



AmericasRelief

AmericasRelief Team
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NEWS OF INTEREST TO OUR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

PRESS RELEASE

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NICARAGUA TO BE THE FIRST COUNTRY TO JOIN *AMERICASRELIEF* DISASTER RELIEF INITIATIVE

MIAMI, FL – *AmericasRelief* Team has created a new effort aimed at providing logistical support to countries affected by humanitarian and natural disasters. After a positive first meeting with General Consuls from the Spanish-speaking countries in the Caribbean Basin in October, *AmericasRelief* Team (**ART**) met separately on December 8th with Consul General of Nicaragua Jose Velasquez and Executive Secretary of SE-SINAPRED (*Sistema Nacional Para la Prevencion, Mitigacion y Atencion de Desastres*) Lic. Geronimo J. Giusto-Robelo to further discuss an alliance.

Led by Velazquez's initiative, Giusto-Robelo, who reports directly to the President of Nicaragua, was the first governmental emergency response entity representative to be briefed on *Americas Alliance for Disaster Relief* initiative throughout the Caribbean Basin. He also provided **ART** with concrete feedback on the specific needs of the country and obstacles encountered in past relief efforts. He committed to transmit the information to his country's decision-makers and push for the cooperation agreement to be signed as well as to disseminate it to the other countries' emergency teams at the upcoming emergency summit gathering all Central American countries, the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disaster (CEPREDENAC), to be held in the first quarter of 2007. "I look forward to working with **ART** and feel confident that my colleagues in Central America will appreciate this valuable initiative aimed to ensure effective and timely humanitarian aid to those in need," expressed Giusto.

Collaborating countries in **ART**'s initiative would provide first-hand communications, priority to the humanitarian aid being shipped, and would recommend security regarding the relief aid and/or the personnel involved. In turn, **ART** would be the one-stop for all non-profits and for the countries in need creating an effective and logistically sound system to identifying, transporting and delivering relief aid. Relief items

needed following a crisis would be shipped through **ART**'s Bank Depository of Charity Cargo carriers and others. "The goal of this initiative is for all the countries in the Caribbean Basin to enter into a cooperation agreement to facilitate effective logistics integration and management of relief," explains Teo Babun, Executive Director of *AmericasRelief* Team. "We hope that Nicaragua's commitment will prompt other countries to join us in our initiative."

On October 3rd, General Consul of Honduras, Fernando Agurcia, Guatemala, Beatriz Illescas, El Salvador, Conchy Ruiz; and Nicaragua, Jose Velasquez, who as Dean of the Consular Corps in South Florida also represented the remaining Consuls from Central America, participated in the round-table discussion and introduction of a new initiative of *AmericasRelief* Team titled: *Americas Alliance for Disaster Relief*. The General Consuls vouched to present the initiative to their respective government and the pertinent emergency response agencies in order to form alliances.

Brian C. Dean, President of Florida FTAA and Ivan Barrios, representing Enterprise Florida introduced the Consuls to *AmericasRelief* Team. Barrios noted in 2005 Governor Jeb Bush applauded the efforts of the organization when it coordinated more than \$5 million in food, clothing, and additional supplies to Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and other countries in the aftermath of Hurricane Stan. Dean noted the importance of humanitarian aid in the U.S. and the State of Florida's efforts to reach out to the Caribbean and Central America.



ABOUT AMERICASRELIEF TEAM:

*Americas*Relief Team has been operational since 2003. The recent active hurricane seasons helped prove the organizational strength of the organization and helped propel the organization. All staff is on a volunteer basis yet, the level of knowledge and dedication is highly professional.

Members include top executives from Carnival Corporation; Cross International; FedEx Latin America; Feed the Children; Food for the Poor; Lucent Technologies; Pharmed Group Corp.; Caribbean Central America Action (CCAC); Florida Stevedoring; G.O.A.L., Inc.; Miami-Dade Aviation Department; Port of Miami Terminal Operating Co. (POMTOC), Seaboard Marine; Florida Association for Volunteer Action in the Caribbean and the Americas (FAVACA); Gordon, Reyes & Co.; Harvest International; Pan American Development Foundation (PADF); WorldCity Media; Enterprise Florida and World Vision-South Florida.

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AmericasHumanitarian Logistics Relief Team

Getting disaster relief in effective ways to our Caribbean Basin friends