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MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

THE UNITED STATES DONATES COTS TO BOLSTER NATIONAL DISASTER RELIEF SUPPLIES

On **Wednesday 03 November 2021**, Mrs. Megan Kelly, the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy, officially handed over 939 military grade cots to Major General (Retired) Rodney Smart, the CEO of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM), on behalf of the Minister of National Security. The ceremony was held at the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) at Mausica.

In handing over the items, Mrs. Kelly said that the United States was extremely happy to donate the cots to the Government and People of Trinidad and Tobago and thanked the ODPM for its service to the nation and the region. She indicated that the ceremony was a symbolic representation of the strong friendship that exists between both countries and emphasised that *“Trinidad and Tobago can count on the U.S. in the joint effort of Disaster Risk Management, especially in addressing the effects of Climate Change.”*

Major General (Ret'd) Smart expressed his sincere gratitude to Mrs. Kelly for the United States' donation and for its continued commitment to improving Trinidad and Tobago's disaster risk reduction and management capabilities. The retired General also took the opportunity to thank the former Chief Military Liaison Officer, Colonel (Ret'd) Claudia Carrizales, who commenced the acquisition process for the cots. He underscored the point that the donation was an investment that will bolster the national disaster relief and recovery efforts, in particular, it will assist persons impacted by emergencies and disasters. The CEO further stated *“For someone who lost his or her home, the sense of safety and belonging, a simple, dry space to comfortably lay one's head, can go a long way in reducing the emotional trauma of disasters.”*

Of the 939 cots received, 470 will remain with the ODPM for operations in Trinidad while the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) will receive 469 for disaster relief operations in Tobago. These cots will augment the distribution the ODPM made to the Regional Corporations and TEMA in 2020.

Photos and Captions



Photo and Caption 1: Deputy Chief of Mission, Mrs. Megan Kelly, Embassy of the United States of America in Trinidad and Tobago officially hands over cots to Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart, Chief Executive Officer, ODPM to support disaster relief and recovery operations in Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean region.



Photo and Caption 2: Deputy Chief of Mission, Mrs. Megan Kelly, Embassy of the United States of America in Trinidad and Tobago officially hands over cots to Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart, Chief Executive Officer, ODPM. From (L) First Lieutenant Althea Davidson, Bi-lateral Affairs Officer, Military Liaison Office; Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart, Chief Executive Officer, ODPM; Deputy Chief of Mission, Mrs. Megan Kelly, Embassy of the United States of America in Trinidad and Tobago; and Lieutenant Commander James Brown, SCO Chief, Military Liaison Office.



Photo and Caption 3: From (L) Training and Education Specialist, Ms. Franchesca Peters, Operations Manager Mr. Dennis Marcelle, Lieutenant Commander James Brown, SCO Chief, Military Liaison Office, Deputy Chief of Mission, Mrs. Megan Kelly, Embassy of the United States of America in Trinidad and Tobago, Major General (Ret'd) Rodney Smart, Chief Executive Officer, ODPM; First Lieutenant Althea Davidson, Bi-lateral Affairs Officer, Military Liaison Office, Mitigation Manager, Mr. Haley Anderson and IT Specialist Major (Ret'd) Fareed Muhammed.

END

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