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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Danish Emergency Agency to Send Humanitarian Assistance to US Virgin Islands

New York, NY – The Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) is dispatching an emergency team to the US Virgin Islands to assist US officials in recovery efforts following the widespread devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

The US Virgin Islands, which includes the islands of St. Croix, St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island, and is also known as the former Danish West Indies, was severely damaged when the two hurricanes battered the US territory just days apart from each other in September. Roads, harbors, airports, hospitals and communication networks have been either partially or completely destroyed, according to on-the-ground reports.

“The US Virgin Islands were severely damaged by the hurricanes in September, and critical infrastructure is still not working,” Denmark’s Minister of Defence, Claus Hjort Frederiksen, confirmed.

“Because of Denmark’s special attachment to the US Virgin Islands the Danish government wants to assist in the recovery efforts. And in cooperation with US Virgin Islands and US authorities we have found a really good match between what is locally needed and what we have in terms of capabilities.”

The DEMA emergency team will consist of 14 individuals who will be dedicated to restoring critical infrastructure, including the rebuilding of the Islands’ damaged schools, over a 10 to 12 week period.

The team will be divided into five subgroups to provide more efficient and rapid assistance to affected communities. The five subgroups consist of a management team that will coordinate all efforts with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and local authorities; a

logistical team; and three fully equipped independent working teams. They are expected to arrive in the US Virgin Islands by 6 October.

The Danish relief effort is the result of a cooperation agreement between Danish, US Virgin Islands, and US authorities. The Danish Ministry of Defence is financing the emergency assistance.

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