



## **IRO – Missionreport Algeria 2003**

The International Rescue Dog Organisation made an Offer of Assistance to the Algerian Embassy in Vienna on 21 May 2003 following the strong earthquake there and it was accepted immediately. An international contingent of the IRO departed for Algiers on the same evening with 10 dog handlers and their dogs, 1 assistant, 1 medic, and 1 mission leader representing Austria (SKV-Fire Dept. KHD Vienna), Slovenia (DVRPS, Društvo vodnikov reševalnih psov and ERPS, Enota reševalnih psov) and the Czech Republic (SZBK, Svaz zachrannych brigad kynologu).

Although the team was one of the first to arrive in the disaster area, it would be another 14 hours before it was put into action in Corso, east of Algiers. This area had already been thoroughly searched, however, and the team was consequently transferred on the same morning to Bordj Menaiel, approx. 40 km eastward, where the mission was continued with a team from the BRH - Federal Federation of Rescue Dogs (Member of the IRO). Work in this city was declared finished on the evening of 24 May after a meeting of mission control.

Due to overcapacity of rescue forces – there were more than 1,000 volunteers with more than 100 dogs on scene – the IRO mission ended on 25 May and the entire team returned to Vienna on the same day with Czech and Slovenian teams continuing on to their home bases immediately. The BRH dog handlers left Algiers for Austria on the same evening with another contingent as the IRO flight was completely full.

Rescue dogs were able to make confirmed alerts to the location of 14 deceased victims on this mission.