



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL & TOURISM
ASSOCIATION

For Immediate Release

Source: Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

Contacts:

Greta Andzenge, Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association/ Marketplace Excellence
greta@marketplaceexcellence.com +1 201-861-2056

Ellaine Deeken, Tourism Cares, ellaine.deeken@tourismcares.org

Caribbean Tourism Organization/Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association Hurricane Irma Update #4 can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/2w2MH1b>

HURRICANE TOURISM RECOVERY FUND LAUNCHED TO HELP DEVASTATED PARTS OF THE CARIBBEAN

Tourism Cares and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association partner to maximize travel industry support to restore destinations, tourism nonprofits and jobs

CORAL GABLES, Florida (September 12, 2017) - The travel and tourism industry has launched the Caribbean Hurricane Tourism Recovery Fund, uniting the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Industry with the noted Tourism Cares organization, which has helped to lead private sector efforts globally following crisis.

The fund will allow tourism industry stakeholders and friends of the region throughout the Caribbean and the world to pool their resources in support of vulnerable, devastated areas of the northern Caribbean that welcome millions of visitors in a region that supports 2.4 million tourism-related jobs.

The Fund's focus on the recovery of islands directly affected by Hurricane Irma complements existing relief efforts and gives the tourism industry a way to leverage its resources to help the region bounce back, ideally better than before.

"Tourism is the quickest way to rebound an economy, put people back to work and generate badly needed tax revenues to support reconstruction. By working together, we should be able to build a better and more resilient sector," said Karolin Troubetzkoy, president of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA). "The Recovery Fund will help us as we gather

together to marshal investment support for the most severely affected areas and to help hoteliers and their staff get back to business," she stated.

Troubetzkoy stressed the importance of strengthening the resilience of the sector and how CHTA and Tourism Cares aim to have the affected areas of the Caribbean ready to receive tourists for the spring and summer seasons of 2018, if not sooner. "Our nations and territories are dependent on tourism and they will need help to bounce back," Troubetzkoy said.

The greatest benefit will be felt in destinations such as St. Maarten-St. Martin, Anguilla, St. Barts, Barbuda, and the British and U.S. Virgin Islands. Included also will be the Turks and Caicos Islands and the southern Bahamas, where the impact of Irma is still being assessed.

"There is no shortage of need for us to fill, given the scope of the hurricane's impact. We know that there will be a considerable number of displaced employees who can benefit from skills training while properties are being restored. Hospitality studies programs in the schools need to be re-outfitted and strengthened, there are visitor centers at airports which were destroyed; the islands' hotel and tourism associations need support to help tourism rebound as quickly as possible. The needs are tremendous, and we are appealing to our tourism industry partners and friends of the Caribbean to help in a big way," she added.

Fund contributions will focus on affected communities and organizations in need of projects such as the physical restoration of damaged attractions and cultural tourism nonprofits, including historical monuments, beaches or open spaces and visitor centers. Other areas of focus include capacity building and support for nonprofit organizations and their facilities, systems and staff capabilities, to ensure that the social capital of the region recovers and gets stronger. Skills training, professional development and education-related initiatives will also be a focus, with the aim of helping those in the industry and those aspiring to be in the industry. These activities could include technical assistance and skilled volunteering programs.

Other investments based on need include training on volunteer management, disaster mitigation and planning, and marketing and communications support.

"This effort is a natural complement to all the wonderful giving we've already seen from the travel and tourism industry," said Mike Rea, CEO of Tourism Cares. "We can make the greatest difference by giving together with our industry, for our industry - especially in times of crisis. We will leverage not just our donations, but also our expertise and influence, and we will share our stories and lessons throughout the industry."

CHTA will work with its affiliate hotel and tourism associations to assess needs and identify responses, along with engaging members, partners and friends of the Caribbean. Tourism Cares will administer the fund, engage the industry and provide program expertise based on decades of philanthropic experience in disaster recovery.

Donations are tax deductible where applicable and may be made online (www.tourismcares.org/caribbean), by check (payable to Caribbean Hurricane Tourism Recovery Fund c/o Tourism Cares, 20 Vernon St., Norwood, MA 02062, USA) or by donating securities. Questions may be addressed to ellaine.deeken@tourismcares.org.

About the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA)

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) is the Caribbean's leading association representing tourism interests for national hotel and tourism associations. For more than 50 years, CHTA has been the backbone of the Caribbean hospitality industry. Working together with 1,000 hotel and allied members and 32 National Hotel Associations, CHTA is shaping the Caribbean's future and helping members to grow their businesses. Whether navigating new worlds like social media, sustainability, legislative issues, emerging technologies, data and intelligence or looking for avenues and ideas to better market and manage businesses, CHTA is helping members on matters that matter most.

For further information, visit www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com.

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