



# Hurricane Otis | Situation Report #1

Latin America & the Caribbean Response Plan

1 November 2023, 17:00 ET

## OUR RESPONSE

Airlink has activated its Latin America & the Caribbean Regional Response Plan following the devastating impact of Hurricane Otis on October 25. Airlink is coordinating with humanitarian, logistics, and airline partners in the region to assess main needs and response capabilities and will continue to monitor the situation to best support partners' responses. Please reach out to [ops@airlinkflight.org](mailto:ops@airlinkflight.org) if your organization is planning to respond and/or has a request for transportation assistance.

## THE SITUATION

On October 25th, 2023, Hurricane Otis made landfall in Acapulco, Mexico, as a Category 5 storm and the strongest Pacific storm ever to make landfall. Originally projected to be a weak tropical storm at its peak intensity, Otis experienced a rapid and substantial intensification, making landfall at peak intensity with winds of up to 165 mph (270 km/h). The sudden and rapid intensification left local communities with insufficient time to adequately prepare or evacuate, while response agencies had limited time to stage resources. The storm dissipated quickly as it passed over the Sierra Madre del Sur mountains.

According to a statement from Mexico's civil defense agency, 43 fatalities were reported in Acapulco, with an additional five casualties in Coyuca de Benitez and 58 people reported missing. The number of reported casualties is expected to rise. The storm caused significant damage to critical infrastructure, including 273,844 homes and 120 hospitals, schools, roads, bridges, airports and ports. There has been no official report on the number of internally displaced people in the state. Approximately 80 percent of the hotel sector has experienced substantial damage, raising concerns regarding challenges to long-term economic recovery.

### Humanitarian Logistics Overview

After making landfall, cell service in Acapulco and its vicinity remained disrupted for several days, causing delays in the reporting of damage and humanitarian requirements. Some areas continue to be cut off from phone and internet connectivity, challenging the humanitarian response in the region. Affected areas continue to have challenges accessing food, water, shelter, and healthcare services. The major highway to Acapulco from Mexico City is operational, however, access to coastal and mountainous regions of Guerrero continues to be a challenge due to the impact of the storm.

As of this time, a call for international assistance has not been issued by the Mexican government. Following the activation of Mexico's DNIII plan, the Mexican Armed Forces is leading the humanitarian response, supported by federal and state entities and coordinated by the National Civil Protection System (SINAPROC). All aid coordination is being conducted by the Mexican military. NGOs working in the country have reported difficulties in getting permission to import supplies procured internationally. In recent days, there have been reports of at least sixteen crime syndicates active in Guerrero state, including incidents involving the deaths of a dozen police officers. This has led to concerns from NGOs regarding movement throughout the area.

## SERVICE DELIVERY

As there is no request for international assistance from the Mexican Government, Airlink is currently supporting nonprofit partners that have long-term programs or are coordinating with local organizations.

### Cargo Support

At this time, there are no declarations for allowing humanitarian duties and fees. Airlink can support cargo flight options into (MEX) at this time. Airlink's logistics partners have the capacity to support customs clearance as needed.

### Personnel Flights

Round-trip passenger flights to Mexico City (MEX) and humanitarian flights to Acapulco (ACA) from North America, Central America, South America, and Europe.

**Airport Status:**

- MEXICO CITY (MEX): Open
- ACAPULCO (ACA): Open to aid flights from MEX only

**Port Status:**

- VERACRUZ: Open
- ACAPULCO: Closed

**Customs Clearance:** Given the absence of a customs waiver for humanitarian cargo, responding agencies should be prepared to adhere to Mexican import policies and expect to cover duties and fees.

**RESPONDING PARTNER AGENCIES**

If you don't see your organization listed and you are responding, please email [ops@airlinkflight.org](mailto:ops@airlinkflight.org).

**Active Partners:**

- CADENA
- GlobalMedic
- The Salvation Army
- Médicos Sin Fronteras en México
- World Central Kitchen

**Active Airline & Logistics Partners:**

- Aeroméxico
- Avianca
- Flexport.org
- Priority Worldwide Services
- SEKO Logistics
- United Airlines
- Volaris