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St. Vincent and the Grenadines donates US 1 million to Cuba

Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves pledged US 1 million dollars towards the Cuban Government as a show of solidarity, following the impact of Hurricane Rafael which affected Cuba recently.

Dr. Gonsalves made the announcement while addressing a farewell cocktail on Saturday November 23, to honor the Cuban linesmen who played a crucial role in helping to restore the electrical infrastructure on Union Island following the devastation caused by Hurricane Beryl.

The Grenadine island was left ravaged by the hurricane, and the collaborative efforts of the Cuban brigade and VINLEC (St. Vincent Electricity Services Limited) proved instrumental restoring electricity to affected residents.

Prime Minister Gonsalves also highlighted the urgent need for continued collaboration between the two nations, noting that while electricity has been restored, many houses on Union Island were destroyed by Hurricane Beryl. He said

there is the possibility of seeking additional Cuban assistance to address a shortage of skilled construction workers to aid in rebuilding efforts.

CEO of VINLEC, Mr. Vaughn Lewis, expressed deep appreciation for the solidarity and teamwork between the workers of both nations.

"The camaraderie and shared determination forged between our teams have demonstrated the true power of partnership in times of crisis," he remarked.

Minister of Urban Development, Hon. Benarva Browne, Energy echoed the similar sentiments, noting that St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Cuba share a long-standing friendship which has impacted all sectors of development including health, education and infrastructural development.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, His Excellency Carlos Rodríguez Etcheverry, shared his pride in Cuba's ability to support its Caribbean neighbors in times of need. "Cuba stands ready to provide continued assistance to St. Vincent and the Grenadines as we navigate recovery and reconstruction together," he said.

Head of the Cuban Brigade Damian Jiménez, spoke on behalf of his team, emphasizing the strong bonds of brotherhood and mutual respect developed during the recovery efforts. "We leave not just as colleagues but as friends, united in our mission to restore energy and hope to the people of Union Island," he shared.

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