

MISSION REPORT SYRIA

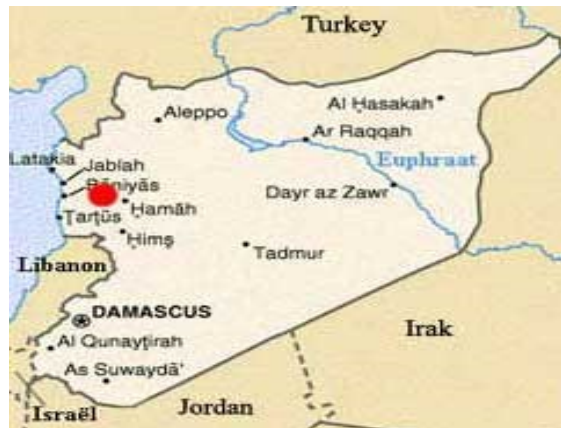
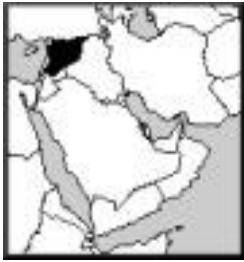
June 8th -16th 2002



Communications for life

MISSION to SYRIA

June 8th to 16th 2002



On June 4th 2002, the Zeyzoun dam, located 200km north of Damascus, collapsed. This gigantic construction (5km long, 43m high) held more than 70 million cubic meters of water which thundered out into the Ghab valley.

Within a few moments, the Zeyzoun village, located 100m from the dam was buried under thousands of tons of sediments and mud.

The wave only stopped 14 km further down, drowning six other villages under 4m of water, killing 20 people and making 10,000 people homeless. 80 km² were devastated.



As soon as it heard about the disaster, Télécoms sans Frontières placed itself at the disposal of the Syrian government and of the Red Crescent.

On the morning of Saturday June 8th, the French embassy in Syria confirmed the request for aid made by the Red Crescent and a team took off immediately for Damascus, equipped with satellite telephones, M4 satellite data transmitters and a video conference kit.

In the capital, TSF was welcomed by the Syrian Red Crescent and then went directly to Hamah, a town close to the site of the disaster, where it was brought up-to-date on the situation by the local branch of the Red Crescent.



At the Crisis Centre set up in the middle of the temporary camp located over the previous site of the Zeyzoun village, Télécoms sans Frontières met the rescue teams. The Crisis Centre which coordinated the setting up and management of the camp had absolutely no means of telecommunications.

The team immediately installed a satellite telephone exchange which it placed at the disposal of the Syrian Red Crescent and the Health Department's rescue teams. The daily communication of situation reports enabled aid to be adapted to the needs of the population.

The following day, representatives of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, who had received the latest information on the situation the day before, came to the camp to estimate needs and coordinate the arrival of different types of aid.

TSF placed at their disposal an Internet hub (ISDN and MPDS connection) to allow reports to be sent to the centres of Amman and Geneva.



TSF also offered its services to the population and the number of people who used the satellite telephones increased day by day.

Numerous villagers had relatives abroad (Koweït, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia ...) who had seen the pictures of the disaster on television but who had not yet had any news from their family. This communications centre was maintained available for five days.

³ In the meantime, TSF's mobile teams



The Syrian housing minister's visit to the communications centre set up by TSF at the camp

During this mission, TSF gave 300 families (or more than 1500 people) the opportunity to contact their relatives and offered 5 days of permanent Internet connection (MPDS et ISDN) to the rescue workers.

travelled to the disaster zones outside the camp to offer people who did not have the means to move, the possibility to make phonecalls.

On Saturday June 15th, the team felt that the emergency phase was over and left the camp. They were received that very evening by two Syrian ministers and the governor of the province of Hamah who thanked them for their efforts.

Visit to Damascus of a French Delegation from "Télécoms sans Frontières"

Al-Fidaa, June 13th 2002

(page 2)

منظمة اتصالات بلا حدود، الفرنسية تقدم خدماتها للمتضررين من انهيار سد زيزون

والجهازية والتحرك السريع. وهذا ما أثر على نفسية المتضررين وارتياحهم واستعدادهم للتعاون مع المتطوعين الشباب من منظمة الهلال الأحمر.

ونحن بدورنا سنُعلم العالم أجمع بما قام به الشباب في الهلال الأحمر العربي السوري. وسنؤكد له أنهم محترفون وسننقل صوراً عن نشاطهم الى سائر أنحاء العالم.

• الآن عرفنا لماذا الرئيس

شريك يحب السوريين وعن الانطباع الذي تركته زيارتهم لسورية عليهم، قال: - الناس في سورية جميلون ولطفاء، يتمتعون بالحيوية، وقد رحبوا بنا أجمل ترحيب، وكانوا يبادرون لتقديم كل ما يؤكد محبتهم لنا وكرم ضيافتهم. وقد عرفنا لماذا الرئيس شريك يحب السوريين.

• محمد أحمد خبازي

ترجمة: المهندس عصام الفرا

في العالم، وحيث توجد أخطار وأضرار، عملنا في كوسوفو والهند وأفغانستان والسلفادور والبيرو وغيرها.

• عمل الهلال الأحمر ممتاز

وعن عمل المتطوعين الشباب من منظمة الهلال الأحمر في موقع السد وتقديمهم الخدمات للمتضررين قال رئيس منظمة الاتصالات:

- لقد قام المتطوعون الشباب بخطوة كبيرة جداً وبسرعة لم نرها في أي مكان في العالم، وخصوصاً من حيث السرعة في إقامة مخيم للمتضررين والسرعة في إغاثتهم ومد يد العون لهم.

فخلال خمسة أيام أقام فرع الهلال بحماسة مخيماً وجهزه بكل المستلزمات، وقدم للمحتاجين الدواء والغذاء وكل ما يلزمهم، وهذا عمل رائع.

إننا نعتبر الهلال الأحمر السوري من أوائل المنظمات الانسانية في العالم، من حيث العمل والكفاءة

الدولي لتقديم المساعدة للمتكوبين، وبالفعل فقد هيّا لنا وبالتعاون مع منظمة الهلال الأحمر في سورية، القدوم الى موقع الكارثة، حيث استقبلنا معاون وزير الداخلية وقدم لنا سائر التسهيلات لتنقلنا في سورية.

• ربط موقع الكارثة

مع العالم الخارجي

وعن مهمة المركز الرئيسية قال السيد كازانوفو:

- مهمتنا الأساسية ربط موقع الكارثة مع العالم الخارجي، من خلال إقامة حوض من الاتصالات المرئية في الموقع، حيث نرسل الصور والمعلومات بالانترنت عبر الأقمار الصناعية الى شركتنا وشركة تليكوم للاتصالات الدولية، التي توزعها بدورها على العالم. وايضاً تمكين المنكوبين من الاتصال مع أقربائهم أينما كانوا لإعلامهم أنهم من الناجين، أو لطلب إغاثة أو مساعدة منهم.

• خدمات نحب أن يعرفها

السوريون

- وقال السيد كازانوفو: إنه من الجيد بالنسبة لنا أن يعلم الناس في سورية أننا نقدم خدماتنا مجاناً لكل الناس، بالتعاون مع شركة /إنمارسات/ و /فرانس تليكوم/ و /كابل ويرليس/ و /فودافون/ ومساعدة الجميع في وقت الطوارئ.

لقد عملنا في عدة أماكن ساخنة

• منظمة اتصالات بلا حدود منظمة فرنسية غير حكومية، شعارها في العمل اتصالات لأجل الحياة، ومجال عملها المواقع الساخنة في العالم ومواقع الكوارث المتضررة، والحاجة لكل عون ومساعدة.

وترجمة لشعارها شكلت هذه المنظمة مركز اتصالات متطوراً جداً في موقع قرية زيزون التي دمرها انهيار السد، بغية تقديم الخدمات الاتصالية للمتضررين والمنكوبين وربط موقع الكارثة بالعالم الخارجي.

• لقاء مع رئيسها

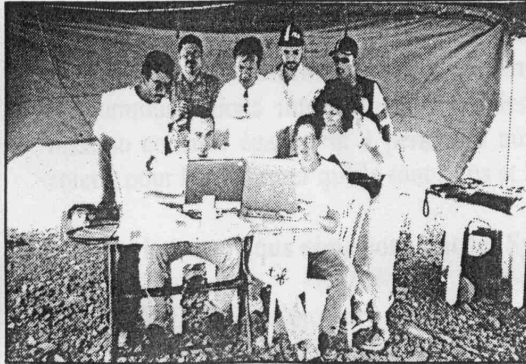
• وحول هذه المنظمة وعملها في موقع زيزون كان اللقاء التالي مع رئيسها السيد جان فرانسوا كازانوفو الذي قال:

يتألف فريق العمل من مديرة المنظمة مونيك لابنوتي، والمنسق التقني للاتصالات تيبوديريان، ومنسقة العمليات والاتصالات غال روسو.

مقر منظمنا الرئيسي في لندن، ومركز عملياتها في مدينة /يو/ الواقعة جنوب فرنسا.

ونحن في مركز العمليات مشتركون لدى جميع وكالات الأنباء في العالم، وعن طريق وكالات الأنباء، تلقينا خبر انهيار سد زيزون، وأنه وقع في سورية كارثة.

فاتصلنا بالصليب الأحمر



TELECOMS SANS FRONTIERES INTERNATIONAL
BRINGS ITS HELP TO THE VICTIMS OF ZEYZOUN

(AL-FEDAA, PAGE 2, HAMA -13 juin 2002

TSFI is a non-governmental organisation whose motto is "Communications for life". It intervenes anywhere in the world during conflicts or after disasters, where people need its help and assistance.

Putting this motto into practice, TSFI has installed a highly-sophisticated telecommunications' centre at the site of Zeyzoun, destroyed by the collapse of its dam. The goal is to provide telecommunication services to the victims of the disaster and to re-establish a link between the village and the rest of the country and the world.

An interview with TSFI's president

The newspaper Al-Fedaa has held an interview with TSFI's president, Mr Jean François CAZENAVE, who told us about the organisation and its action in Zeyzoun:

"Our team is composed of three members: the organisation's director, Mrs Monique LANGE-PETIT, the technical coordinator, Mr Thibault DERRIEN and Mrs Gaelle ROUSSEAU, who coordinates operations and telecommunications.

The headquarters of the organisation are in London, and the operational centre is in Pau. We subscribe to all the press agencies in the world. That's how we learned about the dam collapse in Zeyzoun and the catastrophe that followed in Syria.

We contacted the International Red Cross to offer our help to the victims. We collaborated with the Red Crescent to prepare our visit to the site of the disaster. The Interior Vice-Minister welcomed us and did his best to make our stay in Syria easier."

Linking the site of the disaster to the rest of the world.

About the team's main mission , Mr CAZENAVE declared:

"Our first objective is to link the site of the disaster to the rest of the world through the creation of a centre of visual telecommunications. We send pictures and data using by Internet, via satellites, to our international communications' company, which in turn broadcasts this information throughout the world. Our mission is also to give the victims the possibility to contact their relatives, no matter where they are, to tell them they're safe."

The services we would like the Syrian people to know about.

Mr CAZENAVE added: :

"It would be good for us that the Syrian people know we provide all our services free of charge, in close cooperation with INMARSAT, France Télécom, Cable & Wireless and Vodafone, to help everyone in emergency situations."

We have worked on numerous disaster sites around the world, in Kosovo, India, Afghanistan, El Salvador, Peru, and many others.

The Red Crescent did an excellent work.

About the Syrian Red Crescent organisation, its volunteers' work in the field where the dam collapsed, and the help they provide to the victims:

“The young volunteers' work was very fast and effective, more than anywhere else we have been before. Within five days, they managed to set up a full-size camp providing anything needed to help the victims, whether medicines or food. This was a fantastic accomplishment.

We consider the Syrian Red Crescent as one of the best humanitarian organisations in the world, as far as its competence, availability and celerity are concerned. The victims' satisfaction has led them to accept to cooperate with the SRC's young volunteers.

We will inform the entire world about the SRC young volunteers' action. They are professionals and we will spread this public image.”

About the impression Syria gave them during their stay, he concluded:

“People in Syria are nice and friendly. They're dynamic people who welcomed us very warmly. They did their best to express us their friendship and hospitality.”

Mohammed Ahmad KHABBAZI

Translated from Arabic to French by Engineer Issam EL-F ARRA.



President Assad receives new messages of sympathy. Arab and international aid continues to arrive to relieve the Zeyzoun dam victims.

(Tichrine and As-Saoura, page 1 and continued on page 15 - June 10, 2002)

(...) As part of the effort aimed at lowering the suffering of the victims, a shipment of emergency aid arrived at Damascus from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The second Algerian plane also arrived at the Damascus International Airport with 35 tons of food and medical aid.

Three Iraqi and one Kuwaiti plane also landed at the Damascus Airport, carrying First Aid goods for the victims.

Furthermore, a French delegation from the organisation “Télécoms sans Frontières” arrived at Damascus yesterday to bring its help to the population. This delegation is composed of : Mr Jean-François CAZENAVE, the president of the association of telecoms without borders, Mrs Monique LANNE-PETIT, its director, Gaele ROUSSEAU, the telecommunication coordinator, and Thibaut DERRIEN, technical coordinator.

This delegation was welcomed at the airport by the head and the team members of the committee commissioned to receive the aid.

Mr Jean-François CAZENAVE declared to a correspondent of the SANA press agency that he was grateful for the warm welcome they had received. He also said that the delegation's mission was to offer help to victims through the modern equipment brought from France in close cooperation with the Arab and Syrian Red Crescent Organisation.

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For general circulation:

PRESS BRIEFING - JUNE 14, 2002
SPOKESMAN'S DECLARATION

The Foreign Office spokesman made several declarations during the daily press briefing.

[...]

= 6 SYRIA / THE ZEYZOUN DAM =

The French non-governmental organisation "Télécoms sans Frontières Internationale" sent a team on mission to re-establish a communications network in the Zeyzoun area where a dam collapsed, causing a severe disaster on the 10th of June. We are thankful to TSFI for their work and we rejoice in seeing that this mission was achieved thanks to the successful collaboration between TSFI and the Syrian authorities.

[...]

SYRIAN ARAB RED CRESCENT
HEADQUARTERS

Damascus 20/6 /2002

Ref. : 416



منظمة الهلال الأحمر العربي السوري

المركز الرئيسي

دمشق في ٢٠٠١ / ١

الرقم :

Telecoms Sans FRONTIERES

Dear sirs,

The SARC extends its best compliments to you, and greatly thank you for your participation in supporting the population affected by the collapse of Zizoun Dam.

Your team of telephone communication was very effective in the provision of telephone contacts.

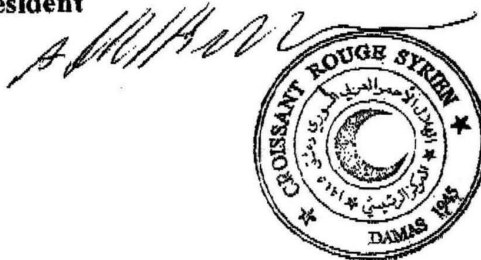
We look forward to a further acquaintance and co-operation with your agency

Thanking and appreciating your support.

I remain

Dr. Abdul Rahman ATTAR

President



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سورية - دمشق - شارع الملك العادل

هاتف ٤٤٢٩٦٦٢ - ٤٤٤١٣٦٦ - فاكس ٤٤٢٥٦٧٧

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