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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **HURRICANE SEASON 2017**

#### ***'Awareness and Preparation Save Lives!'***

The 2017 Hurricane Season for the Atlantic Basin (North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico) will start officially Thursday, June 1 and ends on Thursday, November 30.

Tropical cyclone activity during the 2016 Atlantic Hurricane Season was above average with 15 tropical storms occurring. Of the storms that form, 7 became hurricanes and 3 strengthened into major hurricanes (category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale). Hurricane Matthew was that ***'It Takes just One'*** system that affected the Eastern Caribbean islands with flooding and high winds occurring across the Windward islands and Barbados, moving on to cause major damage and more than 500 deaths in Haiti, then affecting Cuba the Bahamas and the southeastern United States.

An above normal Hurricane Season is predicted for 2017 with an average of 14 named storms, 7 Hurricanes and 3 major Hurricanes. The above normal projection is mainly due to the lack of a clear shift toward El Nino, and near or above-average Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) observed and expected across the tropical North Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea.

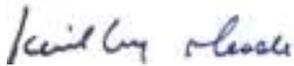
Predictions by no means indicate exact locations of where systems will develop, how they will move or where they will strike. Local authorities and the general public are therefore urged to prepare in advance and to take the necessary precautions in case watches and warnings are issued.

As usual, Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services will monitor the development of all systems which threaten the Leeward and British Virgin Islands and if necessary, issue alerts, watches or warnings. We will also coordinate with disaster management authorities in Antigua and Barbuda, the other Leeward Islands and the British Virgin Islands, and assist with sensitizing the public to the the need to monitor and prepare as necessary in the event that threats and hazards are expected with the passage of storm systems.

The names prepared for this Hurricane Season are: Arlene, Bret, Cindy, Don, Emily, Franklin, Gert, Harvey, Irma, Jose, Katia, Lee, Maria, Nate, Ophelia, Philippe, Rina, Sean, Tammy, Vince and Whitney. Tropical Storm Arlene which formed in April in the Northeast Atlantic was short-lived.

Remember, awareness and good preparedness are essential to limiting the loss of life and property this and every hurricane season.

Keithley Meade



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