

Haiti - Climate : The point on Tomas, less than 48 hours before impact

The Haitian government, humanitarian agencies and the Mission of the UN Stabilisation in Haiti (MINUSTAH) put in place a contingency plan for dealing with Hurricane Tomas, which is close to the island and may affect up to half million people.

The camps evacuation in the capital and in other regions is underway, the refugees are invited to find refuge in their family or friends because there is no shelter to protect a population of 1.5 million people living in camps. People are invited to find a safe place to protect themselves. "Supplies are being pre-positioned notably in Jeremie, Les Cayes, Jacmel and Leogane, which are expected to experience the storm more severely," according to Martin Nesirky with the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. Haiti remains on RED alert level on all the territory. This Tuesday at 8:30 EDT, the center of Tropical Storm Tomas was located at 13.7 degree North and 75.8 degrees West. At 660 km south-southwest of Port au Prince (410 miles) with winds of 55 km/h (35 mph), down from Tuesday (-30%). Tomas significantly slowed its speed (-64% from Tuesday) its speed is now 7 km/h (5 mph). The fact that Tomas moves more slowly, increasing the danger it represents in terms of precipitation [more it moves slowly, more the volume of precipitation is important]. Remember that St. Lucia, Tomas was moving at 12 km/h (8 mph) and dumped the equivalent of 2 years of rain in 24 hours which was the main factor of destruction. According to the forecast track, Tuesday, Tomas moves west-northwest, and is positioned right now to change its trajectory. The present simulations indicate several possibilities for this new trajectory: North-West or North or North-Northeast. The trajectory privileged by the analysts is North-North East. Although satellite imagery shows that Tomas is disorganized, forecasters still predict that Tomas could turn on the night of Wednesday to Thursday in Hurricane Category 1 (winds of 119-153 kph (74-95 mph). If the trajectory of Tomas continues north-north-east, tropical storm (or hurricane) Tomas should move between Thursday 2:00 am and Saturday 2:00 am to: 154 km (96 mi) of Jacmel 152 km (94mi) of Port-au-Prince 125 km (78mi) of Léogâne 46 km (29mi) of Les Cayes 85 km (53mi) of Saint-Marc 61 km (38mi) of Gonaïves Note that the winds of Tomas may impact up to 185 km (115 miles) from its center, but that the area of influence will depend on the strength of Tomas at the time of its passage into a hurricane. Tomas intensity should be estimated more precisely 24 hours before impact.