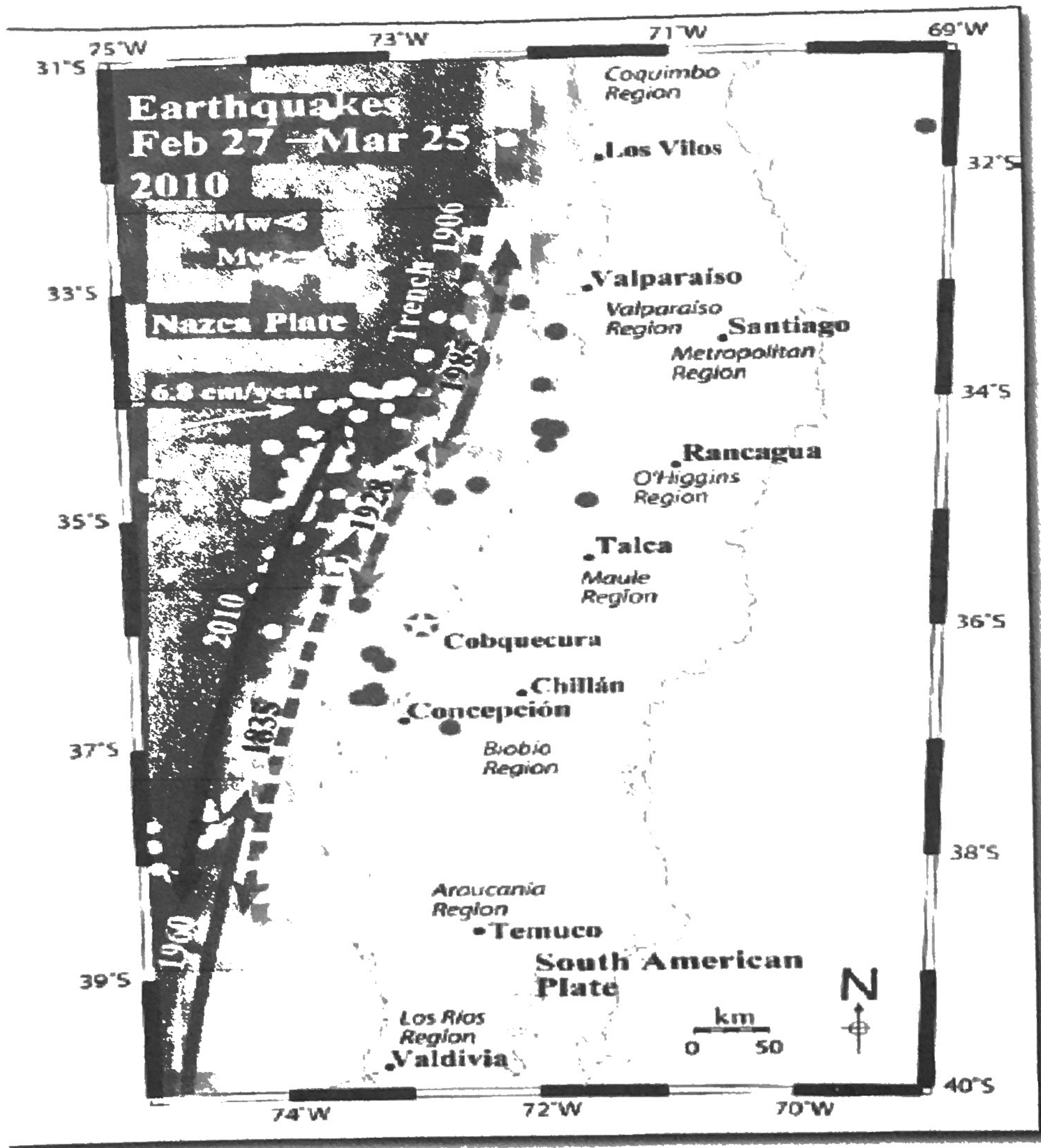


2010 Chile Earthquake and Tsunami

The 2010 Chile earthquake occurred off the Maule coast of central Chile on Saturday, 27 February 2010, at 03:34 local time, having a magnitude of 8.8 on the moment magnitude scale, with intense shaking lasting for nearly four minutes.

It occurred on the subduction zone plate boundary at the Peru – Chile Trench where the oceanic Nazca Plate subducts beneath the continental South American Plate. The two plates are converging at a rate of 80 mm per year. The epicentre was just 70 miles (115 kilometres) from Concepción, Chile's second-largest city.



2010 Chile-Earthquake-Epicentre
Image: Location of the epicentre of the Mw 8.8 earthquake on February 27th 2010 (white star in red circle), and of the aftershocks occurred until March 25th, 2010

The 2010 Chile earthquake ranks as the sixth largest earthquake ever to be recorded by a seismograph. It was the most powerful tremor to hit Chile in 50 years.

It was felt strongly in six Chilean regions (from Valparaíso in the north to Araucanía in the south), that together make up about 80 percent of the country's population. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) the cities experiencing the strongest shaking—VIII (Destructive) on the Mercalli intensity scale (MM)—were Arauco and Coronel. According to Chile's Seismological Service Concepción experienced the strongest shaking at MM IX (Violent). The earthquake was felt in the capital Santiago at MM VII (Very Strong) and MM VIII (Destructive).

Destructive tsunami waves arrived also between 2.5 and 4.5 hours after the main shock. The earthquake-triggered tsunami radiated across the Pacific basin and swamped Chile's sparsely inhabited Juan Fernández Islands, the island chain that inspired the story of Robinson Crusoe, killing at least 8 people.



In Chile 525 people lost their lives, 25 people went missing and about 9% of the population in the affected regions lost their homes. According to Ministry of Interior data in May 2010, 124 of the 550 identified casualties and missing were attributed to the tsunami.

The 2010 Chile earthquake and tsunami destroyed over 81,000 houses, and another 109,000 were severely damaged.

The earthquake generated a blackout in Chile that affected 93 percent of the country's population and which went on for several days in some locations. Restoring power in many cities in the immediate aftermath was impossible because of damage from the tsunami.

It is probably the strongest tsunami in the Pacific Ocean since 1960, when a Mw 9.5 in the southernmost part of the Chilean subduction triggered a transoceanic tsunami which caused casualties as far as in Japan.

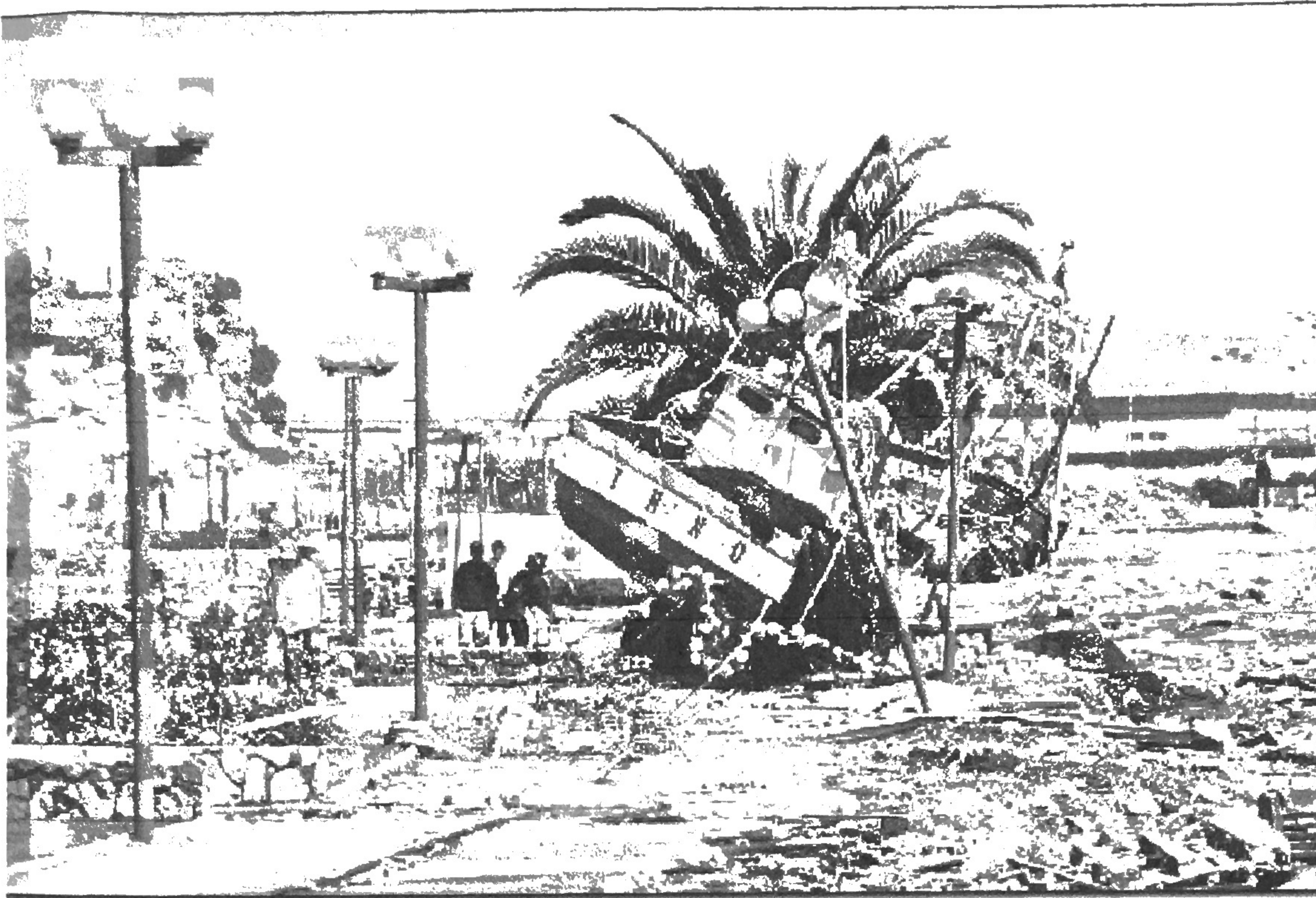


Image: Fishing boats washed up by a wave generated by an earthquake are seen in Talcahuano Port, a city just outside Concepcion, Chile on February 27, 2010.



Image: A flooded area is seen after an earthquake in Pelluhue, some 322 km, about 200 miles, southwest of Santiago, Sunday, Feb. 28, 2010.

According to field observations tsunami heights reached 14 meters in the coastal area of the Maule region immediately north of the epicenter. More variable tsunami heights of 6-8 meters were measured at Dichato-Talcahuano and Tirúa-Puerto Saavedra, in the Biobío and Arauco regions, respectively, to the south of the epicentre.

According to eyewitnesses, the tsunami reached the coast between 12 to 20 and 30 to 45 minutes in areas located closer and faraway from the earthquake rupture zone, respectively.

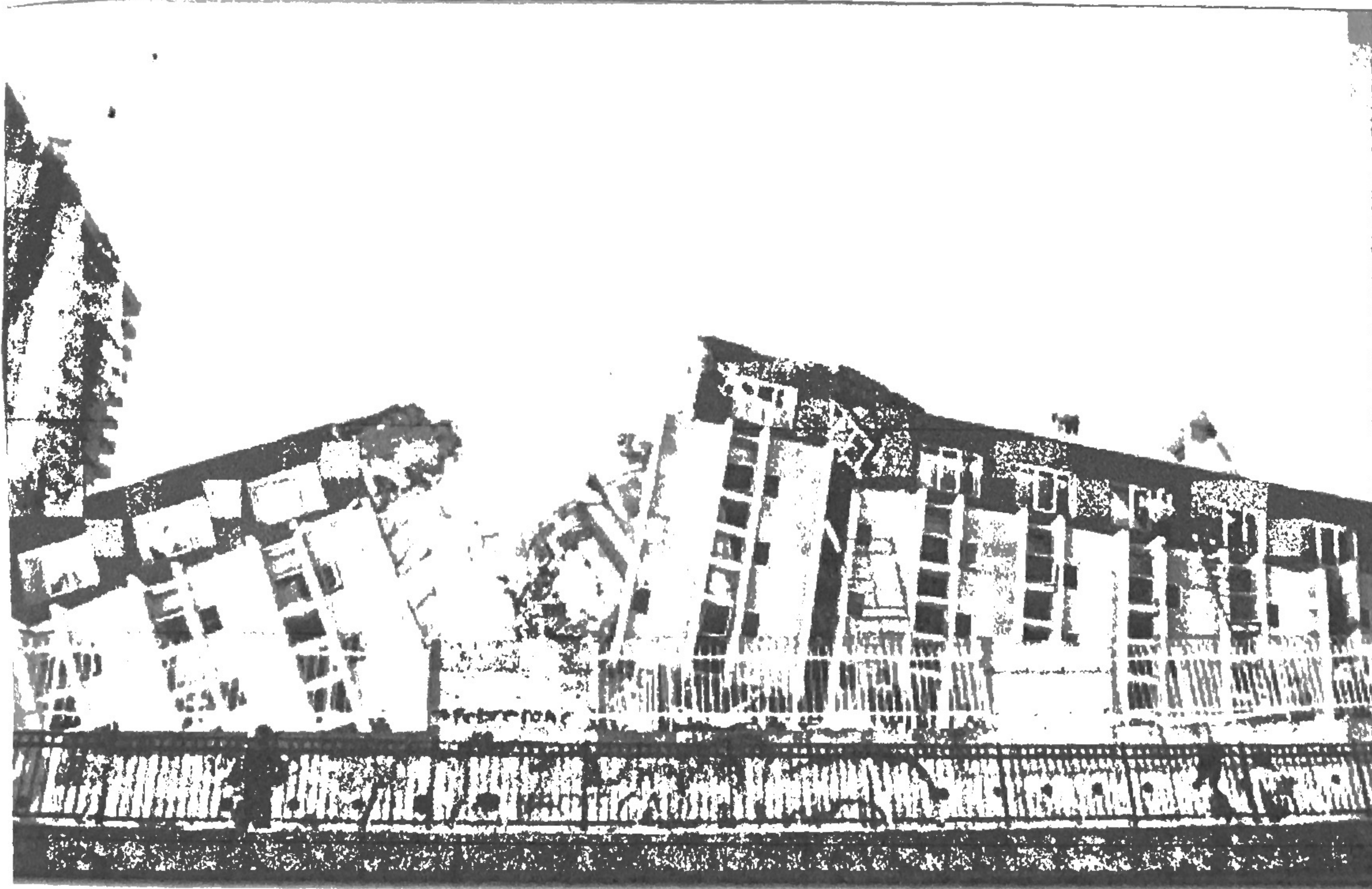


Image: Rescue workers search for victims and survivors after an apartment complex collapsed during an earthquake in Concepcion some 100 km (62 miles) south of the epicentre, February 27, 2010



Image: Vehicles that were driving along a highway that collapsed during the earthquake near Santiago are seen overturned on the asphalt Saturday Feb. 27, 2010 after an 8.8-magnitude earthquake struck central Chile early Saturday.

Tremors were felt in many Argentine cities, including Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Mendoza and La Rioja. Tremors were felt as far north as the city of Ica in southern Peru (approx. 2400 km).

The tsunami waves that followed this event affected the coastal regions between the cities of Valparaíso and Valdivia, with minor effects as far as Coquimbo.

The tsunami devastated several coastal towns from Tirúa to Pichilemu (spanning over 500 Km.), and damaged the port at Talcahuano.