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OECS Prime Ministers Pledge Solidarity and Support for St. Vincent and the Grenadines Following Hurricane Beryl Devastation

In a show of regional solidarity and support, Prime Ministers from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) visited St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Tuesday July 16th 2024, to witness firsthand the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl. The visit underscores the commitment of OECS leaders to aid in the recovery and rebuilding efforts following the hurricane's severe impact, particularly on the Grenadines.

The visiting delegation included Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit of Dominica, Prime Minister Hon. Dickon Mitchell of Grenada, Prime Minister Hon. Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, Prime Minister Hon. Dr. Terrance Drew of St. Kitts and Nevis, Prime Minister Hon. Phillip J. Pierre of St. Lucia and Premier Juliana O'Connor-Connolly of the Cayman Islands.

Premier O'Connor-Connolly of the Cayman Islands personally delivered essential supplies and a significant cash donation, which she handed over to Prime Minister Dr. The Hon. Ralph Gonsalves on the tarmac.

The tour included visits to Union Island and Canouan, two of the hardest-hit areas. Union Island was particularly devastated, with significant infrastructure damage and widespread destruction. Canouan also faced substantial impacts, affecting many residents and businesses.

During the media briefing, Prime Minister Gonsalves expressed gratitude for the overwhelming support from his OECS counterparts. "The solidarity shown by our regional leaders is a testament to the strength of our Caribbean community. Their visit and pledges of support are crucial as we begin the long journey of recovery and rebuilding," he said.

Prime Minister Skerrett of Dominica, who has experienced similar challenges in his country, emphasized the importance of regional cooperation in times of crisis. "We are here to support St. Vincent and the Grenadines, just as they have supported us in the past. Together, we will overcome this disaster," he stated.

Prime Minister Mitchell of Grenada, also facing challenges from Hurricane Beryl in his own country, affirmed his commitment to aid St. Vincent and the Grenadines. "Despite our own struggles, we stand with our neighbors. Our unity is our strength," he said.

Prime Minister Browne of Antigua and Barbuda, Prime Minister Dr. Drew of St. Kitts and Nevis, and Prime Minister Pierre of St. Lucia echoed these sentiments, highlighting the shared resolve to support affected communities and enhance disaster preparedness and response across the region. The OECS leaders took the opportunity to meet briefly before Premier O'Connor-Connolly's departure and then proceeded to visit the southern Grenadines to further assess the damage and needs of the affected areas.

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