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The Salvation Army International Headquarters
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“I have never seen such destruction!”

The Salvation Army responds to Chilean earthquake

March 1, 2010 – Salvation Army disaster services personnel in Chile were immediately mobilized to provide support and comfort to thousands of survivors following a devastating 8.8-magnitude earthquake that rocked the country during the early hours of Saturday, February. 27.

Local staff and volunteers are providing food, water, first aid kits, blankets, candles and other supplies to earthquake victims in several cities, with international financial assistance on the way.

The earthquake epicenter was about 90 miles northwest of the city of Concepción in Southern Chile, approximately 350 miles from the capital of Santiago, where three Salvation Army facilities were damaged.

The Salvation Army has set up tents to house 60 families at its facility near Concepción. Salvation Army staff from the cities of Puerto Montt and Osorno are en route to Concepción to join in relief efforts. The Salvation Army is also carrying out emergency relief work in the city of Os Valparaiso, located on Chile’s west coast.

People have flocked to city streets as numerous aftershocks continue to pummel the country. Water, gas and electricity have been cut off in affected areas and will stay disconnected until emergency crews can assess the damage and prioritize immediate needs.

“I have never seen such destruction here before,” Lt. Colonel Maria Alarcon of The Salvation Army, said of the damage she witnessed in Concepción.

The Salvation Army has had a presence in Chile since 1909 and today offers social services including hospitals, schools for impoverished children and adult rehabilitation.

To support its relief efforts in Chile, The Salvation Army has established a text-to-give program that works on all major cell-phone carriers within the United States. Please give by texting the word “CHILE” to 52000 and respond to the confirmation message you receive with the word “YES.”

About The Salvation Army:

The Salvation Army, an evangelical part of the universal Christian church, has been supporting those in need in His name without discrimination since 1865. Nearly 30 million Americans receive assistance from The Salvation Army each year through the broadest array of social services that range from

providing food for the hungry, relief for disaster victims, assistance for the disabled, outreach to the elderly and ill, clothing and shelter to the homeless and opportunities for underprivileged children. About 82 cents of every dollar raised is used to support those services in nearly 5,000 communities nationwide. For more information, go to www.salvationarmyusa.org.