



UN Requests Tangible Tent-Aid For War-Weary Refugees From ShelterBox USA

A humanitarian project of a U.K. Rotary club, ShelterBox provides emergency shelter and tools/daily equipment to homeless disaster survivors worldwide.

For Immediate Release

BRADENTON, Fla./EWORLDWIRE/Oct. 17, 2006 --- ShelterBox USA has announced two large aid requests from United Nations agencies maintaining refugee camps in Sudan and Somalia. The requests were received from U.N. officials by the international emergency aid organization's headquarters, in Cornwall, U.K. The appeal for long-term tent shelter was then forwarded to affiliates in U.S., Canada and Australia).

Begun in 2000 as a humanitarian project of a U.K. Rotary club, ShelterBox has grown to provide emergency shelter, tools, and daily equipment to one third of a million homeless disaster survivors worldwide. Individually sponsored by individuals and various community and school groups, ShelterBoxes cost \$900(USD), including worldwide transport. Each Box contains an insulated tent designed to shelter 10 people. Other Box items are often packed disaster-specific. Essentials include water purification tablets and tool kits. Recent natural disasters served by ShelterBox include the SE Asia tsunami, Hurricane Katrina and the Pakistan-Kashmir earthquake. Accompanying response teams ensure prompt delivery and distribution of the shipments.

ShelterBox also provides humanitarian shelter aid for man-made disaster victims; 600 Boxes were recently deployed to Lebanon for bombed-out Beirut residents. ShelterBox established a separate ongoing humanitarian initiative in response to inquiries from African U.N. officials who were impressed with the quality and practicality of the Box kit for refugee camp use. Called "A Million in Africa" (AMA), the initiative's objective is to shelter one million homeless in Africa where approximately four million refugees or internally displaced people exist. The first AMA Box shipments begun in 2005 but growing need has prompted two separate U.N. agencies to almost simultaneously request daunting Box quantities.

UNICEF initiated the first request for 10,000 ShelterBox units for Somalia. Since numerous international aid agencies have withdrawn from the war-wrecked country, there is currently very little help reaching Somalis who fled their homes during 15 years of civil war. Internally displaced people (IDP) living in U.N. camps in south Somalia are living in extremely squalid conditions. Rudimentary camp shelters are cobbled together with whatever sticks and scraps of material that can be found.

In addition, UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) submitted a second request for 7,000 Boxes for Sudan as part of a complex repatriation plan. The plan involves both southern Sudan refugees who having fled to other African countries now wanting to return home but complicated by IDP who must first be relocated north before refugees can return to south Sudan. Transitory camps must be provided for both groups.

ShelterBox USA is launching a grassroots appeal for Box sponsorship funds to apply to the U.N. aid requests. The practical tangibility of ShelterBoxes, immediate aid access provided by U.N. agencies and specific feedback to sponsors are three program aspects expected to appeal to potential donors. Refer to www.shelterboxusa.org for further program details and donor information

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