I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- Three eruptions were registered in the Galeras Volcano (Nariño department) on 24 April. The alert level is now orange.
- The Regional Committee for Disasters Assistance and Prevention (CREPAD) ordered the evacuation of 7,000 persons.

II. Situation Overview

On 24 April (7:32 p.m.), the Colombian Geology and Mining Institute (Ingeominas) declared a red alert (Level I, imminent or ongoing eruption) due to the recent activity of the Galeras Volcano in Nariño department.

According to the extraordinary report issued by the Institute, the Volcanological and Seismological Observatory in Pasto registered a series of explosive eruptions that were perceived 25 kilometres away from the volcano. Also, the fall of ashes was reported in the municipalities of Sandoná, Santa Bárbara, Consacá and Ancuya (see map).

On 25 April (12:10 p.m.), after a slight reduction in the volcano activity and gas emissions, the alert changed to orange (Level II, probable eruption in the terms of days or weeks).

The Regional Committee for Disasters Assistance and Prevention (CREPAD) activated the contingency plans and ordered the evacuation of nearly 7,000 persons from the area of influence of the volcano (municipalities of Pasto, Nariño and La Florida). According to press sources, only 115 out of the 7,000 persons have complied with the evacuation order.

According to the CREPAD, aid organizations evacuated a health center in the municipality of La Florida, located in a high risk area.

The last eruption of the Galeras volcano was registered on 13 March, 2009.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

Emergency Shelter
The emergency shelters built by the National Government in the areas of low risk of the volcano are ready to receive the evacuated population.

Health
The hospital network of the department is in yellow alert ready to assist any sudden emergency. So far, no victims have been reported.

IV. Coordination

The Regional Committee for Disasters Assistance and Prevention (CREPAD) holds two meetings a day in order to monitor the situation and coordinate prevention measures, until the volcano levels change.

The UNETT is in close contact with the CREPAD and the National Risk Management Directorate in order to assess the situation and provide assistance if required.
The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international actors.

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