



Office of the
Prime Minister

Immediate Release

***Press Statement from the Prime Minister Hon. Philip Edward Davis at
the Office of the Prime Minister Multi-Stakeholder Press Conference***

A multi-agency investigation is underway to determine the full circumstances surrounding a suspected human smuggling operation which has resulted in the deaths of Haitian migrants. The Royal Bahamas Police Force and the Royal Bahamas Defense Force responded to reports of a boating incident seven (7) miles off New Providence just after 1 a.m. on Sunday, July 24th, 2022. A rescue operation ensued immediately.

Rescue teams recovered 17 bodies from the water; 15 females, one male and one infant. Twenty-five (25) persons were rescued and were turned over to health officials for monitoring. Based on the information received, it is presumed that additional persons are missing. Search, and recovery continues as we speak.

Preliminary investigations suggest that a twin-engine speed boat left a docking facility off West Bay Street around 1 a.m. with approximately 60 people on board. It is believed that their final destination was Miami, Florida.

It is believed that the vessel capsized in rough seas. Law enforcement officials will update you on the criminal matter and other rescue and recovery efforts. However, I would like to convey the condolences of my government and the people of The Bahamas to the families of those who lost their lives in this tragedy.

Since it came to office, my government has warned against these treacherous voyages. We have increased surveillance on land and sea and intensified patrols.

We take this opportunity to strongly condemn the organisation of smuggling operations which risk human life and compromise our national security. Those found to be involved will face prosecution.

I understand the situation that many of these migrants face that would encourage them to take such significant risks. We, however, appeal to those considering making such a voyage not to.

24 July 2022
The Office of The Prime Minister
Commonwealth of The Bahamas