

US Embassy in Spain prepares the evacuation of the Americans from La Palma

Volcanic eruption in Canary Islands

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USPA NEWS - The United States Embassy in Madrid, in collaboration with the Spanish authorities, has drawn up an evacuation plan for US citizens who are on the island of La Palma, in the Canary Islands archipelago, where the eruption of a volcano has caused so far the evacuation of more than 10,000 people and considerable material damage.

The evacuations focus on the areas of Cabeza de Vaca and El Paraíso, close to the site of the eruption and which have already been affected by rivers of lava from the volcano's crater. The Embassy urges United States citizens who are on the island of La Palma to inform themselves, through the local media and the information channels of the Canarian authorities, about the escape routes and the means to leave the Island.

Until the time of writing this information, no victims have been reported from the eruption of the volcano, which, according to experts, has a magma reserve half of that registered fifty years ago, when another volcano, Teneguía, changed the orography and the map of the island of La Palma. Experts expected the lava from the current eruption to reach the sea during the afternoon of this Monday, but it has not occurred. The lava has slowed its march and was running this Monday at just 300 meters per hour. Of course, destroying everything in its path.

The volcano has already opened nine eruptive mouths. More than 10,000 people have been evacuated from the five municipalities near the site of the eruption. The landscape is bleak. Drones flying over the crater and its surroundings reveal dramatic images: houses destroyed by lava, burned fields and blocked roads. Emergency services try to ensure that fires do not break out from the lava. The evacuated neighbors still do not know when they will be able to return to their homes, or if they will find their homes intact.

The Prime Minister visits the area

In La Palma, the President of the Government of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, has affirmed that the safety of the island's citizens is guaranteed and has promised to replace the material losses caused by the volcano's eruption "as soon as possible". After a volcano erupted in Montaña Rajada, in the municipality of El Paso, at 15:12 (local time) of the Sunday, the Spanish Prime Minister postponed his attendance at the United Nations General Assembly in New York and travelled to the island of La Palma to see first-hand the damage and the coordination of the activated mechanism.

In a joint appearance, the president emphasised that all the institutions - central and regional governments and the City Hall - have collaborated throughout the week to anticipate the eruption and inform the public on how to act when the time comes. The protocols - he pointed out - are being developed as planned, with the fundamental objective of protecting citizens at all times.

Sánchez has pledged the support of the Government of Spain "so that all the material losses can be replaced as soon as possible" and said that the citizens of La Palma "have to be reassured," as all instruments are being used to guarantee their safety. The President, who has been in constant communication with the King Felipe VI, remain on the island this Monday to follow the development of the eruption.

The authorities are keeping a close eye on the evolution of the fires caused by the eruption and, in addition to the Police and Civil Guard, forest firefighters and firefighting teams from the Canary Islands Government are working in the area, as are members of the Military Emergency Unit.

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