

Chinese Aircraft Delivers Humanitarian Aid to Cuba After Hurricane Irma



Havana, September 23 (RHC-Xinhua)-- An Air China 747 aircraft arrived Friday at Jose Marti International Airport with humanitarian aid to Cuba after the Caribbean nation was severely damaged by Hurricane Irma.

The first plane carried 86 tons of relief materials like tents, generators, folding beds, blankets, water pumps, and other materials sent by China to Cuba.

Upon receiving the aid at the airport, Chinese Ambassador to Cuba Chen Xi said that based on the traditionally friendly relations between the two peoples, the Chinese government decided to send emergency humanitarian aid to the Caribbean nation.

"We hope these materials can contribute to the reconstruction of the affected areas and in addition to this emergency aid, China will send six ships full of rice to Cuba before the year ends," he said.

The envoy said three more flights will be made with this type of aircraft to complete the aid offered by Beijing to Havana.

"China and Cuba are friendly countries that over the years have supported each other and are firmly united in difficult situations," Chen said.

Antonio Carricarte, Cuba's First Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Investment, expressed appreciation for this solidarity by the Chinese government as part of the historic ties of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

"This help confirms the important relations between Cuba and China because we are brother countries and we have ties of friendship, solidarity and respect," he said upon receiving the relief goods at the airport.

He also said China despite being geographically distant from Cuba sends this aid to express its solidarity and its government understands the magnitude of the damages caused by the hurricane to the island.

"Regardless of the size of the country or its economies, it is also an expression of the relationships that can exist between large nations like China and smaller ones like Cuba," the official said.

A 9-member team of the Red Cross Society of China also participated in the welcome ceremony and in the coming days will be installing and handing over the humanitarian aid to the areas most affected by the storm.

With this aid China joins other countries in the world that have sent humanitarian relief to Cuba after the passage of Hurricane Irma where it left a trail of destruction particularly in the central provinces of the country.

Irma hit Cuba as a Category 5 hurricane and on its path along the northern coast of the island, left at least ten dead, 1.7 million people evacuated, heavy floods and serious damages to the tourism infrastructure, agricultural areas and housing.

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