

DRAFT REPORT OF ANNUAL OPERATIONS

POLISH HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION

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Polish Humanitarian Organization
ul. Szpitalna 5/2, 00-031 Warsaw
Phone No. + 48 22 828-9086
Fax No. + 48 22 635-8882
E-mail: pah@pah.ngo.pl
PBK IV O/W-wa 11101109-8442-2700-1-32

A. Humanitarian Aid Convoys

In the past year the Polish Humanitarian Organization, being aware of the necessity of providing humanitarian aid for the former Soviet Union States and immediately responding to the disasters that occurred there and in Northern Afghanistan, concentrated on sending its convoys to these areas.

1. Date of departure: June 20, 1998: Afghanistan

Three trucks with 39 tons of goods (mainly medications, hygiene products, food, tents, blankets and water containers) valued at \$73,000 were delivered to Dushambe (Tadjikistan) for the earthquake victims. Later, all the goods were transported by International Red Cross helicopters to a small town called Rostaq (Takhar province). From the surrounding mountains in Dashtak an 80-meter thick layer of soil caved in on the school and killed 150 children. Polish Humanitarian Organization sees that the constant help to Afghanistan is really necessary. That is why PAH would like to provide financial support for the rebuilding of the school at a new location. According to the local UN representatives, the cost of rebuilding the school is \$5000.

2. Date of departure: September 29, 1998 target: Kazakhstan

7 tons of humanitarian goods valued at about \$71,000 was delivered to western Kazakhstan. The Polish Humanitarian Organization passed on food, medications, first aid equipment, hygiene products, clothes and some furniture to the Provincial Clinic for Children, the Polish Association in Kokczetav, the Catholic parish in Pietropavlovsk and the orphanage in Lisakovsk.

3. Date of departure: December 15, 1998 target: Ukraine

In answering the Ukrainian authorities' appeal for help for flood victims, PAH sent more than 26 tons of humanitarian aid. The receiving party was the Local Commission of Humanitarian Affairs in Vinogradov.

B. Rebuilding a School in Sarajevo

The school, Osman Nuri Hadzic, which has been chosen by the Supervisory Committee is placed in the Zone of Separation that remains in dispute between two Bosnian States: Serb Republic and Muslim-Croat Federation. As has recently appeared it cannot be rebuilt because of the still unresolved ownership of the property. We feel that we owe the school not only to the Bosnians but also to the Polish people who for the past two years have given great support to the project. Although the funds come from different sources, everyone has provided their aid in knowledge that it would contribute towards the new school. We would like to fulfil our obligation by finding another school to be rebuilt. Presently we are discussing this possibility with the Bosnian Authorities.

C. Feeding Children in Lithuanian Schools

PAH continues to feed 496 children in 8 schools in the Święciański and Soleczniki regions. We are still looking for companies, organizations and people who would take long-term care of a given school. We have already found sponsors for 5 schools.

Wishing to provide not only relief but also long-term aid, the Foundation delivered computers, textbooks and stationery to the schools under its care.

D. Assistance for elderly people in Ukraine

The Polish Humanitarian Organization prepared and sent 311 Christmas packages with food, hygiene products and small gifts for the Polish War Veterans Association. Nowadays, these veterans do not have Polish citizenship and therefore they do not have any ex-soldiers' rights in Poland. PAH would like to provide these people with permanent humanitarian assistance.

E. Supplement meal for the children of north-eastern Poland - Operation PAJACYK

Since September 1998, the Polish Humanitarian Organization has been providing help to 497 young children in 14 schools across north-eastern Poland. Up until the end of December 1998 operation PAJACYK raised a total amount of 421,188.21 PLN, which allows additional help to 1200 children in another 26 schools (details of this action were provided earlier).

F. Assistance for Flood Victims

Stage I – immediate assistance:

Once again 1998 brought heavy flooding to South-Western parts of Poland. Fortunately, the flooding was not as severe as that of 1997. We sent three transports (30 tons) of goods to victims of the 1998 flooding in Duszniki, Polanica Zdroj, Szalejów Dolny.

Stage II – remodeling and refurbishing:

The continuation of the previous year's help for flood victims included passing on donations to finance nine public schools in the provinces of Nowy Sącz, Tarnobrzeg, Rzeszow, Kielce and Walbrzych, valued at \$177,000.

The effective help for flood victims contributed to the signing of the PHO into the working group for preparing plans for cooperation between government and NGOs in the event of disasters. For the same reason, Mrs Janina Ochojska received the European Culture Award (Europäische Kulturpreisverleihungen) in the field of humanitarian aid.

G. Refugee Counseling Center

In 1998, as in the previous years, we engaged in the following Refugee Counseling Center activities: counseling and social work, assistance in transacting official business in government offices, as well as legal advice and medical help for refugees and foreigners seeking asylum in Poland. Two hundred applicants came to the Center in 1998, which together with people who had contacted us in previous years gives a figure of over 700 relief recipients. The integration program now has over 90 participants. Last year we reunited four refugee families.

Events and activities organized by the Polish Humanitarian Organization's Refugee Counseling Center in 1998

- In 1998, together with the Community Center in Podkowa Leśna, we organized an International Children's Day party for refugees' and Polish children.
- In cooperation with PAH Humanitarian Education program and Somalian refugees we participated in Refugee Days organized by a secondary school in Świebodzice. In addition we presented lectures about refugees in elementary schools in Warsaw and other towns.
- An integrative summer camp for 15 refugee children and 15 pupils of the TAK school from Opole. The camp was organized in Opole in August 1998, together with the "One World" Association from Poznań, with the participation of volunteers from Poland, Slovakia and Yugoslavia .
- Together with UNHCR and Amnesty International we prepared a major concert of folk music, with the participation of refugee bands, for the Refugee Day in Warsaw in October.
- A Christmas party in December was prepared with the major participation of over 10 volunteers. Over 50 refugee children and pupils of schools in Warsaw took part.

The Refugee Shelter

Since 1996 we have been operating a home for homeless foreigners who have applied for refugee status. More than 300 people took advantage of the facility in 1998.

We are cooperating with all organizations and institutions which deal with refugee problems in Poland. We are constantly in touch with NGOs which help refugees in other European countries.

H. Humanitarian Education Program

PAH's campaigns in 1998:

- The national contest for youth called "Refugees" was prepared together with the Warsaw UNHCR and the Polish Scout Association. The contest was divided into three categories: literature, art and tolerance.
- We created a photographic exhibition called "Who will come ... ", which showed how Poles have helped those in need. The exhibition was displayed at the Modern Art. Gallery "Zacheta" in Warsaw and other towns around the country.
- We organized approximately 30 workshops for youth and the same number of presentations for teachers about humanitarian education in many different towns in Poland. In addition we prepared a basic educational kit for teachers.
- We cooperated with Antiracism Forum (an informal non-governmental organization working against racism) and we encouraged young people to participate in the European Week Against Racism and in marking the anniversary of Kristallnacht.

I. Forth Polish Pilgrimage from Kazakhstan and Christmas Gifts for Poles in Kazakhstan in 1998

The concept behind the campaign, just as in previous years, was to allow the oldest living deportees, who had never came to Poland and who could not afford to do so by themselves, to visit the country during Christmas.

Seventy-four people visited Poland this time around. There were 35 people from the Kokczetaw District, 16 from Astana, 3 from Pavlodar, 8 from Karaganda, 6 from Almaty, 3 from Petropavlovsk, 1 from Taldy-Kurgan, and 2 from Kustanaj. The oldest person was 86 and the youngest 62. They spent Christmas and New Year's Eve with 74 host families from 35 towns around Poland (eg. Pułtusk, Ostrów Mazowiecki, Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Lublin, Janów Lubelski, Kazimierz Dolny, Łódź, Łask, Pabianice, Katowice, and Gliwice).

They followed a similar program to that from previous years. On January 2, 1999 the pilgrims were hosted by the Senate Marshal, Mrs Alicja Grzeškowiak in Warsaw and participated (along with their host families) in a Christmas gathering with the Archbishop of Poland, Cardinal Józef Glemp.

Those who could not be our guests for Christmas received Christmas gifts. With the invaluable help of volunteers from a Warsaw secondary school we managed to prepare and deliver 750 packets, around 7kg each.

As in every year, the pilgrimage was financed thanks to the contributions of individuals, companies, and various institutions. For this program we collected around 456,000 PLN.

J. Regional Offices

Regional offices also participated in all campaigns organized by the Warsaw office by finding sponsors and donors, informing the press, and organizing collections. In addition, these offices work on behalf of those in need in their area.

We continue to run the community center in Łódź for 30 children from dysfunctional families and the Assistance Center for abused mothers and children in Toruń.

1 USD = 3.50 PLN