09/2008 - The European Commission has launched today an emergency funding decision for €2 million to provide relief for vulnerable people in Caribbean countries affected by the passage of Hurricane Gustav.

The Commission's Humanitarian Aid department, under the responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel, has been closely following the progress of the storm. The department has a field office in Santo Domingo.

Commissioner Michel said: "Initial reports from Haiti, where Gustav first made landfall, are of significant wind and flood damage, with 8,000 displaced people living in shelters. Access to clean drinking water has already been identified as a major problem and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of people will be severely affected by crop and livestock losses. We don't have the full picture yet from Jamaica and we are also worried about the situation in Cuba. When Gustav hit there during at the weekend, it was a category four hurricane which usually means major structural damage. What is clear is that many vulnerable people in these countries are suffering and we need to act quickly to help them."

The funds will be deployed to meet a variety of relief requirements in communities affected by the storm, with projects eligible for funding in Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic. Key humanitarian needs include clean water, food, medical care, shelter and basic household items such as kitchen utensils.