ADRA Japan coordinating with National Disaster Office

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Seventh-day Adventists around the world unite today with the people of Japan in mourning the losses caused by the 2011 Sendai earthquake and the resulting tsunami. Our thoughts, our prayers and our sympathies go out to those who have suffered such loss.

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is mobilizing to share resources and meet human need in the affected regions. An ADRA representative was in Fukushima on March 12, and more help is coming.

We remember the Bible's promise in Psalm 91, verse 1: "He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty," and we claim that promise for the people of Japan, and for all areas affected by this tragedy.

Seventh-day Adventists have worked in Japan since 1889 and continue to serve the people of that great country. We are committed to helping meet human needs and sharing the greatest news of all: that God loves and cares for each of us, and that He is coming again soon! We call for all Seventh-day Adventists and others to pray for the people of Japan during this time of intense need.

A spokesman for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency said an ADRA assessment team today reached Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, one of the hardest-hit regions.

ADRA Japan is coordinating with the Japan National Disaster Office and local non-governmental agencies.

ADRA International has committed US$25,000 to fund an initial response in the country, and is accepting donations for the agency's Emergency Response Fund. The magnitude-8.9 earthquake -- the largest in Japan's history -- struck off country's northeastern coast Friday, killing hundreds, cutting off electricity to millions of homes, interrupting the region's mobile phone network and paralyzing Tokyo's train system, according to media reports.

Masumi Shimada, president of the Adventist Church in Japan, said that four institutional buildings in Japan have sustained minor damage. There are no reports of casualties among church members, he said. Shimada said there are 17 churches, 10 schools and five other church institutions in the earthquake-affected areas.

In Tokyo, ADRA has set up as a refugee shelter at the Tokyo Central Adventist Church, providing food and free Wi-Fi. There are about 15,000 Adventists in Japan worshiping in 115 churches.