

Chile Rejects Bolivia Offer for Aid to Flood Ravaged Areas



Santiago de Cuba, March 30 (teleSUR-RHC) The Chilean government expressed gratitude to Bolivia for the help offered by President Evo Morales to areas impacted by flash floods through Chile's Atacama desert, but said the help was not needed.

The Bolivian government offered 13 tons of aid to support relief efforts after heavy rains left 14 dead, 20 missing, and thousands without power or running water in the region.

"It is our duty, between peoples, to help those who suffer calamities caused by climate change," Morales said. "We share the little we have and do it with conviction that our people are brothers and sisters."

However, Chile's Consul General in La Paz Milenko Skoknic said international aid was not needed at the moment. "We've said to all the governments that for the moment, we don't need any particular item or aid shipment, since we hope to have everything here in Chile, in order to provide help to all the affected families who are in shelters," Skoknic said.

The diplomat added that this decision does not mean saying no to Bolivia because of the existing maritime dispute between the two countries. Chile and Bolivia have only maintained consular relations since 1978 when territorial negotiations between the country's failed. Under the governments of Morales in Bolivia and Michelle Bachelet in Chile, relations have improved, although a border dispute between the two nations is still pending.

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