



HIGH COMMISSION FOR ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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PRESS RELEASE

Thursday 7th September 2017

All of us have been deeply touched by the images of devastation to our sister island of Barbuda. Pictures of the destruction continue to be shared from neighbouring islands as this mammoth storm moves across the Caribbean leaving devastation of catastrophic proportions in its wake.

Late yesterday evening the Honourable Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, Gaston Browne, travelled to Barbuda with the police and officials from the emergency medical services. Two helicopters landed on the island to assist nationals and assess the damage caused by Hurricane Irma. Two plane loads of aid have also successfully been delivered.

Barbuda, Antigua's sister island, received the brunt of the Category 5 storm as the eye passed over it. Reports have revealed that most buildings were damaged and about 60% of the residents are now homeless. Tragically one fatality has been reported.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda has declared a State of Emergency and all efforts in the next few days will be concentrating on sourcing emergency relief for Barbuda. The islands are also bracing themselves for the next storm, Hurricane Jose, which is expected to hit over the weekend.

On his visit, Prime Minister Gaston Browne offered words of support and encouragement to the residents of Barbuda "Hurricane Irma is a timely and painful reminder of the vulnerability of our small island states. In just a few hours our entire country was decimated and the slow and complex task of rebuilding now lies ahead. I would like to reassure the residents of Barbuda of the Government's complete commitment to that task."

Her Excellency Karen-Mae Hill, the High Commissioner of Antigua and Barbuda said "Our thoughts and prayers remain with all the people of the Caribbean and the southern United States. The High Commission will continue to monitor the current situation with Hurricane Irma and the expected arrival of Hurricane Jose."

Notes to Editors

The High Commission has made arrangements with the following charities and agencies where donations could be made:



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Rebuild Barbuda Appeal Fund

Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland
Account Name: Ascension Trust (Charity #1127204)
Account No.: 10019655
Sort Code: 16-00-93
Reference: 'Rebuild Barbuda Appeal Fund'

Information on the relief effort for Antigua and Barbuda will be available on the High Commission's website www.antigua-barbuda.com and social media pages, www.facebook.com/abhcuk, [www.twitter.com/abhcuk](https://twitter.com/abhcuk) and www.instagram.com/abhcuk. Additional information can also be obtained from: <https://www.facebook.com/abstvradio/> and <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>. The High Commission can be reached during office hours on 0207 258 0070. For emergency calls outside office hours please call 0203 668 3803 until otherwise indicated.