

Natural disaster in Venezuela

During 15 and 17 December 1999, there came about a natural disaster of the great magnitude in Venezuela. The relentless downpour created a deadly mixture of moving water, mud and rocks from the steep slopes of the Cordillera de la Costa in three days. Millions of tons of this mixture burst open through ravines running from the peaks of mountain range directly to the sea. The mixture tore down and buried everything that stood in the way. Resorts such as Mucato, Caraballeda, Camuri, Tanaguarena and other their beaches, which were enlivening by thousands of people of Caracas at weekends, stopped to exist. Even the historic part of La Guaira, which is famous for its most beautiful colonial architecture in the country, disappeared under the mud. Also historical carratera, the former most expensive road in the world, connecting the international airport in La Guaira with Caracas, almost disappeared from the world thanks to buried tunnels and debris on the road.



The number of people, who lost their lives, is estimated at 150,000. It was the biggest disaster in history, which affected Venezuela.

The Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez Frias proclaimed the BOLÍVAR 2000 rescue program for 400,000 inhabitants who lost their homes. The aim was to build 100,000 social housing particularly in emerging satellite towns Miranda and Zamora in the state of Miranda, the satellite town Vargas in the state of Vargas and in other parts of the country, such as Barquisimeto, Barinas, Guárico, Sucre, Zulia and Falcón.



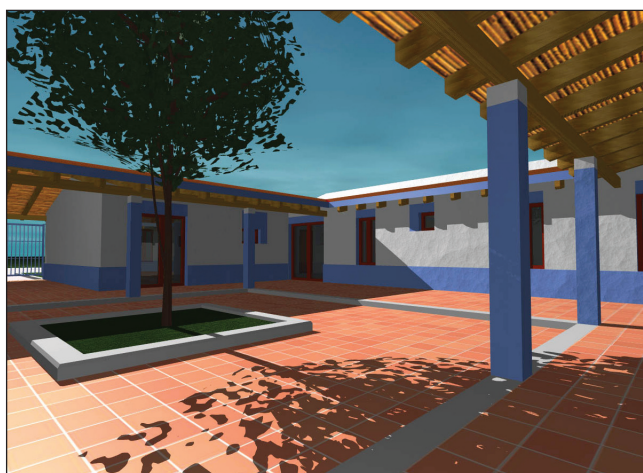
It's hard to put into words the feelings that Ivo Vaněk had three months after the disaster at La Guaira. This was still a Venezuelan riviera on 14 December 1999, full of tourists and local people.



Ivo Vaněk went to Venezuela to be convinced, to what the diamond technology, which he sent in the context of humanitarian aid immediately after the floods to rescue buried people and to clear the place, served. Then the technical and technological aid followed, which had focused on the recovery of damaged buildings.



At the invitation of the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Hugo Chavez Frias, who proclaimed the program of humanitarian and social aid BOLÍVAR 2000, Czech Red Cross (above), the Mayor of Prague, the architect Jan Kasl (left), and Ivo Vaněk joined their powers to contribute, according to their capabilities, to the return of decent living conditions for the survivors of the Venezuelan population affected by the natural element.



In the international competition for the project of the social housing program BOLÍVAR 2000, the project of the architect Radko Květ and Ivo Vaněk was appreciated as the best one and immediately prepared for the realization.



3-4 m below Ivo Vanek, there led the main avenue in La Guaira 3 months ago. Mud and stones reached a height of 14 meters in some places. A truck protruded from the digged embankment, with which the current played as with a wooden toy.



The local people were grateful for any help and despite of their own critical situation they invited us for a snack to their torsos of their houses.



Angel Ranchel Sanchez is familiarizing Ivo Vaněk with the mobile recovery technique that Venezuelan National Civil Defense used in the rescue of survivors. Ivo Vaněk is indicating that any critical situation is easier to deal with when strengths are joined.



After deciding on the winning project of low-cost social housing, the preparatory negotiations for the realization is fully ran with the governors of the affected states. The Governor of the state of Vargas really wanted social houses to be built from the most traditional local material, dried adobes.



On the left: With the Governor of the state of Aragua in Maracay, who provided estates for the two satellite social towns and securing of energy. On the right: With the Governor of the state of Miranda in Los Teques, where was planned to build the crucial number of social apartments.



With the exhausted Governor of the state of Vargas in La Guaira (the Venezuela's main port), 30 km far away from Caracas, however, over the mountains with the height of 3000 m.



Ivo Vaněk is giving the winning project of the low-cost social housing for Venezuela to the President of the Venezuelan National Civil Defence, Angel Ranchel Sanchez.

The Venezuelan government maximally cooperated in the preparation of the project of the construction of low-cost social apartments. The team of Ivo Vaněk and the architect Radko Květ had everything what they needed at hand.



In the shortest possible time, the architect Radko Květ and the constructor Luboš Dalecký were moving between very distant places, where the governors of the individual Venezuelan states suggested to realize the construction of the satellite towns.



It was needed to study the local habits, building materials (types and their availability) and paints, so that everything could correspond to the cultural conditions and nature. Last but not least, even the availability of energy was crucial for the choice of locations.

Oswaldo A. Niño Hernández, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Bolivar Republic of Venezuela was familiarized with the hinterland and possibilities of Ivo Vaněk and companies VYMYSLICKÝ and BOŽÍ DAR, which Vaněk leads, in detail before he decided to support the project of the social housing.



At the Building Fair in Brno, Ivo Vaněk introduced him dozens of special construction machinery and hundreds of kinds of industrial diamond tools, which the company VYMYSLICKÝ produced and exported to 34 countries in all continents. The foreign delegation consisted of the Venezuelan Chargé d'Affaires Oswaldo A. Niño Hernández, the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Cuba, Jiří Třicátník, and Vlastislav Beneš, the Honorary General Consul of Ecuador.



In the former military training camp, which was also used by the Soviet army, in Mladá – Milovice, Oswaldo A. Niño Hernández was familiarized with the revitalization program for the first satellite town of 20,000 inhabitants, which Ivo Vaněk led there over 6 years there. In the photo from the airport Boží dar, prepared as a backup airport for Prague, there are Ivo Vaněk, the Vice-Consul of Ecuador, Veronika Břečková, and the Mayor of Milovice - Mladá, Stanislava Matějková.



At the opening of the regional information center in Brno, there is Ivo Vaněk with Miss of the Czech Republic in 2000, Michaela Salačová. Ivo Vaněk opened regional information centers in the Czech Republic to familiarize visitors with the program „Revitalization of panel housing estates of the Czech Republic“, as the author of the program.



In flood-affected Třebouž, Oswaldo A. Niño Hernández heard dramatic stories of inhabitants survived the natural disaster that affected the area of Moravia in 1997. He also heard words of praise for the project of flood houses of the company BOŽÍ DAR and VYMYSLICKÝ, which was financed by the Czech Red Cross, and its authors are Ivo Vaněk and the architect Jan Kasl, the subsequent Mayor of Prague. In the photo, there is shown an interview with the man who survived with his cat as the only family member.



*Meanwhile, in Caracas,
negotiations with representatives of banks, ministries,
construction companies and suppliers of building materials were intensively held.*



Angel Ranchel Sanchez, the President of the Venezuelan National Civil Defence, gave Ivo Vaněk a high Venezuelan state honor award, which was granted for humanitarian aid to the people of Venezuela.



The ceremonial awarding of the high Venezuelan state honor was again done by Oswaldo A. Niño Hernández, Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the Czech Republic a few weeks later.

The team of Ivo Vaněk realized the special technical assistance in providing a bridge between the two tunnels on carratera Caracas - La Guaira. The neighboring mountains are unstable and getting closer about 20 mm every year. This causes increasing tension in the whole bridge structure, which is starting to crush.

There was built about 20 thousand of low-cost social apartments. The work on social satellite towns were terminated because the high concentration of socially disadvantaged population proved to be unsuitable, as it led to their isolation. The continuation of the project is carried out by the integration of socially disadvantaged ones into majority population in order to individually give soccuer to those who cannot do without it.

The project is considered the great success and example for many other countries. The Venezuelan dream completely came true.



Dear Sir,

It is an honor for me to turn to you and thank you on behalf of the National Government for your valuable cooperation and humanitarian aid provided during the natural disaster that occurred in Venezuela.

On the anniversary of these events, I would like to invite you to a memorial service for the victims, which will be held at St. Thomas Church, Josefská 8, Prague 1 - Malá Strana, on Saturday, 16 December 2000 at 5:30 p.m.

I take this opportunity to repeatedly express you my deepest respect.

*Oswaldo A. Niño H.
Chargé d' Affaires a.i.*