

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Caribbean Hotel And Tourism Assoc. Urging Region's Tourism Industries To Help Haiti, Bahamas

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The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is urging the region's tourism industry stakeholders to assist with both immediate and sustained relief efforts to support the people of Haiti and parts of The Bahamas which were hardest hit by Hurricane Mathew this month, a press release the association issued on Thursday has made known.

"Our neighbors in Haiti and The Bahamas have borne the brunt of this powerful storm and the recovery and restoration process will be long and difficult," said Karolin Troubetzkoy, president of the regional trade association.

Working with the national hotel and tourism associations in Haiti and The Bahamas, CHTA is directing tourism industry stakeholders to local organizations which are coordinating on-the-ground relief, accepting and directing donations of cash, equipment and supplies.

According to Troubetzkoy, a two-step approach is important for the destinations to rebound as quickly as possible. "First, we must meet the immediate needs of people. Beyond that, we need to support long-term efforts which are essential to sustained recovery".

To do this, CHTA is developing a fundraising initiative through the online auction channel CharityBuzz.com with which CHTA previously collaborated on a relief and recovery project for Dominica. Regional hoteliers are invited to donate room nights for the auction to benefit residents in Haiti and The Bahamas who are struggling to put their lives back in order. Room nights can be contributed by contacting CHTA's dedicated auction email at ch4haiti@gmail.com.

In Haiti, Hurricane Matthew is reported to have claimed almost 1,000 lives and devastated the agricultural and fishing sectors, the island's flora, natural attractions, schools and homes, leaving thousands of families homeless and unable to meet basic human needs. In The Bahamas, reports indicate that the most severe damage occurred on Grand Bahama Island, North and Central Andros, and the Berry Islands.

National hotel and tourism associations have reported international airports are operational as are major seaports which will assist in the recovery operations and in welcoming visitors to those areas which were least impacted.

The majority of the hotels in The Bahamas are operating while others expect to be fully operational over the next several weeks. Similarly, in Haiti, 90 percent of the hotels are operating since the northern part of the country was not as severely affected as in the southwest part of the nation.

Items of greatest immediate need include: tarpaulin, building supplies, mattresses, bed linens, hygiene kits, water, diapers, evaporated milk, infant formula, wipes, baby clothes, soap, shampoo, shoes, solar powered lamps, non-perishable items, rice, flour, oatmeal, sugar, tuna, canned spaghetti, sardines, fruit cups, peanut butter, jam and corned beef

To assist with immediate relief, national hotel associations in The Bahamas and Haiti have advised that cash or in-kind contributions can be made as follows:

Haiti Donations of Cash or Goods: FOOD FOR THE POOR: www.foodforthe poor.org (Cash Donations) SOW A SEED: www.sowaseedonline.org (Cash Donations) MEDISHARE: www.projectmedishare.org (Cash Donations) PRODEV: www.prodevhaiti.org (Education Focused - there has been considerable damage to schools. Cash donations can be made on the website. For contributions of equipment and supplies contact info@prodevhaiti.org).

Goods can be donated by shipping them to: 777, Route Nationale # 1, Titanyen, Haiti
Telephone: 786 375-1234

The Bahamas Donations of Cash: Bahamas Red Cross - USD Monetary donations can be deposited through Destination CHASUS33, (IBK) JP Morgan Chase Bank, New York, ABA021000021; Payable to Bank: /001 1 188448 (BBK) ROYCBSNS RBC Royal Bank Bahamas Limited. Beneficiary Name: The Bahamas Red Cross Society, Account Number & Branch/ Transit / Account number 05165/ 289 423 6 - John F. Kennedy Drive Branch

Donations of Supplies/Goods: For details on shipping goods/supplies duty and tax free, visit <http://bit.ly/2dx1ZaP>

Feature Image: In Jeremie, Haiti, Hurricane Matthew claimed the life of a pregnant woman, whose remains were carried in a coffin by local residents on Friday, October 7, 2016.

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