

House of Commons: Written Statement (HCWS1017)

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

Written Statement made by: **Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Multilateral, Human Rights, Latin America and the Caribbean (Chris Elmore)** on 04 Nov 2025.

Hurricane Melissa: the UK's response

I am writing to update the House on the impact of Hurricane Melissa in the Caribbean and the action the Government is taking in response.

Hurricane Melissa has caused severe flooding, landslides and infrastructure damage across Jamaica, Haiti and Cuba, and also impacted parts of Dominican Republic and The Bahamas. The UK Overseas Territories of the Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands and Bermuda reported low to minimal damage. Over 5.5 million people have been affected in the region. At least 65 deaths have been reported across the region; actual numbers may well be higher.

Hurricane Melissa is the strongest ever storm to make landfall in Jamaica – where it hit the south-western part of the country on 28th October as a Category 5 hurricane.

At least 32 deaths are now reported, and the number may yet rise. 25,000 people have been displaced. All western parishes have suffered significant damage, over half the country remains without power, internet or mobile connectivity, with many roads blocked and water systems affected. All British High Commission staff and dependents on platform remain safe and accounted for, and I would like to pay tribute to the dedicated work they have done in recent days in the most difficult circumstances. In Haiti, assessments and relief efforts continue to be frustrated by damaged or impassable roads and bridges. Priority needs include shelter materials, food, water and hygiene supplies, medical support, and fuel. In Cuba, infrastructure and services are likely to be impacted for some time, including the national power grid already under severe pressure.

The Foreign Secretary has kept in close contact with the Jamaican Foreign Minister throughout this crisis to offer UK support and solidarity. The Foreign Secretary, Minister Doughty and I have also kept in close touch with the Governments of Haiti, Dominican Republic, Cuba, The Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Turks and Caicos Islands, and Bermuda.

Our efforts have involved close co-ordination between the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and colleagues in the Ministry of Defence, Home Office, Met Office and Department for Transport.

On 26 October, a UK military team pre-deployed to the Turks and Caicos Islands to support disaster management preparations and response. After Melissa passed, HMS Trent also deployed to the Turks and Caicos Islands to provide additional support and assist with local recovery efforts. As always, the UK stands ready to assist the UK Overseas Territories as required.

Given the UK's strong links with Jamaica, many thousands of British Nationals and UK residents were there during the storm.

Our consular operation organised an evacuation flight that arrived in the UK on Sunday 2nd November with just over 100 passengers. These British Nationals and their close family had been unable to make arrangements to leave Jamaica through commercial means. We estimate that around 1,600 British nationals have returned to the UK through commercial airlines and tour operators. Our consular services have been available on a round-the-clock basis and answered over 700 enquiries to date by phone or email. We are updating [Travel Advice](#) regularly to reflect the situation as it evolves. We created a portal ([Register Your Presence](#)) where British nationals in Jamaica have been able to provide their details and receive the latest updates. We will continue to provide consular support to British nationals still in country and direct those wanting to get home to the available commercial flights.

The UK is a longstanding champion of pre-arranged finance and our support has been instrumental in helping Jamaica set up a sophisticated Pre-Arranged Finance (PAF) framework with a reported maximum of \$1.6 billion available to respond to disasters through various financial instruments including anticipatory and contingent finance, insurance, and a catastrophe bond. We were a founding donor to the Caribbean regional risk pool CCRIF in 2007. As publicly announced by the CCRIF, Jamaica will receive around \$71m from hurricane insurance within 14 days.

In anticipation of Hurricane Melissa, UK funded financing mechanisms such as the Red Cross Disaster Risk Emergency Fund (DREF) and UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) have provided around \$8m to help vulnerable communities in Jamaica, Cuba and Haiti. The World Food Programme (WFP) in Haiti also provided anticipatory cash transfers to 9,400 households in high-risk areas ahead of Hurricane Melissa's landfall. \$4 million in Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) allocations, to which the UK contributes, were made to each of Haiti, Cuba and Jamaica.

The UK Government has itself mobilised £7.5 million in emergency funding, in addition to expert deployments to support the response. This includes £1 million to the Red Cross appeal and £1 million to the UN World Food Programme (WFP). The UK Overseas Territories are also sending support, for example the Cayman Islands Government has publicly pledged \$1.2 million to Jamaica.

These efforts aim to meet urgent needs, reinforce national coordination, and support recovery across Jamaica and the wider Caribbean.

To date, 2,800 emergency shelter kits and 1,728 solar lanterns have been delivered, supporting 14,000 people. A consignment of 1,104 hygiene kits is due to arrive in Montego Bay on 4th November. UK supply chain teams are continuing to scope further items, in coordination with the Government of Jamaica and regional partners.

Seven UK humanitarian experts are currently in Jamaica to assess needs and speed up delivery of aid. These include a Humanitarian Adviser, Logistician, and Humanitarian Affairs Officer, who are working to support the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The UK stands ready to support further deployment of humanitarian experts into UN agencies via the Standby Partnerships mechanism. In addition, we are responding to a request from the Government of Jamaica to deploy HMS Trent to assist with the relief effort. HMS Trent arrived off the coast of Jamaica today (4th November), having been pre-positioned in the region as part of the UK's permanent/ongoing presence in the region. Royal Engineers will be going ashore to help assess and repair key infrastructure, in coordination with Jamaican authorities. Should any Members' constituents wish to assist, the most effective way to help is by donating cash through trusted organisations. There are several trusted charities and organisations providing humanitarian relief on the ground in Jamaica. Here are links to two options for donations. The UK Government will

match public donations to the Red Cross appeal with up to £1 million.

[Donate to the Government of Jamaica's emergency appeal.](#)

[Donate to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent \(IFRC\) Societies appeal in support of Jamaica.](#)

The UK shares a deep and enduring relationship with communities across the Caribbean, and that bond has become even more important in this time of crisis. We are committed to standing alongside Jamaica and the region as it recovers and rebuilds. We will keep the House updated.