



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY

"Our humanitarian duty is inseparable from our commitment to community empowerment and our national identity as a people who care for one another."



Commander Origin Deleveaux, Jr., MSc, B.C.M., JP, Hon. DD
Commanding Officer, Bahamas Military and Maritime
Academy (BMMA)

Each year on August 19, the world honors World Humanitarian Day, commemorating the lives of humanitarian workers lost in the line of duty and reaffirming global commitments to alleviate human suffering during crises. The 2025 UN theme "Strengthening Global Solidarity and Empowering Local Communities" underscores the vital role of working hand-in-hand with communities, not merely as beneficiaries, but as active participants and leaders shaping their own futures (United Nations, 2025).

This day marks the anniversary of the tragic bombing of the UN headquarters in Baghdad on August 19, 2003, which claimed the lives of 22 humanitarian workers, including UN Special Representative Sergio Vieira de Mello

(United Nations, 2025). In an era of compounding threats from climate disasters to pandemics, armed conflict to food insecurity, resilience is a national security priority. For The Bahamas, our geographic exposure and regional responsibilities demand that our humanitarian response capabilities be world-class and future-ready.

The 2025 Global Humanitarian Overview highlights the growing scale of crises and the urgent need to fully fund humanitarian action. With 305.1 million people in 72 countries needing humanitarian assistance and only 35% of the 2024 appeal funded, millions go without the help they need (United Nations, 2025). In 2024 alone, over 383 humanitarian workers were killed, with hundreds more injured, kidnapped or detained (Alliance2015, 2025). The humanitarian system is stretched to its limits: underfunded, overwhelmed and under attack.





From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP UNDER PM DAVIS

Prime Minister the Hon. Philip Davis has positioned The Bahamas as a regional leader in humanitarian action through key initiatives that reflect both solidarity and proactive readiness, embodying the 2025 theme of strengthening global solidarity while empowering local communities.

Support for Haiti Relief & Humanitarian Response

In response to Haiti's prolonged crisis, Prime Minister Davis has led The Bahamas' commitment to regional security and humanitarian assistance. In March 2024, PM Davis announced the deployment of 120 RBDF personnel to establish a southern Bahamas blockade operation, working with the US Coast Guard, Turks and Caicos, and Cuban Border Patrol to share critical intelligence and align efforts (The Nassau Guardian, 2024). This was followed by the actual deployment of Royal Bahamas Defence Force (RBDF) officers to Haiti under the Multinational Security Support Mission, including the first-ever female RBDF officer to be deployed on an international mission (Loop News, 2024).



The Bahamian people themselves have demonstrated profound humanitarian spirit. As PM Davis noted, "We Bahamians are a compassionate people," and this compassion has been evident in community-led initiatives supporting Haiti relief efforts alongside broader Caribbean solidarity (Loop News, 2024).

Emergency Domestic Response: Community-Centered Approach

In the wake of the devastating Grand Bahama fire in June 2024, PM Davis deployed 27 RBDF officers and coordinated a multi-agency relief effort that exemplified the principle of empowering local communities (Government of The Bahamas, 2024). The response showcased the Defence Force's role in disaster logistics, evacuations and community reassurance while working directly with affected residents as partners in their own recovery process. This swift action underscored our nation's commitment to protect and support Bahamians while ensuring communities remain at the center of humanitarian response efforts.



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL



Climate Advocacy as a Humanitarian Imperative

At the 79th UN General Assembly, Davis labeled climate change as a "threat multiplier" and demanded global solidarity for Small Island Developing States (SIDS). He argued that climate finance is humanitarian finance, essential to preserving lives and ecosystems in vulnerable regions (United Nations General Assembly, 2024). The Bahamas continues to advocate at global forums for equitable climate action, working to ensure that vulnerable communities have the resources and agency to build their own resilience.

Economic Justice and Social Protection

Prime Minister Davis's comprehensive social protection initiatives demonstrate humanitarian principles in action, including significant increases in minimum wage, substantial boosts in social assistance funding, and targeted allocations to agricultural technology and training for food security. His administration has also launched a Home

Assistance Repair Programme across multiple islands to support communities affected by severe weather events (Office of the Prime Minister, 2025).

THE RBDF LEGACY OF HUMANITARIAN SERVICE

The RBDF has long exemplified humanitarian principles through community-centered service. Under The Defence Act, the RBDF has been mandated to "provide assistance in times of disaster, maintain order in conjunction with the law enforcement agencies of the Bahamas, and carry out any such duties as determined by the National Security Council" (Royal Bahamas Defence Force, 2024).

Hurricane Dorian Response: A Model of Humanitarian Action

During Hurricane Dorian in September 2019, the RBDF demonstrated exemplary humanitarian response capabilities. RBDF vessels, on behalf of NEMA, delivered nearly 32 MT of USAID commodities including buckets, hygiene kits, water storage containers and plastic sheeting sufficient to support up to 31,500 people to Abaco and Grand Bahama (U.S. Agency for International Development, 2019). The RBDF continued relief operations throughout the crisis, working alongside international partners including the U.S. Coast Guard and various humanitarian organizations.



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL



The hurricane response showcased the Defence Force's dual role as both a security organization and a disaster relief agency, with personnel assuming duties as emergency rescue personnel, search and rescue operators and community support coordinators (Royal Bahamas Defence Force, 2024). This comprehensive approach reflects the RBDF's commitment to protecting not just territorial sovereignty but human security.

Community Outreach and Youth Development

The RBDF's commitment to humanitarian principles extends beyond crisis response to ongoing community development. The Commando Squadron has actively engaged in community service initiatives, including assistance at the Bahamas Children Emergency Hostel where Defence Force personnel assembled and painted benches, raked and cleaned debris from the yard and mentored young men through the Ministry of Education Programme Success Ultimately Reassures

Everyone (S.U.R.E) (Royal Bahamas Defence Force, 2021).

The RBDF Rangers Program represents a significant humanitarian investment in youth development. Operating in fifty schools across The Bahamas with over 1,200 students actively involved, the Rangers Program seeks to develop a cadre of young leaders endowed with character, discipline and a sense of national duty (Family Guardian, 2024). This program has been operating for 23 years and has become one of the newest certifying branches of the Governor General Youth Award (GGYA) Programme.

Regional Humanitarian Cooperation

The RBDF's humanitarian mission extends regionally through CARICOM's Regional Security Task Force, which has seen action in UN mandates in Haiti and El Salvador (Royal Bahamas Defence Force, 2024). As PM Davis noted, "Some Bahamians will recall that under Prime Minister Ingraham, Bahamian officers participated in a mission to uphold security in Haiti, in 1994," demonstrating The Bahamas' long-standing commitment to regional humanitarian cooperation (The Nassau Guardian, 2024). This regional cooperation embodies the principle of strengthening global solidarity while building local capacity, as RBDF personnel contribute to peacekeeping and humanitarian stabilization efforts throughout the Caribbean.



President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

BMMA'S FUTURE ROLE IN HUMANITARIAN LEADERSHIP

Once operational, the Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy (BMMA) will be uniquely positioned to nurture the next generation of humanitarian responders, crisis managers and resilience innovators. Through our specialized schools and research institute, BMMA will support national and regional humanitarian priorities while embodying the 2025 theme of empowering local communities to lead their own development.

- **School of Military Science and Strategy (SMSS):** This school of study will emphasize humanitarian logistics, emergency command and tactical leadership that works with communities as partners, not just beneficiaries. Students will be trained to deploy with confidence in disaster zones, refugee operations and peacekeeping missions while understanding the critical importance of community leadership and local knowledge. The curriculum will integrate emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) in decision-making, autonomous systems and advanced data analysis with traditional skills in community engagement and cultural sensitivity. The school will prepare graduates to understand that effective humanitarian response requires deep community relationships and cultural understanding, building on the RBDF's legacy of working alongside

rather than simply for affected populations.

- **School of Maritime and Coastal Studies (SMCS):** This school of study will focus on marine disaster preparedness, coastal evacuation planning and sustainable maritime aid corridors that strengthen community resilience. The curriculum will emphasize working with fishing communities, coastal residents and maritime workers as co-leaders in disaster response and preparedness. Graduates will play key roles in hurricane response, search-and-rescue operations and blue economy relief logistics critical for our archipelago and the region. Innovation areas will include community-based early warning systems, coastal resilience planning and marine resource management through cooperative approaches that strengthen food security while building local capacity for sustainable fisheries management.
- **School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS):** This school of study will develop professionals equipped to design and repair resilient infrastructure, restore power and communications, and deploy renewable energy solutions in post-disaster zones. The focus will be on appropriate technology that can be maintained and operated by local communities, including community-owned solar and wind installations that



President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

provide energy independence and decentralized water and sanitation systems. Technical expertise will accelerate recovery and reduce human suffering after emergencies while ensuring communities have the knowledge and tools to maintain and improve these systems themselves, embodying the principle of empowering local communities rather than creating dependency.

- **School of Health and Human Performance (SHHP):** This school of study will advance knowledge in health sciences with emphasis on community-led health systems that are more resilient and sustainable than externally imposed solutions. Programs in health informatics, exercise science and health promotion will emphasize building local capacity for health service delivery that communities can maintain and improve over time. The school will address emerging fields such as telemedicine, wearable health tech and health data analytics while ensuring that technological solutions complement rather than replace community health networks and traditional knowledge systems.
- **School of Business and Information Technology (SBIT):** This school of study will prepare students for leadership roles in the digital economy while emphasizing how technology can support rather than supplant community-led

development. The curriculum will balance theory and practical application in data analytics, digital content creation and supply chain logistics with understanding of how these tools can strengthen local capacity rather than create technological dependence. Students will gain expertise in collaborating with Artificial Intelligence (AI), cybersecurity and sustainable business practices while learning to design digital solutions that empower communities to manage their own development processes.

- **Security And Sustainability Research Institute (SSRI):** The Security and Sustainability Research Institute (SSRI) will be at the vanguard of integrating cutting-edge research with humanitarian principles, exploring innovative solutions that not only bolster national security but also address the root causes of socio-economic and socio-environmental issues such as health disparities, crime and poverty. Research focus areas aligned with humanitarian principles such as:
- **Climate Resilience and Disaster Preparedness:** SSRI will investigate the impacts of climate change on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and develop adaptive strategies that strengthen community capacity for self-directed resilience building.



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

- **Health Security and Non-Communicable Diseases:** Research will address socio-economic and health disparities by developing preventative strategies for NCDs that can be implemented and sustained by communities themselves.
- **AI, Blockchain, and Web3 for Humanitarian Action:** SSRI will leverage artificial intelligence and blockchain technology to optimize resource allocation and governance systems in ways that enhance rather than replace local decision-making capacity.
- **Blue, Green, and Orange Economies:** Research will examine sustainable use of marine and terrestrial resources while investigating the creative economy as a driver of sustainable development and cultural preservation that benefits entire communities.
- **Education as a Cornerstone for Sustainability:** SSRI will investigate the role of education in addressing socio-economic challenges and fostering civic engagement, developing pedagogical approaches that incorporate sustainability, security and innovation into curricula while respecting local knowledge systems.

LOOKING FORWARD: BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

World Humanitarian Day 2025 reminds us that effective humanitarian action must go beyond emergency response to address root causes of vulnerability while strengthening community capacity for self-directed development. The theme "Strengthening Global Solidarity and Empowering Local Communities" challenges us to rethink humanitarian relationships from charity models to partnership approaches.

BMMA's future role in this transformation will be to prepare leaders who understand that true security comes not from external protection but from resilient, empowered communities capable of collective action. Our graduates will serve not as saviors but as skilled partners who can contribute technical expertise, coordinate resources and facilitate connections while ensuring communities maintain agency over their own development.

Prime Minister Davis's leadership exemplifies this approach by combining international advocacy for global solidarity with domestic policies that strengthen community capacity. His administration's focus on economic empowerment, social protection and climate resilience creates conditions that allow communities to respond effectively to crises while building long-term prosperity.

As we face an era of increasing humanitarian challenges from climate change to global conflict to persistent inequality, The Bahamas can lead by example in demonstrating



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

how small nations can contribute to global solidarity while ensuring that our own communities are empowered, resilient and prepared for whatever challenges the future may bring.

"Our humanitarian duty is inseparable from our commitment to community empowerment and our national identity as a people who care for one another."

REFERENCES:

Alliance2015. (2025). World Humanitarian Day 2025. Retrieved from <https://www.alliance2015.org/world-humanitarian-day-2025/>

Family Guardian. (2024). Family Guardian donation to the Royal Bahamas Defence Force Rangers. Retrieved from <https://familyguardian.com/family-guardian-donation-to-the-royal-bahamas-defence-force-rangers/>

Government of The Bahamas. (2024). Grand Bahama fire response update [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://www.bahamas.gov.bs>

Loop News. (2024). Bahamas deploys first Defence Force team to Haiti. Retrieved from <https://www.loopnews.com/content/bahamas-deploys-first-defence-force-team-to-haiti/>

Loop News. (2024). Bahamas takes steps to protect borders as Haitian crisis deepens. Retrieved from

<http://caribbean.loopnews.com/content/bahamas-takes-steps-protect-borders-haitian-crisis-deepens>

Office of the Prime Minister. (2024). PM Davis' remarks at Haiti Stakeholders Meeting. Nassau, Bahamas: The Government of The Bahamas.

Office of the Prime Minister. (2025). 2024/2025 Mid-year Budget Statement. Retrieved from <https://opm.gov.bs/>

Royal Bahamas Defence Force. (2021). Commando Squadron community initiative. Retrieved from <http://rbdf.gov.bs/commando-squadron-community-initiative/>

Royal Bahamas Defence Force. (2024). About. Retrieved from <https://rbdf.gov.bs/about/>

The Nassau Guardian. (2024). PM announces RBDF blockade. Retrieved from <https://www.thenassauguardian.com/news/pm-announces-rbdf-blockade/>

United Nations. (2025). World Humanitarian Day. Retrieved from <https://www.un.org/en/observances/humanitarian-day>

United Nations General Assembly. (2024). National Statement: Bahamas at the 79th UNGA. Retrieved from https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/79/bs_en.pdf

U.S. Agency for International Development. (2019). The Bahamas - Hurricane Dorian Fact



From the Desk *of the*

Special Edition: 08

President

The Bahamas Military and Maritime Academy

DATE: 19th August 2025 | DISTRIBUTION FULL

Sheet #3, (FY) 2019. Retrieved from
<https://www.usaid.gov/crisis/dorian/fy19/fs3>

Wikipedia. (2024). Multinational Security Support Mission in Haiti. Retrieved from
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multinational_Security_Support_Mission_in_Haiti