

U.S. President Donald Trump Visits Hurricane-wracked Puerto Rico



San Juan, October 4 (RHC)-- U.S. President Donald Trump visited hurricane-wracked Puerto Rico on Tuesday, hoping to highlight federal recovery efforts and repair damage done by his controversial early response to the crisis. Trump's trip to the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, normally a fairly routine show of presidential empathy, took on an outsized political meaning.

During nearly five hours on ground, the president met first responders, officials from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as well as survivors. Speaking with reporters in San Juan, Trump said that "it's been amazing what's been done in a very short period of time on Puerto Rico."

Nearly two weeks after Hurricane Maria thrashed through Puerto Rico, a U.S. territory located in the northeast Caribbean Sea, news reports said that much of the island remains short of food and without access to electric power or drinking water.

Political analysts said that Trump's visit to Puerto Rico was an attempt to show that the federal government is on top of the overwhelming recovery effort, and that 3.4 million American citizens are not forgotten. But critics of his administration said the early response was not fast or large enough, prompting

the combative president to punch back.

Trump, who has feuded with the mayor of Puerto Rico's capital over the pace of the relief effort, claimed before leaving that even his critics were acknowledging "what a great job we have done." The U.S. president berated San Juan's mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz and suggested Puerto Ricans were ungrateful people who "want everything to be done for them."

Trump also accused the news media of lying about the "great job" he was doing. "Outside of the Fake News or politically motivated ingrates... people are now starting to recognize the amazing work that has been done," he wrote on Twitter.

Residents of San Juan have described the Trump's administration's relief efforts as a "disaster," insisting that federal help has been disorganized, delayed and scarce, especially in remote areas.

U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders told CNN on Sunday that skin color may be a factor in Trump's response. He also noted that Trump tweet-bombed the San Juan mayor from his "fancy golf club" in New Jersey, where he was enjoying the weekend, while Mayor Cruz coped with issues involving a lack of food, water, and electricity. "It is unspeakable," Sanders said. "I don't know what world Trump is living in."

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