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MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 14th January 2021

For Immediate Release

ODPM HOSTS INAUGURAL NATIONAL DISASTER PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS MONTH MEETING

On **Wednesday 12th January 2021**, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) hosted the inaugural National Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Month (NDPPM) Multi-Sectoral Committee Meeting. The highly anticipated meeting was coordinated from the ODPM's Alternate National Emergency Operations Centre (ANEOC) at Mausica and brought together representatives of over 20 key Government Ministries and Agencies, using a blended approach.

Last year Cabinet declared that the month of May will be used to create nationally, a heightened sense of disaster awareness, preparation and readiness. May was selected as it is the month immediately prior to the commencement of the Atlantic Hurricane Season, which runs from June 1st to November 30th and coincides with the Wet Season. Together, these periods historically represent the greatest disaster-related losses in Trinidad and Tobago.

The meeting discussed the major disaster risks the country faces and were introduced to proposals for the four (4) week period of activities that places focus, on a different segment of the society weekly. In the first week emphasis will be placed on the individual and family followed by communities in week 2. The third week will highlight civil society organisations while a whole of society approach will be taken in the final week involving the Public and Private Sectors and Regional and International bodies.

The CEO of the ODPM, Major General (Retired) Rodney Smart, who chaired the meeting indicated that while the NDPPM would place focus on increasing citizens' participation and knowledge of disaster management during May, the cross-sectoral committee's strategic purpose was to develop a national culture of disaster prevention and preparedness. This he said would ultimately increase Trinidad and Tobago's disaster readiness and resilience, leading to a reduction in injuries, loss of lives and livelihoods and damage to property.

This very important intervention he said is aligned to both the UN Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and CDEMA's Comprehensive Disaster Management approach, the respective global and regional initiatives to which the Government has committed to accomplishing.

PHOTOS AND CAPTIONS



Photo and Caption 1: CEO of the ODPM, Major General (Retired) Rodney Smart conducting a presentation at the first NDPPM multi-sectoral meeting at the ODPM's Alternate NEOC, Mausica.



Photo and Caption 2: (R) Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and Caricom Affairs Mr. Bruce Lai along with a cross-section of the multi-sectoral committee members attending the first NDPPM meeting at the ODPM's Alternate NEOC, Mausica.



Photo and Caption 3: Mr. Haley Anderson, Manager Mitigation, Planning and Research Unit conducting a presentation for the NDPPM committee members.

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Issued by:

Public Information, Education and Community Outreach Unit