



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Royal Bermuda Regiment and Bermuda Police support relief efforts in the Caribbean

The Hon. Wayne M. Caines JP, MP

Minister of National Security

15th September 2017

Mr. Speaker, I am immensely proud to advise this Honourable House that a contingent of thirty (30) men and women of the Royal Bermuda Regiment and six (6) Bermuda Police officers have now deployed to support the UK's efforts in the Caribbean Overseas Territories devastated by Hurricane Irma.

Mr. Speaker, the contingent's travel arrangements are for a direct deployment via UK military airlift to the Turks & Caicos Islands. Bermuda police are expected to move onwards to the British Virgin Islands where they will join UK and Cayman Islands police already supporting law and order there. Regiment soldiers will be embedded with the 24 Commando Engineer Group where they will put their specialist Hurricane response skills to best use.

Mr. Speaker, these teams from our security services have mobilized quickly and have answered a call to serve beyond these

shores in what will be trying circumstances. Bermuda has a history of helping our Regional partners and the Government is extremely proud to support this effort. The training and time invested in these men and women will be proven worthwhile. I have every confidence they will represent the best of Bermuda and will significantly contribute to the humanitarian effort required to support those impacted by the recent storm.

This is the seventh (7th) time the Regiment has been called upon to assist its Caribbean neighbours with Disaster relief, having deployed most recently to the Turks and Caicos in 2008, Grenada in 2005 and the Cayman Islands in 2004. On the 2004 Cayman operation, the BPS also sent twelve (12) officers who spent fifteen days there in the wake of Hurricane Ivan.

Mr. Speaker, I can also advise this Honourable House that neither deployment will adversely affect the operational readiness of the Regiment or the BPS here at home.

On this occasion the Bermuda Contingent will join the UK effort including over 700 troops and 50 police officers to support the islands' recovery from the devastating effects of Hurricane Irma.

Mr. Speaker, this call for aid could not go unheard. Bermudians of every walk of life can trace a common West Indian heritage. These are our brothers and sisters in need and it is right that we heed their call for assistance and send them the very best we have to offer.

This Bermuda Contingent goes with our prayers for their safety and for the speedy recovery of the Islands so tragically impacted by this hurricane. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.