

At least 5,000 feared dead in Libya as torrential rains collapse dams



Tripoli, September 12 (RHC)-- Thousands of people are feared dead in Libya after a powerful Mediterranean cyclone brought devastating flooding to the eastern port city of Derna. Libya's National Center of Meteorology says the storm dumped more than 16 inches of rain on the city in less than 24 hours, causing two dams to burst, washing away entire neighborhoods.

On Monday, a spokesperson for the Libyan National Army put the death toll in the thousands. Ahmed al-Mismari told reporters: "The latest update regarding the death toll, as the prime minister of Libya announced, exceeds 2,000 in Derna city alone. May they rest in peace. There also, in Derna, are thousands of missing people — some 5,000 to 6,000 missing people — and this number could largely increase."

Libya's Red Crescent said the number of missing people has reached 10,000, with at least 20,000 displaced from their homes. Much of Libya's infrastructure has crumbled since 2011, when the Obama administration and NATO backed an uprising against Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi, setting off years of war.

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