



### *Appeal in the aftermath of hurricane Irma*

Matanzas, September 13, 2017

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ. “May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord” (2 Pet 1,2).

This is an urgent appeal for help in the aftermath of hurricane Irma, which has been the largest hurricane formed in the Atlantic. It destroyed and devastated almost completely the north coast of Cuba, during September 8-10, 2017, with winds of up to 255 kilometers per hour. It swept this region with strength of category 5, the maximum in the scale Saffir-Simpson. The waves of the sea reached more than 6 meters high. More than a million people were evacuated on the island, including about 51,000 tourists and despite this, there are at least 10 people reported to have died as a result of the storm. Almost 100 % of the national territory ran out of electrical power and as we write this appeal there are still some territories without this service and without running water, while there are still floods.

The effect of the hurricane was much worse than expected, many people lost everything they had, in many areas of the territory the situation is critical. Irma swept hotels in Cayo Coco and in Jardines del Rey, two of Cuba's main tourist hubs in the center of the country, and also damaged its main access routes, as well as the hotels of Varadero beach. As Irma moved away, there were also strong winds and sea penetrations in Havana and Matanzas, two provinces of the West that were not expected to be affected by the hurricane.

In the city of Matanzas, where our Evangelical Seminary of Theology is located, Irma's effect was felt very strongly (tough winds and heavy rains) between September 9th and 10th. In our campus, although we did not lament human losses or serious structural damages in the buildings, it caused considerable destruction, primarily in the green areas. 80% of the trees and plants were demolished, including the vegetable garden which serves hospitals and part of the city's population. Also the plumbing and water system, some ceilings, part of the lighting and electrical system, as well as the paint of some buildings, were damaged.

We have assessed the damage (kindly find photos included), which can be valued in the following figures (cuc: local currency and in US dollars - 0.86 exchange rate):

1,030.00 cuc	Reforestation
1,596.00 cuc	Re-establishment of the gardens
3,050.00 cuc	Re-activation of the vegetable garden (organopónico)
1,778.00 cuc	Plumbing and water system
2,297.00 cuc	Repair and waterproofing of the ceilings
1,600.00 cuc	Repair of lighting and electrical system
<u>2,449.00 cuc</u>	<u>Painting of exterior walls of buildings</u>
13,800.00 cuc	<b><u>TOTAL IN USD \$ 16,046.51</u></b>

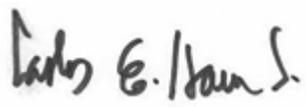
If your church/organization is able to send some help, **from the USA**, kindly transfer it to:  
Account: Matanzas Evangelical Theological Seminary, # E862510.  
Presbyterian Church, USA  
P.O. Box 643700  
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

**From other countries:**

Bank account: 03 000 000 000 0 6739  
Banco Financiero Internacional S.A.  
Address: Línea No 1, Vedado. Havana, Cuba.  
Name of the account: Seminario Evangélico de Teología de Matanzas  
SWIFT: BFICCUHH

Many thanks for your prayers and support to the people in Matanzas and/or to the Seminary! If you would like to make a contribution to the people in need in Matanzas, the Seminary can help to channel this donation.

Very gratefully yours,



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(Photos annexed)





