

# [News story: Hurricane Irma: Foreign Secretary's visit to the UK Overseas Territories in the Caribbean](#)

The Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson visited the Caribbean to see the impact of the UK's relief effort following Hurricane Irma. He also met the governors and others leading the recovery work, and visited communities working to repair major damage.

## **Arriving in the Caribbean**

Arriving at Bridgetown airport in Barbados yesterday, 12 September, the Foreign Secretary said:

We're in Bridgetown in Barbados which is absolutely crucial for the operation of British armed forces in getting in huge numbers of men and supplies and police officers into areas affected by Hurricane Irma, in Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos.

It's an extraordinary effort, the biggest military effort by British services since Libya, and I really think it's starting to work, I think they've been very well received. You're seeing confidence starting to rise on those islands, making some more announcements tomorrow about some of the funding that's coming through.

But the key message that we're making, we're giving is that we're not just here to support these islands to get back up on their feet, we're here for the long term. These are British people, and we're here to help.

[Foreign Secretary speaking in Barbados](#)

## **Visiting Anguilla**

Visiting the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Anguilla today, the Foreign Secretary said:

I'm here outside the hospital in Anguilla where they've had huge amount of storm damage, about 60% of the facility is damaged, but the Royal Marines, the Royal Engineers are here and they've been putting it back on its feet and steadily repairing it. A dozen or more have just arrived with their tools and getting on with the job of putting Anguilla back on its feet.

It's incredible to see the resilience of the people here, I've seen trees stripped of every leaf, telephone poles snapped in 2, electricity poles torn down, roofs blown off. Quite unbelievable destruction but you can't destroy the spirit of these people.

[Foreign Secretary speaking in Anguilla](#)

## Visiting the British Virgin Islands

After meeting the authorities and local communities, the Foreign Secretary said:

I'm in Tortola in the British Virgin Islands and this is the East End Area and we're looking at, as you can see, incredible devastation but it is starting to come back on its feet and the UK is helping. £25 million announced today by our government in addition to the £32 million we've already pledged. We are getting on with the work of sending our Armed Services around, with the police helping to build up confidence on the streets.

Yes there are difficulties distributing some of the aid, getting water and food to the places we want it to get to but slowly it's happening and you've got the UK government working very, very closely with the authorities here in the British Virgin Islands.

What's so incredible is the spirit of these Islands. The hurricane can come in, it can knock down absolutely everything in its path but it can't bow or bend the spirit of the British Virgin Islands.

[Foreign Secretary speaking in BVI](#)

Find out more about the [government's response to Hurricane Irma](#).