

U.N. may divert food aid for Haiti due to unrest

(Reuters) -- Unrest in Haiti may force the United Nations to divert ships carrying food for flood victims to the Dominican Republic, where the aid can be put on trucks, a U.N. spokesman said Tuesday.

Tropical Storm Jeanne killed 3,000 people last month and left 100,000 in the coastal city of Gonaives dependent on food help from the U.N.'s World Food Programme, spokesman Simon Pluess told reporters.

But some shipping firms are refusing to dock in the capital, Port-au-Prince, where 113 food containers are stuck, after two weeks of violence between Haiti's U.S.-backed government and supporters of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

"The possibility of letting incoming vessels dock in the Dominican Republic and transporting food to Haiti by truck is under consideration," Pluess said.

Since the flooding, the WFP has distributed more than 1,700 tonnes of food, mainly in the Gonaives region, where 200,000 people were left homeless. Stocks held by other aid agencies, including Care International, are running low.

The Rome-based WFP, which was already feeding some 500,000 Haitians before Tropical Storm Jeanne, says that the 100,000 flood victims it is helping will need rations for five months.

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