

Press release: UK matches public donations to Hurricane Irma British Red Cross Appeal

The UK government today (Saturday) pledges to double any public donations to the British Red Cross appeal for victims of Hurricane Irma.

For every £1 given towards the relief effort in the Caribbean, another £1 will be added through the Department for International Development's Aid Match scheme, up to £3 million.

Donations will support people through the region, including in the badly hit British Overseas Territories of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands and Turks and Caicos.

Secretary of State for International Development Priti Patel says:

Today we are announcing we will double any public donations which are made to the British Red Cross appeal through DFID's Aid Match scheme.

The overwhelming generosity of the UK public in times of crisis is one of the things that makes Britain truly great.

This will help get water, food, shelter and power to those left devastated by Hurricane Irma.

This donation is on top of the £32million already pledged by the UK government.□

Mike Adamson, chief executive, British Red Cross says:

We would like to thank DFID for supporting our Hurricane Irma appeal, raising urgent funds for those affected by this devastating disaster. The most powerful hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic has left major destruction in its wake. Red Cross teams are on the ground now supporting people in shelters, providing first aid and doing whatever they can to help.

Ms Patel's pledge came after she visited her department's disaster response centre in Kemble, Gloucestershire on Friday.

While there, she saw vital aid begin its journey to the disaster zone, including 10,000 UK aid buckets and 5,000 UK solar lanterns. This aid is will reach those in need in the next few days by the quickest and most effective

route possible.

Ms Patel also pledged on Friday to double the number of humanitarian experts in the region from four to eight, who are now working in the field across several islands to assess need. Further advisors are expected to arrive in the coming days.

□In addition to delivering emergency humanitarian relief, DFID is working with agencies across the Caribbean to plan how to rebuild and reconstruct areas damaged by the hurricane.

To donate to the British Red Cross Hurricane Irma appeal visit:

www.redcross.org.uk/HurricaneIrma or call 0300 456 4999.

Notes to editors

- UK Aid Match is funded from the International Development budget. The UK Government has agreed to match public donations up to £3million.
- Donations must be from people (not businesses) living in the UK.
- This funding is on top of the £32 million already announced by the UK Government.