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ROTARY AID REACHES SRI LANKA AND INDIA

- Aid provides temporary homes and fresh water for more than 10,000 survivors
- Saturday 8th January designated Rotary Tsunami Disaster Collection Day

Rotary Clubs in Great Britain and Ireland have responded to the Asian Tsunami disaster by raising funds for Shelterboxes and Aquaboxes, in response to requests from Rotary Clubs in Sri Lanka, Indonesia and India. Eight hundred Aquaboxes and five hundred Shelterboxes have been shipped to India and Sri Lanka in the last week to provide temporary homes and clean water for 10,000 victims of the Asian Tsunami.

- 250 Shelterboxes arrived today in Batticaloa, in the eastern province of Sri Lanka and are being distributed by local Rotary Clubs.
- 250 Shelterboxes have been shipped to Delhi for use by Rotary Clubs in Madras to assist survivors on the Madras coastal region.
- A further 100 Shelterboxes are being shipped to Djakarta in Indonesia to meet requests from Rotary Clubs there.
- 300 Aquaboxes have been shipped to Worldwide International Aid in Sri Lanka.
- 500 Aquaboxes to Blythwood Care in India.

Rotary Clubs have raised more than £500,000 in the last week for these boxes and further shipments of Aquaboxes and Shelterboxes are planned.

Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland launched a Disaster Relief Fund for South Asia last week and more than £1 million has been raised to date. At some locations in Hampshire the income rate was in excess of £1000 an hour. In addition to fund raising Rotary Clubs have been working to arrange free transport of the emergency boxes and have co-ordinated approaches to airlines and the military for help, including Trans-Global International, Virgin Atlantic, Sri Lankan Freight and the Indian Air Force.

Gordon McNally, President Rotary International in Great Britain and Ireland said "The earthquake and subsequent Tsunami is arguably, the greatest natural disaster to befall our planet in the one hundred years of Rotary's existence. Many Rotarians have been affected by the disaster, both in the area involved and also here within Great Britain and Ireland, where Rotarians have lost family and friends. The response to the disaster by Rotarians has been phenomenal - hundreds of Rotary Clubs have held collections in shopping centres, at motorway service stations and at sports stadiums. The public response has been incredible and thousands of pounds have been raised, thanks to the generosity of the public and to the generosity of Rotarians and their families and friends in giving time to collect that money. Perhaps more importantly a great deal of tangible aid has already gone to the disaster area in the shape of Rotary Shelter Boxes and Rotary Aquaboxes providing essential shelter and clean water. The need however remains immense and Rotary in Great Britain and Ireland has designated Saturday January 8th 2005 'Rotary Tsunami Disaster Collection Day' when Rotary Clubs will organise further fund raising."

Photographs and film of aid being used in disaster area available on request

Interviews with Gordon McNally available on request

For further information, to arrange interviews or photographs please contact Judith Diment on 01628 672965 or 07860 162313 or email judithdiment@aol.com
For detailed information on fund raising activities by local Rotary Clubs see www.rotary-ribi.org

Notes to editors

1. A standard Aquabox costs £49.00 and can supply 1100 litres of purified water sufficient for a family of 4 for three months. For more information see www.aquabox.org

2. A Shelterbox costs £490.00 and contains a ten person tent, sleeping bags, water purification equipment, basic tools, lighting and kerosene fuelled cooking equipment. For more information see www.shelterbox.org