



THE FREEMASONS'
GRAND CHARITY

NEWS RELEASE: Emergency grant following flooding in Brazil

31ST January 2011

The President of the Grand Charity has made an emergency grant of £20,000 following flooding earlier this month in Brazil. Over 1,000 people have died after floods and mudslides swept through an area north of the capital, Rio de Janeiro, destroying hundreds of homes. The money has been passed to the District Grand Lodge of South America, North Division to assist with immediate recovery needs following the floods.

Colin Foster, District Grand Master for South America, North Division, reports:

“What happened was that there was about 8” of rain over the period of a few hours, focussed on the small mountain range above the city of Rio de Janeiro and an area maybe 50 miles long. Two different things happened: the first is that in many places, the topsoil became saturated with water and at a certain critical mass freed itself from the bedrock and came down like an avalanche. This happens frequently, but usually it is one or two landslides in an area. This time it was hundreds.....



So, these numerous landslides, spread over several towns and villages, in a very beautiful area, resulted in hundreds of houses being destroyed, either falling down along with the landslide, or being covered by what came from above. Around 500 people lost their lives in the landslides... Then there was the second phenomenon – flash floods. I am not sure the term does justice to what actually happened. Yes, there were people and houses swept away by the raging waters, along with hundreds of houses and about 80 bridges. But the bigger problem was that the waters started building higher in the hills and brought with them mud and boulders. A relation of a friend was found sitting in a chair, watching television, submerged by mud, in a grotesque parody on the instantaneous petrification in the ancient volcanic eruption in Pompeii.”



ENDS

Further information:

For questions concerning The Freemasons' Grand Charity's support for relief efforts in Brazil, please contact Katrina Baker on **020 7395 9314**.



THE FREEMASONS'
GRAND CHARITY

NOTES

The Freemasons' Grand Charity is a grant-making charity, which is funded by Freemasons and their families. It continues a commitment to charitable support that began nearly 300 years ago in the earliest days of organised Freemasonry.

Each year The Freemasons Grand Charity donates millions of pounds to support:

- Freemasons and their dependants in financial need
- Medical research
- Support for vulnerable people
- Youth opportunities
- Hospice services
- Air Ambulances and equivalent services
- Disaster relief

Through its grants the Grand Charity aims to:

- Make a significant difference to people in real need
- Support issues of concern to Freemasons and their families
- Help the wider community by supporting vital projects

Visit The Freemasons' Grand Charity website at www.grandcharity.org

ENDS