

Indian Ocean tsunami warning plan proposed

August 23 2006

U.S. Embassy officials in Jakarta, Indonesia, report progress in developing a regional Indian Ocean warning system for tsunamis and other hazards.

ANTARA, the official Indonesian government news agency, said it learned officials from various agencies presented the secretariat of the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization with an initial implementation plan for such a tsunami warning system during a meeting in Bali, Indonesia, earlier this month.

During the meeting, groups representing efforts in seismic monitoring, sea-level monitoring, hazard-risk assessment, modeling and warning centers reported on progress made to date.

The World Resources Institute estimated 228 million of Indonesia's 238 million citizens live in highly vulnerable seismic coastal areas such as the Indian Ocean, ANTARA reported. Not all tsunami warnings could be issued quickly enough to reach sunbathers and others on the region's vast number of beaches.

Also during the meeting, representatives of five countries -- Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand -- confirmed they will act as tsunami-watch providers for the Indian Ocean region, ANTARA said.

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