

Relief operation in storm-battered Dominica 'going in the right direction,' says UN official

3 October 2017 – Two weeks after Hurricane Maria devastated Dominica, the island nation's recovery is becoming more evident as the main port has reopened and supplies of food, water and basic necessities are being regularly delivered to the people, a United Nations Resident Coordinator in the region said today, while stressing that are still "major challenges" ahead.

Briefing reporters at UN Headquarters in New York via telephone from Dominica, Stephen O'Malley, who is the UN Resident Coordinator for Barbados and for the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, said "the [relief] operation is going in the right direction."

According to the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), this is the fifth time on record that Dominica has taken a direct hit from a hurricane, but never has it faced a storm of such ferocity and strength. The hurricane brought life in Dominica to a standstill.

"What was shocking to me was that the island, which was known as 'the nature island of the Caribbean,' was almost totally brown [in the wake of the category 5 storm]. But now, the green has started to come back," he said, noting that this progress is being matched on the ground, where the situation has begun to stabilize.

Garbage is now being collected and roads are opening up, noted Mr. O'Malley, adding that power has come back to the capital, Roseau, and a few other locations.

"We are able to reach almost everybody now, and we are getting food water and basic supplies out to people," he said, cautioning at the same time that there will certainly be major challenges ahead.

He explained that the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)), working with the Government, has distributed 60 metric tonnes of food last week to about 30,000 people, which is about half the population, and that more than 40 UN agency workers are on the ground to help the population.

The Government has asked the UN to work with it on a logistics plan to ensure regular delivery of relief supplies. "The Government is also focused on its recovery plan," said Mr. O'Malley, noting that Dominican officials will head to Washington, D.C. and present the details during the Fall Meetings of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"What we need to do now in Dominica is keep up this regular supply of the basics for people. Make sure the electricity comes up; getting people's water

supplies up; and getting markets open again; as well as health centres,” he explained, adding that the Government was also looking at ways to “get the economy off the ground,” especially as the reconstruction effort would be massive.

He went on to recall that the UN, its partners and the Government has last week launched an [emergency appeal](#) for \$31.1 million to reach 65,000 people over the next three weeks.

Responding to a question, he said that looking at the broad swathe of devastation across Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Turks and Caicos, and other islands and territories that were affected by this summer’s series of category five storms, Mr. O’Malley said the recovery, over time, could cost as much as \$1 billion, though he stressed there were no exact figures.

“It’s going to be a large-scale rebuilding effort that will take time,” he said.

[SDGs ‘take off’ in Nepal’s skies with UN development programme-airline partnership](#)

3 October 2017 – Through a partnership between the United Nations Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) and a private aircraft company, airplanes flying in Nepal’s skies will bear UN Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) branding icons, disseminating the globally-agreed targets far and wide.

“This is a [powerful example](#) to show the world that in partnership with the private sector, the [[2030 Agenda](#) for] Sustainable Development can really take off,” Renaud Meyer, the UNDP Country Director for Nepal, said in a news release announcing the new aircraft livery.

“We are very pleased to see these airplanes flying in Nepali skies, spreading messages on how we can tackle some of the world’s biggest challenges,” he added.

In addition to the SDG-branded aircrafts, the partnership between UNDP and Yeti Airlines also includes the Goals features on airport shuttle buses and boarding passes, information leaflets on sustainable development, social media campaigns as well as a link on the airline’s website for donating to UNDP programmes in country.

Thousands across the landlocked mountainous country, including those residing in remote areas – where aircrafts provide a vital transport and connectivity link – are expected to be informed about the [SDGs](#) through concrete and

action-oriented messages, noted the news release.



A Yeti Airlines plane in the UN SDG branding at Kathmandu airport, Nepal. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi, UNDP Nepal



A Yeti Airlines plane and passenger shuttle buses bearing the SDG branding at Kathmandu airport, Nepal. Photo: Laxmi Prasad Ngakhusi, UNDP Nepal

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Also under the partnership, UNDP and the airline will undertake joint initiatives to raise awareness on sustainable development, and mobilize stakeholders and advocates for its implementation.

The partnership will also explore, adopt and promote innovative and sustainable business models in the aviation and tourism industry that would help Nepal meet some specific SDG indicators in the areas of climate change adaptation, poverty reduction and gender equality, it added.

The SDGs, adopted by UN Member States in 2015, have a specific goal on partnerships, including with the private sector given their potential to mobilize resources, technology and innovation to aid and accelerate the implementation of the overall sustainable development agenda.

“In Nepal, we have been exploring ways in which the UN could help the local businesses grow more responsible and SDG friendly,” said Mr. Meyer, expressing hope that more such “inspiring” joint initiatives will be unveiled to help the country meet the global development goals by 2030.

[Global Goals embraced by Japanese society, UN deputy chief says, wrapping up Tokyo visit](#)

3 October 2017 – Concluding her three-day visit to Japan today, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed today noted how much the Japanese society has embraced the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) as a compass guiding to a more prosperous future for themselves.

“Throughout my visit, I have been impressed to see how much [SDGs](#) are embraced enthusiastically in Japan by the business community represented by Japan

Business Federation (*Keidanren*), civil society, media, and young students,” said Ms. Mohammed.

Referring to her visit to the Paralympic Support Center at the Nippon Foundation, which is extremely inclusive in its barrier-free structure and in its workforce, as well as her meeting with the ‘Tokyo2020’ Olympic and Paralympic Games Organizing Committee, she expressed her high expectation that taking Paralympic sport as starting point, Japan would open up towards people with disabilities as a whole. The Deputy Secretary-General shared these observations in her meeting with Foreign Minister Kono Taro today.

Ms. Mohammed also paid a visit to the exhibition at JICA World Square on ethical fashion titled “Fashion as Action: Supporting Sustainable Society Through Clothes.” The exhibition explains how consumers can contribute to sustainable development by being sensitive to how fashion items they buy are produced and disposed. The Deputy Secretary-General was extremely impressed with how these messages were communicated with fun in an innovative way.



Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed pays courtesy call on Shinichi Kitaoka, President of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Photo: UNIC Tokyo/Takashi Okano



Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed pays courtesy call on Taro Kono, Minister of Foreign Affairs on Japan. Photo: UNIC Tokyo/Takashi Okano



Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed attends a working luncheon with heads of UN agencies in Japan at United Nations University. Photo: UNIC Tokyo/Takashi Okano

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[Top UN relief official urges support for scaling up response to Rohingya refugee crisis](#)

3 October 2017 – With over half a million Rohingya refugees having fled their homes in Myanmar since violence erupted in late August, the top United Nations humanitarian official has underscored that the solution to the crisis needs to be found within Myanmar.

“The root causes of this crisis, as you know, are in Myanmar and the solutions need to be found in Myanmar,” Mark Lowcock, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, told journalists at a news conference in Cox’s Bazar, where many of those fled are taking refuge.

Noting that relief operations are gathering momentum, he informed the media that over the past six weeks, aid agencies have delivered more than nine million food rations, provided more than 300,000 with water and sanitation support, inoculated more than 100,000 children and provided some 50,000 with counselling and psycho-social support.

However, the sheer numbers of those in need mean that much more has to be done.

“The conditions in the camps are terrible. We need to do a lot more to scale up beyond what we have done so far,” added Mr. Lowcock, urging the international community to scale up their support.



ERC arrives at Balukhali Makeshift Settlement, Cox’s Bazar District, Bangladesh. OCHA/Anthony Burke

He also announced that, as the manager of the UN Central Emergency Response Fund ([CERF](#)), he today allocated an additional \$12 million to relief efforts and enable humanitarian partners kick-start life-saving critical health care, access to clean water and sanitation and camp management in the new sites.

These funds follow a previous CERF allocation of \$7 million, bringing the total CERF support to \$19 million.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), the number of Rohingya refugees who have fled into Bangladesh from Myanmar has now reached 509,000.

UN agencies, including the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)), the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) and the International Organization for Migration ([IOM](#)), humanitarian partners, together with the Bangladeshi Government have been working alleviate the plight of those uprooted from their homes as well as supporting the host community cope with the scale of the influx.

Yesterday, a diarrhoea treatment centre was opened at the Kutupalong Refugee Camp, where refugees who have been living since 1992 have taken in thousands of newcomers. By the end of this week, there will be a total of 80 beds at the centres in three locations, with two more centres planned to open next week.

UN agencies together with the authorities have conducted an immunization campaign for children to protect them against measles and have launched another one against cholera. Similarly, UN humanitarian staff along with refugee volunteers, are visiting refugee camps and informal settlements to

identify people who may be sick but have not sought treatment.

Pioneer of work in women's reproductive health appointed head of UN Population Fund

3 October 2017 – United Nations [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today appointed Natalia Kanem of Panama to head the UN's women's health agency.

In making the announcement, UN spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric [highlighted](#) that Dr. Kanem “brings to the position more than three decades of strategic leadership and management in the fields of medicine, public health, international peace and development, human rights and social justice.”

Currently serving as the agency's Acting Executive Director, the new Under-Secretary-General is the fifth Executive Director of the UN Population Fund ([UNFPA](#)). Prior to that, she was the UNFPA's Deputy Executive Director for Programmes and earlier, its Representative in Tanzania.

She started her career in academia with the Johns Hopkins and Columbia University schools of medicine and public health.

While serving as a Ford Foundation Officer from 1992 to 2005, Dr. Kanem helped pioneer work in women's reproductive health and sexuality, in particular through her position as the representative for West Africa. She then served at the Foundation headquarters, becoming Deputy Vice-President for its worldwide peace and social justice programmes in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and North America.