

# EU mobilises further assistance for Hurricane Irma hit islands: Statement by Commissioner for Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, Christos Stylianides

*"Hurricane Irma has left a trail of devastation across many countries.*

*It is our moral duty to help those in need whose lives and homes are being destroyed or severely threatened.*

*We stand in full solidarity with all those in the Caribbean and in the USA during and after the storm. For as long as it takes.*

*Last week we mobilised our emergency response tools and our 24/7 Emergency Response Coordination Centre has been in continuous coordination with our EU Member States on any assistance required.*

*Today additional EU funding is on its way.*

*We have now released an initial amount of humanitarian assistance of €2 million for the most affected islands in the Caribbean. This will help support key sectors such as water and sanitation, health, waste management, logistics.*

*Further EU funding for reconstruction efforts is of course available in terms of longer term assistance. This new support comes on top of our EU Copernicus satellite support, which has been providing essential mapping services since last week.*

*EU humanitarian experts deployed across the region continue to help the local authorities and coordinate aid deliveries.*

*Let me make it clear that any country in the region can request our help through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. We stand ready to provide any further assistance to the affected countries."*

## **Background**

The EU mobilised all its emergency response tools last week before Hurricane Irma approached the Caribbean. As a first step last week, the EU's Copernicus satellite mapping system was activated to deliver high quality maps for Guadeloupe, Saint Barthélemy and Saint Martin at the request of France, and of Sint Maarten at the request of the Netherlands, as well as for the British Virgin Islands. The Commission has also activated Copernicus for areas of Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

The Commission is also supporting a Disaster Relief Emergency Fund operation by the International Federation of the Red Cross, providing basic relief kits to the affected populations in Antigua and Barbuda. Furthermore, a team of EU humanitarian experts is deployed in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic. The EU also supported the US authorities during Hurricane Harvey by providing use of its Copernicus satellite service.

**For more information**

[Factsheet “EU: a world leader in helping those affected by crises”](#)

[Factsheet “EU Civil Protection Mechanism”](#)

[Video](#) and [photo](#) of Commissioner Stylianides’ recent visit to the Commission’s Emergency Response Coordination Centre

Video: [European Commission’s Emergency Response Centre](#)

[Website of the Commission’s Emergency Response Coordination Centre](#)