

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS IN THE MITIGATION OF EARTHQUAKE DISASTERS

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It is a well-known fact that Indonesia is located along the equator and bordered by two continents, to wit Asia and Australia, as well as by two oceans, the Indian and the Pacific Ocean.

Indonesia is an archipelagoan country, consisting of approximately 14,000 islands and a population of approximately 147,500,000 people, the largest part whereof, approximately 92,000,000 people are located in Java with an area of approximately 130,000 square kilometers with an average population density of 700 people per square kilometer.

Indonesia itself is located on three earthquake-belts. The first earthquake-belt is known as the Alpidic or Tethys mountain-system, stretching from the Asian mainland southward, west of the island of Sumatra, and subsequently turning east, south of the island of Java, towards the Moluccan Archipelago.

The second earthquake-belt is the Pacific Circumbelt, constituting a part of East Asiatic System, stretching from the islands of Japan all the way down south through the Philippines, the northern part of Celebes and the Molucca islands. The third belt is the Australian Circumbelt, constituting a part of the East Asiatic System, going from the New Zealand islands through Australia and the Province of Irian Java.

Under these circumstances, Indonesia is subjected to an extremely high degree of seismic activities, with an average annual earthquake incidence rate of 350, where 4 to 10 earthquakes are of considerably formidable magnitudes. Relative to earthquake-mitigation and preparedness activities in Indonesia a number of seismic stations have been established, the combined capacity whereof is still inadequate however for the need of monitoring earthquakes occurring all over Indonesia, whether they be of a tectonic nature as the earthquakes that have been mentioned, above, of a volcanic nature, caused by volcanic activities or caused by landslides occurring on land as well as at sea. One hundred twenty seven volcanoes exist in Indonesia of which 70 are still considerably active. Consequently, Indonesia is subjected to a considerably high earthquake incidence-rate of volcanic nature.

In its endeavor to mitigate the sufferings of earthquake victims, whether the earthquakes are of a tectonic or volcanic nature or caused by landslides, the Government has realized the following measures:

1. Mechanisms for the mitigation of natural disaster have been created at all levels, from the Central level down to the grassroots level, to wit: