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With Hurricane Season Looming, Community Can Rest Assured That Aid Will Reach Victims Quickly and Efficiently

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In times of crisis, South Florida always rises to the occasion.

Whether devastating earthquakes in Haiti and Chile, or the hurricanes that frequently ravage the region, the Miami community has proven time and again that it is especially quick to respond with donations of much-needed emergency, relief and medical supplies – especially to our neighbors in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Donors are often concerned; however, that aid and contributions fail to reach victims in a timely fashion, if at all. These nagging worries are again magnified by the onset of the 2010 hurricane season, which brings with it somber predictions for a particularly active storm season – and thus a heightened possibility that the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean will be hit.

South Floridians can rest assured that their donations and other aid will be delivered as expeditiously as possible, through the efforts of a Miami-based non-profit organization that facilitates and supports assistance that is targeted to those most in need. This organization – America's Relief Team (ART) – has for years successfully and safely delivered countless tons of critical relief cargo through careful planning and logistical expertise provided by its corporate partners, such as Seaboard Marine, and FedEx Express Latin America & Caribbean.

In the chaotic aftermath of the Haiti earthquake, an ART-coordinated flight using a FedEx charter delivered the first organized humanitarian relief assistance to Haiti. That first flight of many – filled with supplies provided by fellow ART members Heart to Heart, American Red Cross and Pan American Development Foundation – was the result of careful preparation and pinpoint logistical coordination with U.S. and Haitian government agencies.

That Herculean effort was characteristic of ART, which has years of experience in overcoming the many obstacles facing relief organizations in channeling aid to areas that are devastated by natural disasters. And those obstacles can be significant – severely damaged communications lines and transportation venues, in-country police or military in disarray, a lack of orderly on-the-ground distribution points, and of course the desperation and frustration of victims dealing with injuries and the loss of loved ones.

The beauty of ART is that it is able to overcome or sidestep many of these obstacles by careful planning and coordination with multiple partners, agencies and governments. In particular, ART maintains a Bank Depository of Charity Cargo from air carriers and shipping companies. This inventory of donated or discounted cargo and in-kind support (trucking, stevedoring, warehousing, bills of lading and gantry crane space) provides relief organizations with the best options for shipping humanitarian supplies fast and efficiently.

While we hope that this hurricane season will prove to be less active than predicted, we all know that natural disasters will inevitably strike -- suddenly and horrifically -- somewhere in the region. And ART will be ready to deliver – quite literally – on the promises made by charitable South Floridians: that humanitarian aid will quickly reach those who need it the most.

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