

The Earthquake in Chile

Written by Tzu Chi Foundation
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On February 27, the devastating earthquake struck Chile. Measuring 8.8 on the Richter scale and lasting three minutes, the quake occurred in the early morning off the Maule Coast, damaged more than 500,000 homes and killed over 700 people. It was the worst earthquake to hit Chile in 50 years and one of the most powerful of modern times in South America. Countries around the Pacific, from Colombia and Mexico to Japan and Indonesia, issued a tsunami warning.

The human greed and destruction of the environment had caused the earthquake. [Master Cheng Yen](#)

said, “Why did the earth release such force on February 27? Is it not because the earth has been losing its trees and its water? When a person has a fever, the doctor says that he needs water. Our universe has a fever and is short of water and the four elements are out of kilter. This leads to earthquakes and damage that is more and more severe. How many people live in shock and fear? They have no homes and do not know where to go.”

She said that the Chilean earthquake had terrified the hearts of people. “It affected a quarter of the countries in the world and 53 of them issued tsunami warnings. How can the world not be frightened? The sufferings of people are constantly increasing. We see the droughts and eruptions that afflict the world, but we do not see the troubles and pain in the hearts of people. The greed of humankind is like a mighty wave.” People needed the Dharma to cool this fever in their hearts. “If their hearts are full of the happiness of these principles, their lives will be calm and this calmness will lead to wisdom. Let the nourishment of these principles fall like drops of water on the human heart; those hearts will not be so frenzied and they will have no troubles.”

Tzu Chi Foundation is monitoring the post-earthquake situation in Chile. If there is a need, Tzu Chi volunteers will respond to the situation. In South America, Tzu Chi has offices in Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil; it has done relief work in these countries, as in Peru.