AIRBUS HELICOPTERS FOUNDATION SUPPORTS ECUADOR AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE DISASTER

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Airbus Helicopters Foundation has been providing support to on-going humanitarian relief efforts following the earthquake that hit the Manabi and Esmeraldas regions in Ecuador on 16 April 2016. According to national authorities, this disaster has left more than 20,500 people homeless, and many without water and food supplies. This earthquake is the worst natural disaster that has happened in the country since 1979.

Within 12 hours after the earthquake, Airbus Helicopters Foundation was able to identify a Quito-based H125 helicopter operator Avioandes and immediately put the helicopter at the disposal of the humanitarian agencies on the ground. Airbus Helicopters Foundation and Avioandes joined efforts in order to provide a significant number of flights for Ecuadorian rescue workers, performing a high number of missions in the days following the disaster.

During the first two weeks after the catastrophe, the flexible single-engine aircraft notably helped the Red Cross team with evaluation flights, enabling them to get more precise information about the need for shelter and the number of people in danger or in a precarious situation. The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) mobilized

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humanitarian aids to the affected areas in Ecuador. The H125 also performed flights at the request of the French Foreign Affairs Crisis Centre, acting in the frame of the relief actions implemented through the European Union Emergency Response Coordination Center, and the aircraft's help was crucial to restoring access to drinking water.

"I would like to warmly thank Airbus Helicopters and Avioandes for providing the helicopters that have played a crucial role in apprehending the overall situation and permitting the joint evaluation with the local authorities on the field" said Lieutenant - Colonel Denis Lopez, head of the European Union Civil Protection Team during this operational mission in Ecuador.

"In order to perform these rescue operations we used a H125, which is the ideal aircraft for this type of mission. Thanks to its maneuverability and its performance we were able to reach all of the affected areas. On behalf of Avioandes and the Ecuadorians, we would like to thank Airbus Helicopters Foundation for its help during this difficult time, as with their assistance we have been able to reduce the impact of this natural disaster" said Pablo Ochoa, CEO of Avioandes.

In the frame of the Foundation's support to Ecuador, Airbus Helicopters also provided one heavy H215 helicopter to Manta in order to transport tonnes of first necessity supplies such as food, water and medical equipment and medical staff to otherwise inaccessible areas.

More information on the Airbus Helicopters Corporate Foundation is available on its website: http://www.fondationairbushelicopters.com

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