Dear all,

Below you can find a Q & A list about the situation at the moment in Macedonia. If anything is unclear, please drop us an e-mail.

At the end you can find a new list of media with who we did interviews last night and today. Check out your media and please give us feedback!!

Big kisses from Marieke & Ruud

*****IMPORTANT*****IMPORTANT******PRESS LINES***************

lines for external communications Macedonia - Q&A
7-4-99/ruh

========You can use these lines for external communications=========

What happened with the refugees at the Blace-site?

Monday afternoon the Macedonian authorities started massive transportation of the refugees from the strip of land at Blace. Dozens of busses were driving up and down to move the people out. Wednesday morning early the camp was empty.

Besides the refugees in Blace also the refugees who were stuck in No Men's Land - between Kosovo and Macedonia - were let into Macedonia and transported with the busses as well.

We can confirm that the Blace site and the No Men's Land are empty now. The Serbian site of the Kosovo border is closed. The people who were waiting there to get into Macedonia are no longer on the road which leads from Kosovo to Macedonia AS FAR AS WE CAN SEE. We have no confirmation for the rest of that road.

Rumours say the the Serbs will not allow refugees over the border anymore and that the Kosovars have been sent back. We do not know what's going on there.

How did the evacuation go?

We received reports of violence being used against the refugees during the evacuation (police/soldiers beating refugees). In general the evacuation was not violent, but very chaotic.

However, the refugees where not told where they would be taken to, registration was only being organised in the second day, especially the first day was rather chaotic. This whole operation was definitely not in line with the international standards.

MSF is very concerned that families have lost eachother in the crowd and that it will be extremely hard to find each other as there seems to be no adequate registration.

Where were the refugees taken to?
We know that about 15,000 refugees were taken to Stencovic camp (see your map, if did not receive one, please give a call to Polly) and 23,000 to Brazda camp. Aledgedly 9 airplanes full of refugees left for Turkey. MSF Albania reports that 10,000 refugees where transported by bus to Albania. They are expecting another 10,000 to arrive.

Is MSF having problems with the authorities?

NOTE: this issue is sensitive right now; NO PRO-ACTIVE communication! Line: We are in process of being registrated. (Some unclarities are still being sorted out and we are just waiting for the official confirmation.)

Is MSF allowed to work in Macedonia?

We have already started up some medical assistance in two refugee camps (Blace and Stencovic), with local supplies. We are now assessing the needs in other refugee camps and preparing to set up more medical and possibly water-and sanitation facilities.

What do we think of the situation in the camps?

The camps were set up by NATO and they are still present in the camps. MSF is happy that NATO organised these sites so quickly and that refugees could be taken out of the Blace site into these camps. We do however urge that UNHCR takes over the co-ordination of the camps, as it is their mandate to secure that refugees are being treated in line with the international standards.

MEDIA UPDATE

ENGLAND
BBC Radio 4 'the world tonight'
BBC World Service Latin America
Independent Radio News
The Daily Telegraph

USA
The Washington Post
Associated Press New York

CANADA
Toronto Radio
CKNW Radio

HOLLAND
SBS6/nieuws
NOS Journaal
Radio 1
Avro Radio 2
ANP
Algemeen Dagblad

NORWAY
TV2/Oslo

AUSTRALIA
The Age newspaper

SPAIN
Spanish Radio
AUSTRIA
Austrian Radio

SWISS
National TV

SWEDEN
Swedish Broadcasting Corporation

GERMANY
ARD Radio

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